

30-Minute Webinar: Federal Funds Are Flowing! Here's What We're Finding So Far

May 18, 2021 @EdunomicsLab
Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
Slides available at edunomicslab.org

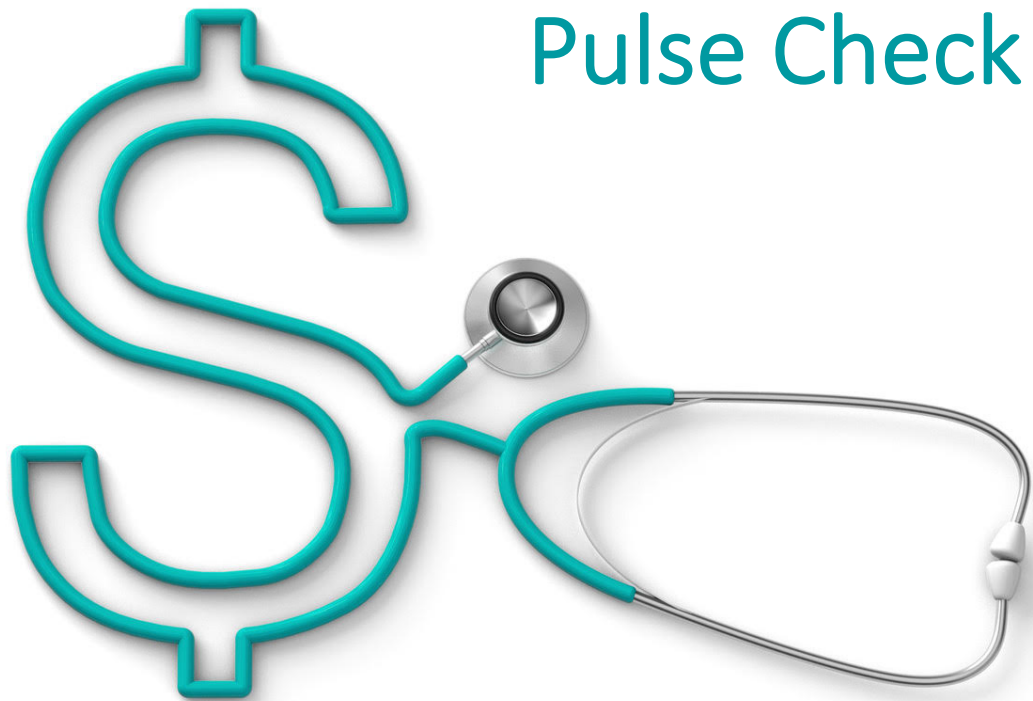
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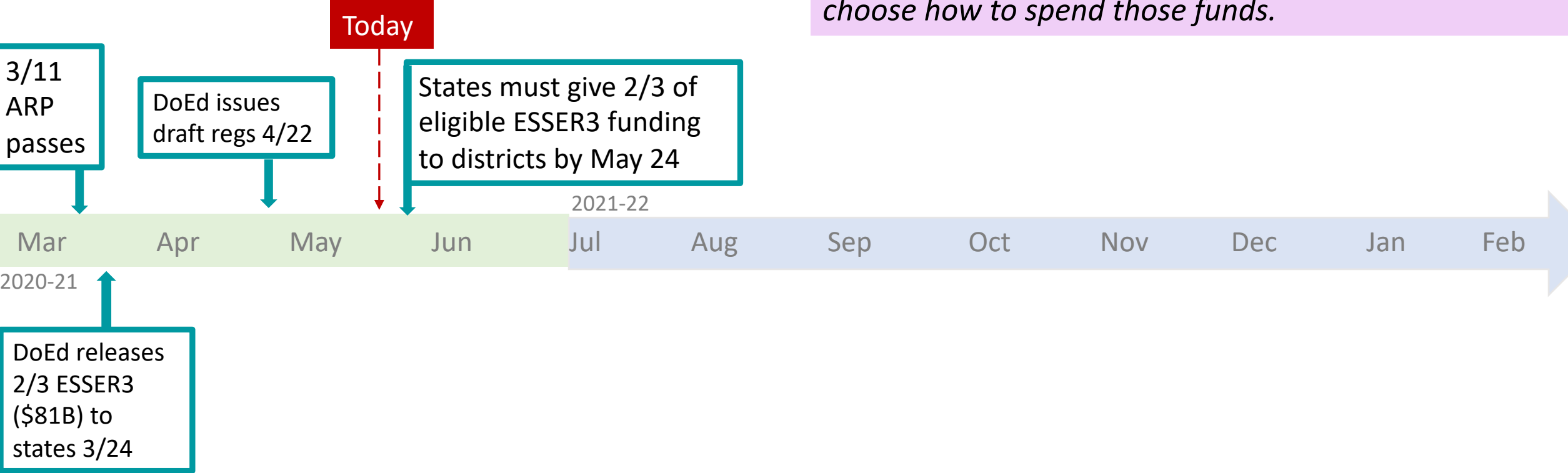
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*Note:
Presentation is
on-the-the
record but Q/A
after is off-the-
record unless
otherwise noted*



