

## **Uses Of ESSA Funding To Further Science Education For All Students**

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The information and links were current and active as of March 2019. Any errors are those of the authors and not the organization's. Please contact Tom Keller ([tom@stemeducationstrategies.org](mailto:tom@stemeducationstrategies.org)) with any questions or corrections.

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## I. Introduction

Having experience as classroom teachers, Tiffany Neill of the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Richard Scott of the Utah State Board of Education and Tom Keller, Honorary Lifetime Member of the Council of State Science Supervisors developed this document from a number of models of documents found on the web. This document was developed on personal time and does not represent the views of any organizations we have worked with now or in the past.

This document was written for the membership of the Council of State Science Supervisors and local science education leaders such as members of the National Science Teachers Association and National Science Education Leadership Association since we believe that state and local leaders working together lead to be best outcomes for our students. State science leaders need to understand the federal regulations and be an integral part of state planning for the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. Local science education leaders who might be district or school science supervisors or lead teachers need to understand the basics of ESSA funding and especially how the local ESSA plan is developed. State leaders can help local leaders and vice versa.

There are two sections to the *Every Student Succeeds Act* that are especially salient to science educators, Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A. We have prepared this guide to help state, district and local science education leaders understand and advocate for funding under this Act. The original Act is 443 pages that we have distilled to this document.

*This CSSS document reflects federal statute and regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), 2015. For specific laws, rules, and guidelines related to the implementation of Title IV, Part A in your state, please contact your State Education Agency science supervisor or specialist and/or your school district's federal program manager. State plans are posted [here](#).*

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**Read the Non-Regulatory Guidance (known as the NRGs) documents for**  
**[Title II, Part A](#) and [Title IV, Part A](#).**

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### A. So, what should I do as a state leader?

1. Point out to the developers of the state plan ways Title II can support the teaching of science. Use this [Dear Colleague Letter](#) from the US Department of Education (US ED). In 2017, an official letter from the US ED was issued to help state educational agencies, local educational agencies, and local partners better understand how to use Federal funds to support science and STEM education under ESSA and other federal grant programs.
2. Strategize ways that LEAs can be reminded of their needs in science education.
3. Encourage State Activities that include science education.
4. Ensure that any teacher, principal or other school leader preparation academies include leadership in science education.
5. Share this document with district and school science education leaders.

## B. So, what should I do as a local leader?

1. Make sure you know the person who is in charge of federal funds, title funds, ESSA, ESEA, or however it is identified in your district. An easy way to find out is to ask, 'who oversees our Title IV funds?' It is likely a central office person. If you have a district or school science supervisor, she or he better know who that federal funding coordinator is! Once you know who the key people are, ask to be involved in any planning regarding the use of Title II or Title IV funds and show your willingness to be part of a needs assessment (see number 3 below).
2. Be aware of the possible uses of Title II for supporting science education.
3. Be part of the local plan development for your ESSA plan. If your district receives over \$30,000 per year in Title IV funds, they had to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment before receiving the funds and the district must conduct subsequent needs assessments at least once every three years. Stakeholders must be involved in these needs assessment and must include parents, teachers, principals, students, schools leaders, and other identified constituencies. Become part of this process!
4. Try to be part of state ESSA plan development, re-development or review.
5. Make sure your state science supervisor knows you are interested in being involved in state and local efforts.

## II. Title II, Part A – what can it be used for?

Title II, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction (see [Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) document). This document states "...it highlights some of the new and important ways State education agencies and local education agencies can use their Title II, Part A funds more strategically and for greater impact." (page 3) The purpose of this title is "...to provide grants to State educational agencies and subgrants to local educational agencies to— (1) increase student achievement consistent with the challenging State academic standards; (2) improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders; (3) increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools; and provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders."