For districts, the clock is ticking...

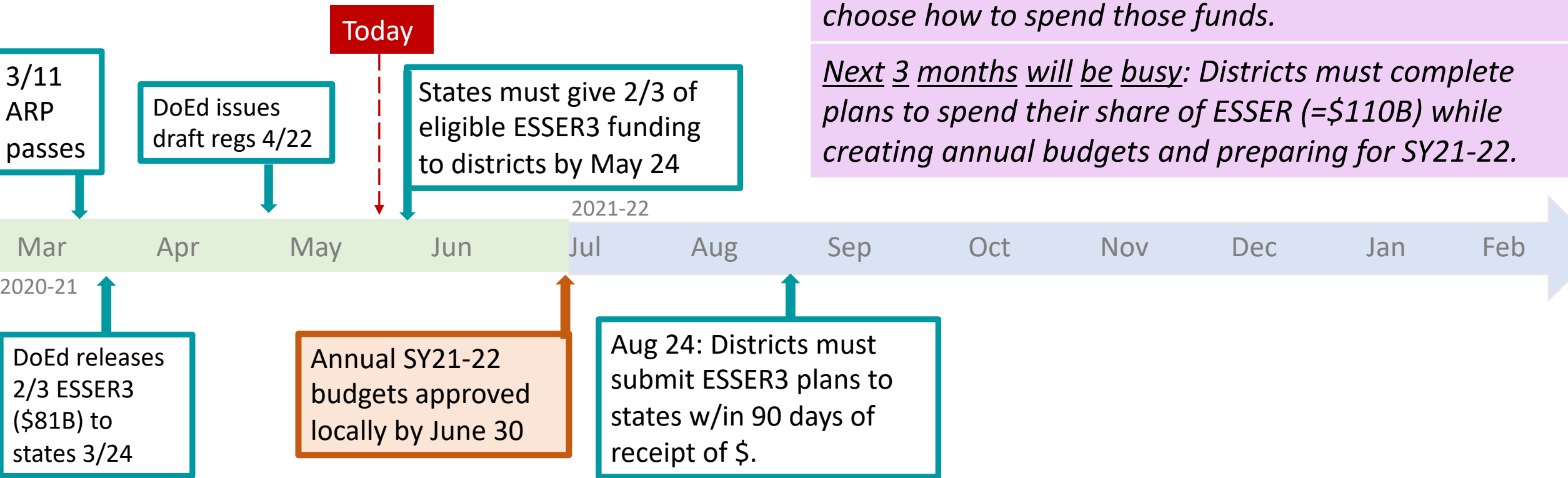
District ESSER funds are highly flexible. Districts will choose how to spend those funds.