### A. Types of State Activities

Described in the legislation are the following activities:

1. Reforming teacher, principal, or other school leader certification, recertification, licensing, or tenure systems or preparation program standards and approval processes to ensure that—
  - a. teachers have the necessary subject-matter knowledge and teaching skills, as demonstrated through measures determined by the State, which may include teacher performance assessments, in the academic subjects that the teachers teach to help students meet challenging State academic standards;

- b. principals or other school leaders have the instructional leadership skills to help teachers teach and to help students meet such challenging State academic standards; and
  - c. teacher certification or licensing requirements are aligned with such challenging State academic standards.
- 2. Developing, improving, or providing assistance to local educational agencies to support the design and implementation of teacher, principal, or other school leader evaluation and support systems that are based in part on evidence of student academic achievement, which may include student growth, and shall include multiple measures of educator performance and provide clear, timely, and useful feedback to teachers, principals, or other school leaders, such as by—
  - a. developing and disseminating high-quality evaluation tools, such as classroom observation rubrics, and methods, including training and auditing, for ensuring inter-rater reliability of evaluation results;
  - b. developing and providing training to principals, other school leaders, coaches, mentors, and evaluators on how to accurately differentiate performance, provide useful and timely feedback, and use evaluation results to inform decision making about professional development, improvement strategies, and personnel decisions; and
  - c. developing a system for auditing the quality of evaluation and support systems.
- 3. Improving equitable access to effective teachers.
- 4. Carrying out programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of teachers (especially for teachers of children with disabilities, English learners, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or other areas where the State experiences a shortage of educators), principals, or other school leaders, for
  - a. individuals with a baccalaureate or master's degree, or other advanced degree;
  - b. mid-career professionals from other occupations;
  - c. paraprofessionals;
  - d. former military personnel; and
  - e. recent graduates of institutions of higher education with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders.
- 5. Developing, improving, and implementing mechanisms to assist local educational agencies and schools in effectively recruiting and retaining teachers, principals, or other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement, including effective teachers from underrepresented minority groups and teachers with disabilities, such as through—
  - a. opportunities for effective teachers to lead evidence-based (to the extent the State

determines that such evidence is reasonably available) professional development for the peers of such effective teachers; and

- b. providing training and support for teacher leaders and principals or other school leaders who are recruited as part of instructional leadership teams.
6. Fulfilling the State educational agency's responsibilities concerning proper and efficient administration and monitoring of the programs carried out under this part, including provision of technical assistance to local educational agencies.
7. Developing, or assisting local educational agencies in developing—
  - a. career opportunities and advancement initiatives that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths, such as instructional coaching and mentoring (including hybrid roles that allow instructional coaching and mentoring while remaining in the classroom), school leadership, and involvement with school improvement and support;
  - b. strategies that provide differential pay, or other incentives, to recruit and retain teachers in high-need academic subjects and teachers, principals, or other school leaders, in low-income schools and school districts, which may include performance-based pay systems; and
  - c. new teacher, principal, or other school leader induction and mentoring programs that are, to the extent the State determines that such evidence is reasonably available, evidence-based, and designed to—
    - improve classroom instruction and student learning and achievement, including through improving school leadership programs; and
    - increase the retention of effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders.
8. Providing assistance to local educational agencies for the development and implementation of high-quality professional development programs for principals that enable the principals to be effective and prepare all students to meet the challenging State academic standards.
9. Supporting efforts to train teachers, principals, or other school leaders to effectively integrate technology into curricula and instruction, which may include training to assist teachers in implementing blended learning (as defined in section 4102(1)) projects.
10. Providing training, technical assistance, and capacity-building to local educational agencies that receive a subgrant under this part.
11. Reforming or improving teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation programs, such as through establishing teacher residency programs and school leader residency programs.
12. Establishing or expanding teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation academies, with an amount of the funds described in subparagraph (A) that is not more than 2 percent of the

State's allotment, if—

- a. allowable under State law;
  - b. the State enables candidates attending a teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation academy to be eligible for State financial aid to the same extent as participants in other State-approved teacher or principal preparation programs, including alternative certification, licensure, or credential programs; and
  - c. the State enables teachers, principals, or other school leaders who are teaching or working while on alternative certificates, licenses, or credentials to teach or work in the State while enrolled in a teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation academy.
13. Supporting the instructional services provided by effective school library programs.
  14. Developing, or assisting local educational agencies in developing, strategies that provide teachers, principals, or other school leaders with the skills, credentials, or certifications needed to educate all students in postsecondary education coursework through early college high school or dual or concurrent enrollment programs.
  15. Providing training for all school personnel, including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and para-professionals, regarding how to prevent and recognize child sexual abuse.
  16. Supporting opportunities for principals, other school leaders, teachers, paraprofessionals, early childhood education program directors, and other early childhood education program providers to participate in joint efforts to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness.
  17. Developing and providing professional development and other comprehensive systems of support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders to promote high-quality instruction and instructional leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, including computer science.
  18. Supporting the professional development and improving the instructional strategies of teachers, principals, or other school leaders to integrate career and technical education content into academic instructional practices, which may include training on best practices to understand State and regional workforce needs and transitions to postsecondary education and the workforce.
  19. Enabling States, as a consortium, to voluntarily develop a process that allows teachers who are licensed or certified in a participating State to teach in other participating States without completing additional licensure or certification requirements, except that nothing in this clause shall be construed to allow the Secretary to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over State teacher licensing or certification requirements.
  20. Supporting and developing efforts to train teachers on the appropriate use of student data to ensure that individual student privacy is protected as required by section 444 of the General

Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974”) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and in accordance with State student privacy laws and local educational agency student privacy and technology use policies.

21. Supporting other activities identified by the State that are, to the extent the State determines that such evidence is reasonably available, evidence-based and that meet the purpose of this title.

## **B. Types of Local Activities**

Requirements regarding local (LEA) uses of funds are described as follow and:

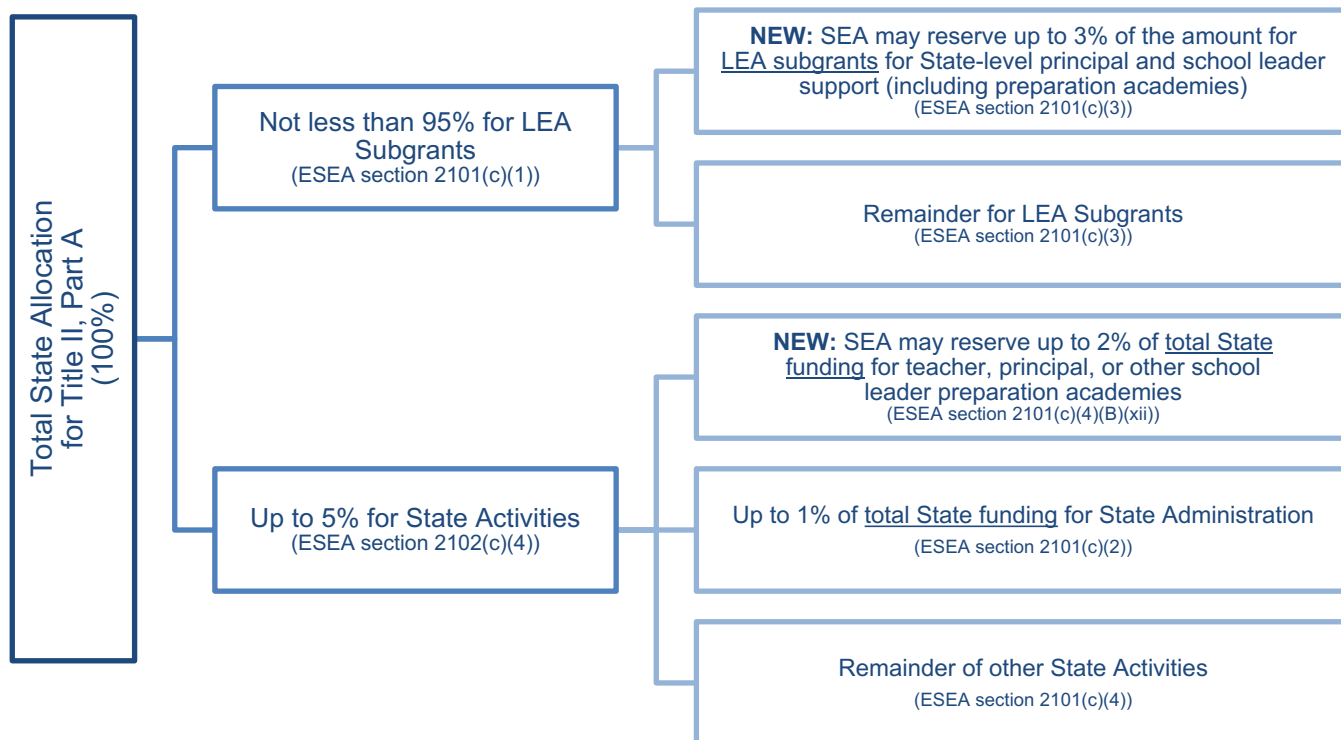
1. shall be in accordance with the purpose of this title;
2. shall address the learning needs of all students, including children with disabilities, English learners, and gifted and talented students; and
3. may include, among other programs and activities—
  - a. developing or improving a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation and support system for teachers, principals, or other school leaders that—
    - is based in part on evidence of student achievement, which may include student growth; and
    - shall include multiple measures of educator performance and provide clear, timely, and useful feedback to teachers, principals, or other school leaders;
  - b. developing and implementing initiatives to assist in recruiting, hiring, and retaining effective teachers, particularly in low-income schools with high percentages of ineffective teachers and high percentages of students who do not meet the challenging State academic standards, to improve within-district equity in the distribution of teachers, consistent with section 1111(g)(1)(B), such as initiatives that provide—
    - expert help in screening candidates and enabling early hiring;
    - differential and incentive pay for teachers, principals, or other school leaders in high-need academic subject areas and specialty areas, which may include performance-based pay systems;
    - teacher, paraprofessional, principal, or other school leader advancement and professional growth, and an emphasis on leadership opportunities, multiple career paths, and pay differentiation;
    - new teacher, principal, or other school leader induction and mentoring programs that are designed to—
      - improve classroom instruction and student learning and achievement; and