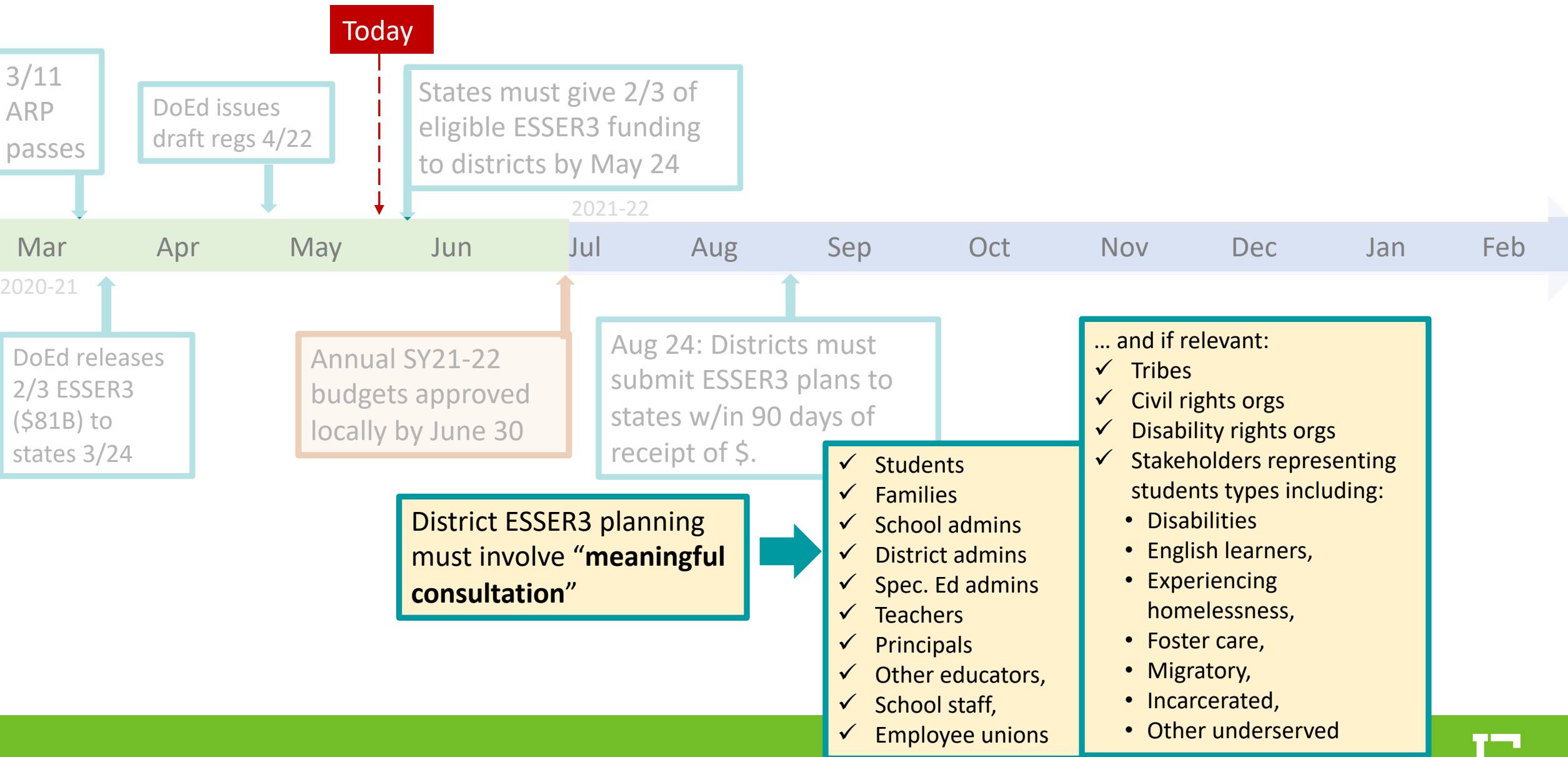
Note: We’re focusing only on district spending here. State agencies also have 10% of ESSER funds for their use. Those plans are separate.