- increase the retention of effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders;
  - the development and provision of training for school leaders, coaches, mentors, and evaluators on how accurately to differentiate performance, provide useful feedback, and use evaluation results to inform decision making about professional development, improvement strategies, and personnel decisions; and
  - a system for auditing the quality of evaluation and support systems;
- c. recruiting qualified individuals from other fields to become teachers, principals, or other school leaders, including mid-career professionals from other occupations, former military personnel, and recent graduates of institutions of higher education with records of academic distinction who demonstrate potential to become effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders;
- d. reducing class size to a level that is evidence-based, to the extent the State (in consultation with local educational agencies in the State) determines that such evidence is reasonably available, to improve student achievement through the recruiting and hiring of additional effective teachers;
- e. providing high-quality, personalized professional development that is evidence-based, to the extent the State (in consultation with local educational agencies in the State) determines that such evidence is reasonably available, for teachers, instructional leadership teams, principals, or other school leaders, that is focused on improving teaching and student learning and achievement, including supporting efforts to train teachers, principals, or other school leaders to—
- effectively integrate technology into curricula and instruction (including education about the harms of copyright piracy);
  - use data to improve student achievement and understand how to ensure individual student privacy is protected, as required under section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974”) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and State and local policies and laws in the use of such data;
  - effectively engage parents, families, and community partners, and coordinate services between school and community;
  - help all students develop the skills essential for learning readiness and academic success;
  - develop policy with school, local educational agency, community, or State leaders; and

- participate in opportunities for experiential learning through observation;
- f. developing programs and activities that increase the ability of teachers to effectively teach children with disabilities, including children with significant cognitive disabilities, and English learners, which may include the use of multi-tier systems of support and positive behavioral intervention and supports, so that such children with disabilities and English learners can meet the challenging State academic standards;
- g. providing programs and activities to increase—
- the knowledge base of teachers, principals, or other school leaders on instruction in the early grades and on strategies to measure whether young children are progressing; and
  - the ability of principals or other school leaders to support teachers, teacher leaders, early childhood educators, and other professionals to meet the needs of students through age 8, which may include providing joint professional learning and planning activities for school staff and educators in preschool programs that address the transition to elementary school;
- h. providing training, technical assistance, and capacity-building in local educational agencies to assist teachers, principals, or other school leaders with selecting and implementing formative assessments, designing classroom-based assessments, and using data from such assessments to improve instruction and student academic achievement, which may include providing additional time for teachers to review student data and respond, as appropriate;
- i. carrying out in-service training for school personnel in—
- the techniques and supports needed to help educators understand when and how to refer students affected by trauma, and children with, or at risk of, mental illness;
  - the use of referral mechanisms that effectively link such children to appropriate treatment and intervention services in the school and in the community, where appropriate;
  - forming partnerships between school-based mental health programs and public or private mental health organizations; and
  - addressing issues related to school conditions for student learning, such as safety, peer interaction, drug and alcohol abuse, and chronic absenteeism
- j. providing training to support the identification of students who are gifted and talented, including high-ability students who have not been formally identified for gifted education services, and implementing instructional practices that support the education of such students, such as—

- early entrance to kindergarten;
  - enrichment, acceleration, and curriculum compacting activities; and
  - dual or concurrent enrollment programs in secondary school and postsecondary education;
- k. supporting the instructional services provided by effective school library programs;
  - l. providing training for all school personnel, including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, regarding how to prevent and recognize child sexual abuse;
  - m. developing and providing professional development and other comprehensive systems of support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders to promote high-quality instruction and instructional leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, including computer science;
  - n. developing feedback mechanisms to improve school working conditions, including through periodically and publicly reporting results of educator support and working conditions feedback;
  - o. providing high-quality professional development for teachers, principals, or other school leaders on effective strategies to integrate rigorous academic content, career and technical education, and work-based learning (if appropriate), which may include providing common planning time, to help prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce; and
  - p. carrying out other activities that are evidence-based, to the extent the State (in consultation with local educational agencies in the State) determines that such evidence is reasonably available, and identified by the local educational agency that meet the purpose of this title.

An especially important fact is the flow of Title II, Part A funding (see page 27 of the NRG). It is depicted on the following page —



### III. Title IV, Part A – What can it be used for?

**Title IV, Part A, is also known as Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (SSAE) (see Non-Regulatory Guidance document).**

The purpose of Title IV, Part A, as defined in law, is “to improve students’ academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, local educational agencies, schools, and local communities to—

1. provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;
2. improve school conditions for student learning; and
3. improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.”

ESSA states that each State Education Agency (SEA) that receives an allotment for the implementation of Title IV, Part A must ensure that the funds are used to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in the three SSAE program content areas, those being well-rounded education, safe and healthy students and effective uses of technology. The SEA will ultimately approve or disapprove any activities through its application approval process consistent with relevant statutory application requirements.

According to the NRG for Title IV, an SEA must reserve at least 95 percent of its SSAE program allocation for subgrants to LEAs and not more than one percent of its SSAE program allocation for administrative costs, including public reporting on how LEAs are using the funds and the degree to

which LEAs have made progress towards meeting identified objectives and outcomes. (ESEA section 4104(a)(1) and (2)). SEAs award SSAE subgrants to LEAs by formula in the same proportion as to the LEAs' prior year's Title I, Part A allocations. (ESEA section 4105(a)(1)). An SEA may use any remaining funds to support LEA activities and programs designed to meet the purposes of the program, which may include monitoring and providing technical assistance to LEAs; identifying and eliminating State barriers to the coordination and integration of programs, initiatives, and funding streams that meet the purposes of the program; and otherwise supporting LEAs in carrying out activities in the three SSAE program content areas. (ESEA section 4104(a)(3)).

## **A. Types of State Activities**

Described in the legislation are the following:

1. providing monitoring of, and training, technical assistance, and capacity building to, local educational agencies that receive an allotment under section 4105;
2. identifying and eliminating State barriers to the coordination and integration of programs, initiatives, and funding streams that meet the purposes of this subpart, so that local educational agencies can better coordinate with other agencies, schools, and community-based services and programs; or
3. supporting local educational agencies in providing programs and activities that—
  - a. offer well-rounded educational experiences to all students, as described in section 4107, including female students, minority students, English learners, children with disabilities, and low-income students who are often underrepresented in critical and enriching subjects, which may include—
    - increasing student access to and improving student engagement and achievement in—
      - high-quality courses in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including computer science;
      - activities and programs in music and the arts;
      - foreign languages;
      - accelerated learning programs that provide—
        - postsecondary level courses accepted for credit at institutions of higher education, including dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools; or
        - postsecondary level instruction and examinations that are accepted for credit at institutions of higher education, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs;