For districts, the clock is ticking...

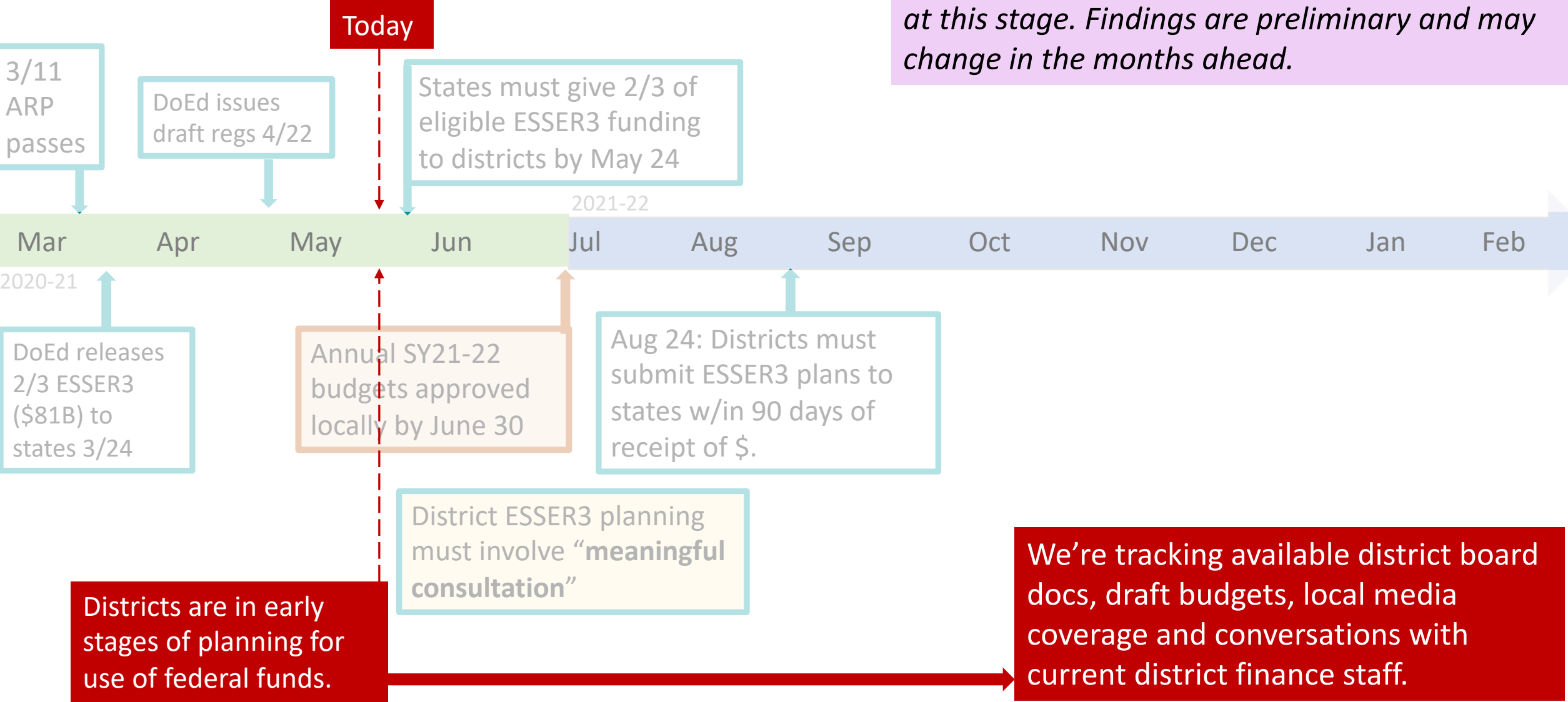


For districts, the clock is ticking...



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Taking the pulse on spending plans is challenging at this stage. Findings are preliminary and may change in the months ahead.



It's still very early, but in our tracking of districts, so far:

We're seeing lots of this:

- Thank you payments to staff
- Filling budget gaps
- Plans to hire counselors, nurses, specialists
- Class size reduction (hiring more teachers)
- Facilities projects
- Tech/Curric updates
- Planning time for staff

and not much of this:

- Tutoring
- Added weeks to school year
- Pass through allocations to schools (for flexible use)
- Customized options where families select what works for their kids
- New delivery models
- New content/course options



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Not much in here
for students

Lots of “as-usual”
spending

Lots of one-size-
fits-all vs. targeting
to high-needs kids

What about
adding learning
time?



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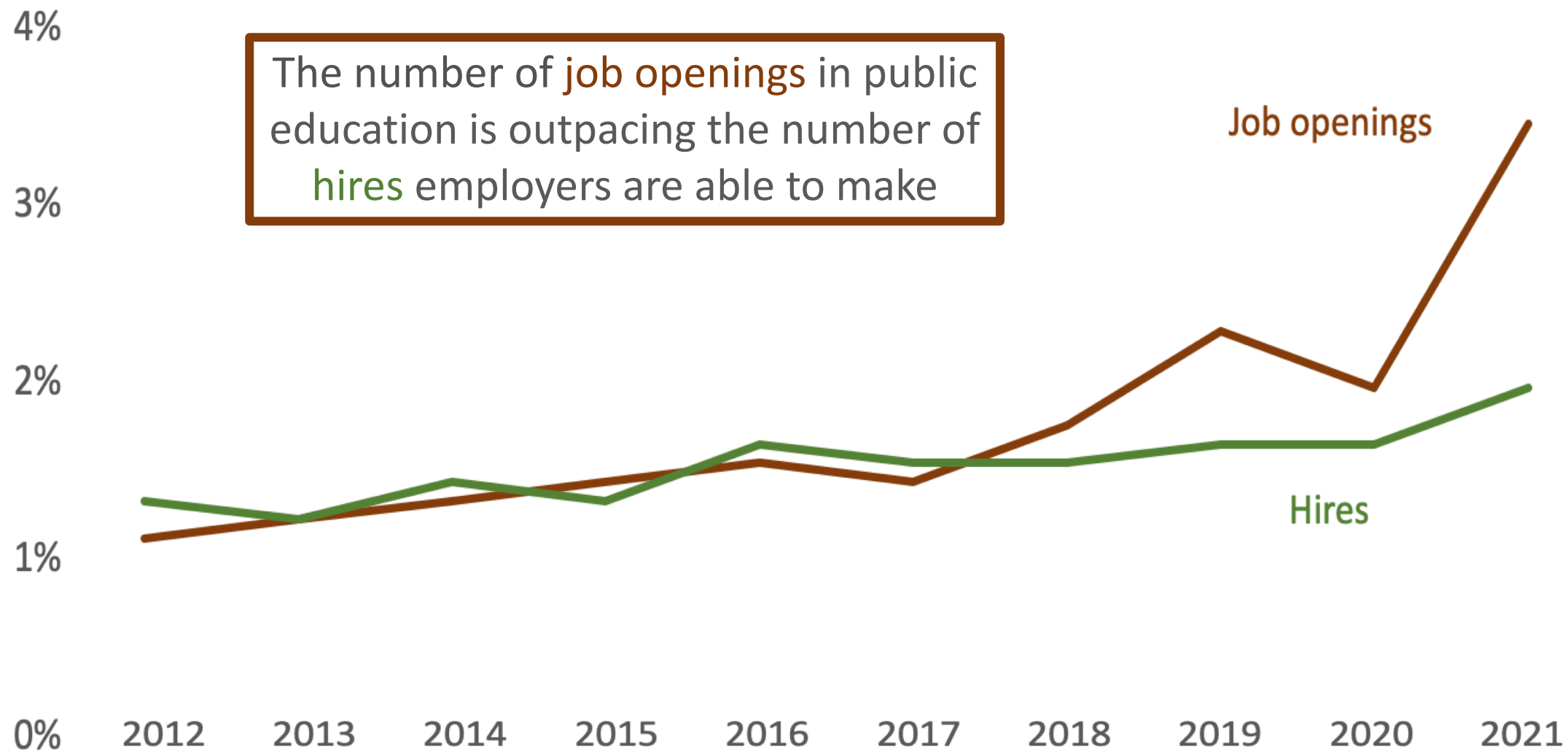
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Filling budget gaps and hiring new staff brings recurring costs and a potential cliff