- American history, civics, economics, geography, social studies, or government education;
    - environmental education; or other courses, activities, and programs or other experiences that contribute to a well-rounded education; or
  - reimbursing low-income students to cover part or all of the costs of accelerated learning examination fees, as described in clause (i)(IV);
- b. foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement, as described in section 4108, which may include—
- coordinating with any local educational agencies or consortia of such agencies implementing a youth PROMISE plan to reduce exclusionary discipline, as described in section 4108(5)(F);
  - supporting local educational agencies to—
    - implement mental health awareness training programs that are evidence-based (to the extent the State determines that such evidence is reasonably available) to provide education to school personnel regarding resources available in the community for students with mental illnesses and other relevant resources relating to mental health or the safe de-escalation of crisis situations involving a student with a mental illness; or
    - expand access to or coordinate resources for school-based counseling and mental health programs, such as through school-based mental health services partnership programs;
  - providing local educational agencies with resources that are evidence-based (to the extent the State determines that such evidence is reasonably available) addressing ways to integrate health and safety practices into school or athletic programs; and
  - disseminating best practices and evaluating program outcomes relating to any local educational agency activities to promote student safety and violence prevention through effective communication as described in section 4108(5)(C)(iv); and
- c. increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology by—
- providing technical assistance to local educational agencies to improve the ability of local educational agencies to—
    - identify and address technology readiness needs, including the types of technology infrastructure and access available to the students served by the local educational agency, including computer devices, access to

school libraries, Internet connectivity, operating systems, software, related network infrastructure, and data security;

- use technology, consistent with the principles of universal design for learning, to support the learning needs of all students, including children with disabilities and English learners; and
- build capacity for principals, other school leaders, and local educational agency administrators to support teachers in using data and technology to improve instruction and personalize learning;
- supporting schools in rural and remote areas to expand access to high-quality digital learning opportunities;
- developing or using strategies that are innovative or evidence-based (to the extent the State determines that such evidence is reasonably available) for the delivery of specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology, which may include increased access to online dual or concurrent enrollment opportunities, career and technical courses, and programs leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (as defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102));
- disseminating promising practices related to technology instruction, data security, and the acquisition and implementation of technology tools and applications, including through making such promising practices publicly available on the website of the State educational agency;
- providing teachers, paraprofessionals, school librarians and media personnel, specialized instructional support personnel, and administrators with the knowledge and skills to use technology effectively, including effective integration of technology, to improve instruction and student achievement, which may include coordination with teacher, principal, and other school leader preparation programs; and
- making instructional content widely available through open educational resources, which may include providing tools and processes to support local educational agencies in making such resources widely available.

## **B. Types of Local Activities**

### **SEC. 4107. ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.**

1. IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 4106(f), each local educational agency, or consortium of such agencies, that receives an allocation under section 4105(a) shall use a portion of such funds to develop and implement programs and activities that support access to a well-rounded education and that—

- a. are coordinated with other schools and community-based services and programs;
- b. may be conducted in partnership with an institution of higher education, business, nonprofit organization, community-based organization, or other public or private entity with a demonstrated record of success in implementing activities under this section; and
- c. may include programs and activities, such as—
  - college and career guidance and counseling programs, such as—
    - postsecondary education and career awareness and exploration activities;
    - training counselors to effectively use labor market information in assisting students with postsecondary education and career planning; and
    - financial literacy and Federal financial aid awareness activities;
  - programs and activities that use music and the arts as tools to support student success through the promotion of constructive student engagement, problem solving, and conflict resolution;
  - programming and activities to improve instruction and student engagement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including computer science, (referred to in this section as “STEM subjects”) such as—
    - **increasing access for students through grade 12 who are members of groups underrepresented in such subject fields, such as female students, minority students, English learners, children with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students, to high-quality courses;**
    - **supporting the participation of low-income students in nonprofit competitions related to STEM subjects (such as robotics, science research, invention, mathematics, computer science, and technology competitions);**
    - **providing hands-on learning and exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and supporting the use of field-based or service learning to enhance the students’ understanding of the STEM subjects;**
    - **supporting the creation and enhancement of STEM-focused specialty schools;**
    - **facilitating collaboration among school, after-school program, and informal program personnel to improve the integration of programming and instruction in the identified subjects; and**

- **integrating other academic subjects, including the arts, into STEM subject programs to increase participation in STEM subjects, improve attainment of skills related to STEM subjects, and promote well-rounded education; (boldface added for emphasis)**
- efforts to raise student academic achievement through accelerated learning programs described in section 4104(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV), such as—
  - reimbursing low-income students to cover part or all of the costs of accelerated learning examination fees, if the low-income students are enrolled in accelerated learning courses and plan to take accelerated learning examinations; or
  - increasing the availability of, and enrollment in, accelerated learning courses, accelerated learning examinations, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high school courses;
- activities to promote the development, implementation, and strengthening of programs to teach traditional American history, civics, economics, geography, or government education;
- foreign language instruction;
- **environmental education; (boldface added for emphasis)**
- programs and activities that promote volunteerism and community involvement;
- programs and activities that support educational programs that integrate multiple disciplines, such as programs that combine arts and mathematics; or
- other activities and programs to support student access to, and success in, a variety of well-rounded education experiences.