These investments involve hiring new employees.



Plans that involve hiring may present a challenge in the current labor climate.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, March data from Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey:
<https://www.bls.gov/jlt/>



For districts, the clock is ticking...

Districts will likely need to adjust plans even after they are submitted.

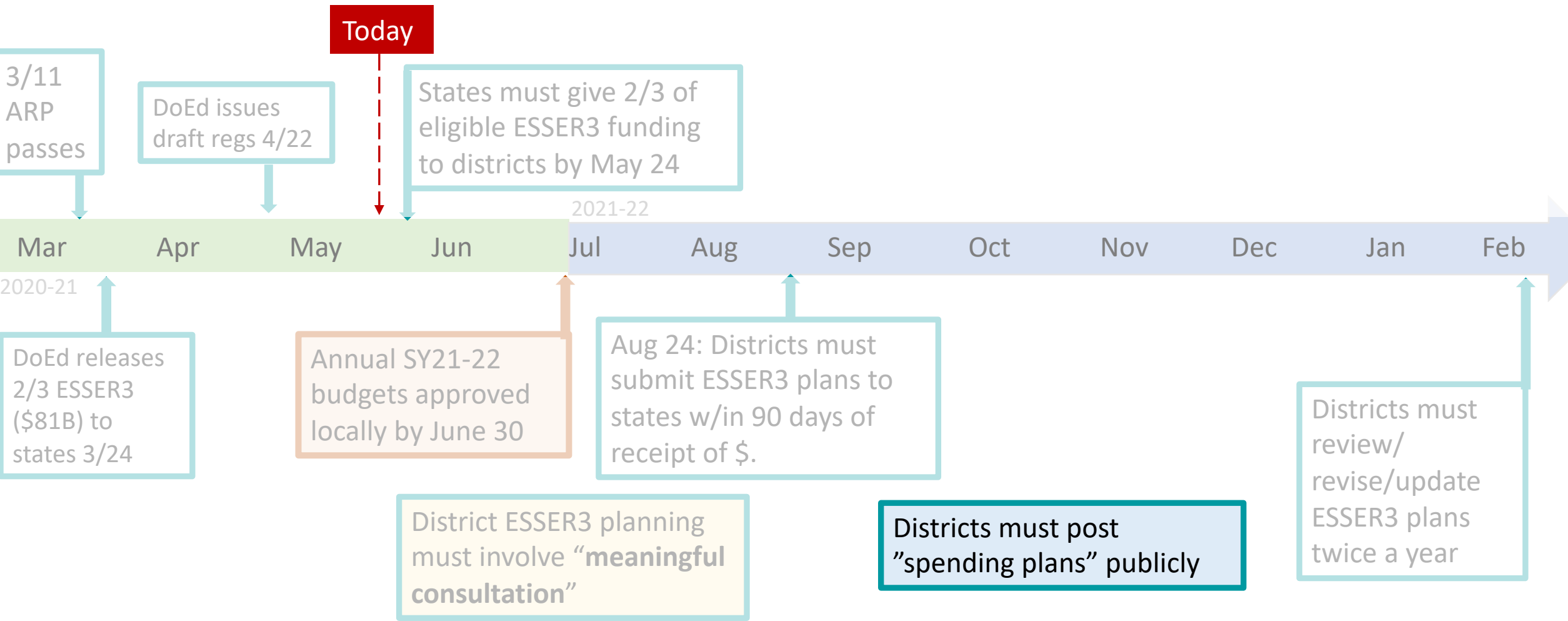


A few other patterns

- ✓ Some plans involving labor are proposed and then rescinded.
- ✓ Some plans do exist for summer programs.
 - Difficult to distinguish from typical summer programming.
 - Some offered by state agencies.
- ✓ Very little transparency at this stage into the planning process, options, etc. (More will come.)



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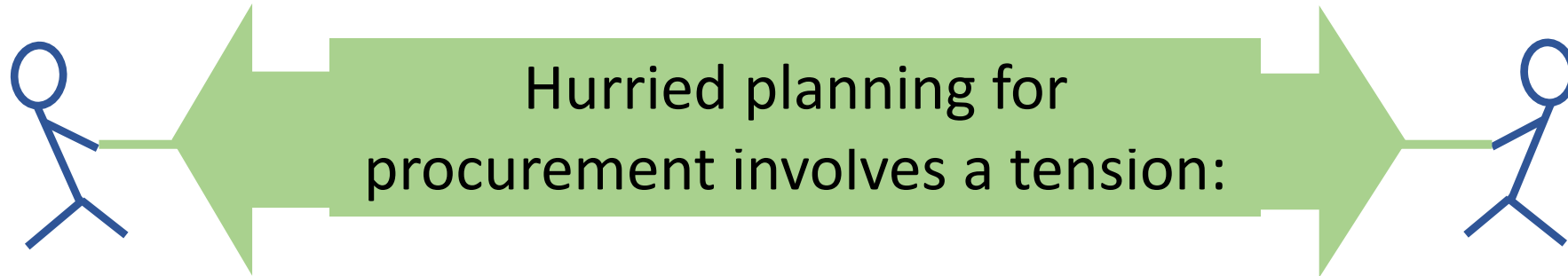


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- ✓ Some plans involving labor are proposed and then rescinded.
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 - Difficult to distinguish from typical summer programming.
 - Some offered by state agencies.
- ✓ Very little transparency at this stage into the planning process, options, etc. (More will come.)
- ✓ Contracts are being negotiated with little public visibility at this stage.



We're hearing it's "Procurement-palooza" in many districts.



Use contracts to:

- ✓ Innovate, do things differently
- ✓ Add capacity
- ✓ Avoid the cliff

While also ensuring:

- ✓ Accountability for outcomes
- ✓ Transparency for the public
- ✓ Proper procurement processes

So far, there is very little visibility into district contracts.

Still to watch: How will plans stack up on five principles for district ARP spending?

1. **Honor the promise to taxpayers to focus on students and relief**
 - a. Compute the per-student costs or cost per extra student hour, to ensure spending is reasonable.
 - b. Find ways to measure effects on students and ensure success.
 - c. Be nimble and adjust plans as needed.
2. **Commit to a multi-year spending plan**
 - a. Avoid adding new recurring costs to avert disruptive fiscal cliff.
 - b. Maintain a long-term financial forecast.
3. **Seek targeted investments to increase learning time for students who need it most**
4. **Consider how equitably funds are applied across schools**
 - a. Compute \$/student impacts on each school.
5. **Be transparent and ensure broad participation in spending decisions**
 - a. Engage parents, communities and especially boards on spending choices.
 - b. Have principals gauge whether investments match need of their students with feasibility for success.
 - c. Apply proper procurement protocols. Publicly communicate all investments, providers and intended benefits.



Q & A

*Note: Q&A is off the record
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Keep us posted on how things are
playing out in your locale:

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