## **SEC. 4109. ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY.**

1. **USES OF FUNDS.**—Subject to section 4106(f), each local educational agency, or consortium of such agencies, that receives an allocation under section 4015(a) shall use a portion of such funds to improve the use of technology to improve the academic achievement, academic growth, and digital literacy of all students, including by meeting the needs of such agency or consortium that are identified in the needs assessment conducted under section 4106(d) (if applicable), which may include—
  - a. providing educators, school leaders, and administrators with the professional learning tools, devices, content, and resources to—
    - personalize learning to improve student academic achievement;
    - discover, adapt, and share relevant high-quality educational resources;

- use technology effectively in the classroom, including by administering computer-based assessments and blended learning strategies; and
  - implement and support school- and district-wide approaches for using technology to inform instruction, support teacher collaboration, and personalize learning;
- b. building technological capacity and infrastructure, which may include—
- procuring content and ensuring content quality; and
  - purchasing devices, equipment, and software applications in order to address readiness shortfalls;
- c. developing or using effective or innovative strategies for the delivery of specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology;
- d. carrying out blended learning projects, which shall include—
- planning activities, which may include development of new instructional models (including blended learning technology software and platforms), the purchase of digital instructional resources, initial professional development activities, and one-time information technology purchases, except that such expenditures may not include expenditures related to significant construction or renovation of facilities; or
  - ongoing professional development for teachers, principals, other school leaders, or other personnel involved in the project that is designed to support the implementation and academic success of the project;
- e. providing professional development in the use of technology (which may be provided through partnerships with outside organizations) to enable teachers and instructional leaders to increase student achievement in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including computer science; and
- f. providing students in rural, remote, and underserved areas with the resources to take advantage of high-quality digital learning experiences, digital resources, and access to online courses taught by effective educators.

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***SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.***

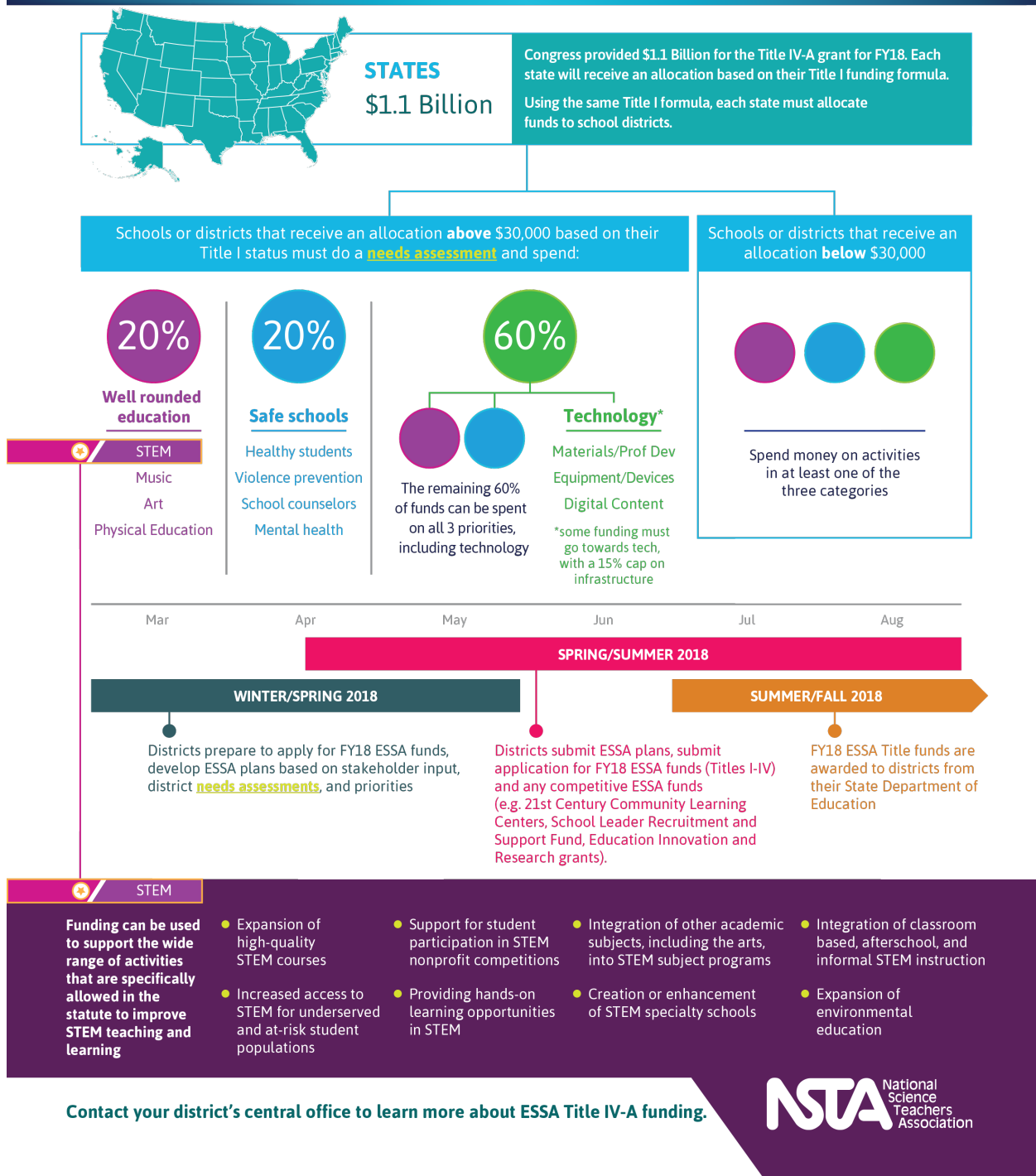
***Funds made available under this subpart shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-Federal funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under this subpart.***

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## C. Distribution and Eligibility of Funds

### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Title IV-A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants and Science/STEM Education



## District Level

Any school district that receives an allocation **\$30,000 or more**:

- must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that includes each of the content areas of Title IV as listed above;
- must engage stakeholders for input;
- must prioritize the distribution of funds;
- must allocate no less than **20% on well-rounded education programs and activities**;
- must allocate no less than 20% on safe and healthy school programs and activities; and
- must allocate a portion of the remaining funds on the effective use of technology.

Districts may allocate more than 20% on well-rounded education and safe and healthy school programs and activities based on stakeholder input and priorities identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.

**Special Rule:** *No more than 15% of the portion allocated for the effective use of technology can be used on technology infrastructure (devices, equipment, software, and digital content).*

A school district that receives an allocation of **less than \$30,000**:

- **is not required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment**;
- must prioritize the distribution of funds; and
- must allocate funds in at least one of the content areas (well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, or the effective use of technology).

**Special Rule:** If funds are allocated on the effective use of technology, *no more than 15% of that portion can be used on technology infrastructure (devices, equipment, software, and digital content).*

**Note:** Title IV-A funds are applied for by the district, not by a school site. The funds are distributed based on the needs assessment and/or priorities set by the district in its application process. A non-Title I school may receive Title IV-A funds if identified as a priority during the application process.

### **Appropriation versus authorization**

*Remember that programs are authorized (or estimated) for a said amount, but the final line is how much is appropriated, 'actual' or allocated.*

*State tables by program and State tables by State are available [here](#). Information on how much a local school district receives may be available through the SEAs website, but probably more readily available through the local federal programs manager in the school district.*

*The authorization or estimate for Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment is triple in 2018 what it was in 2017.*

## D. Local School District Application - What is a ‘Comprehensive Needs Assessment?’

Title IV, Part A requires LEAs implement a process to ensure student academic achievement. That process includes district assessment, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating. LEAs that receive \$30,000 or more must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment; however, all districts may use an assessment to identify barriers that prohibit students’ access to a well-rounded curriculum, which includes music education.

LEAs may use a tool to inform the development of a local improvement plan that identifies the LEA’s prioritized needs. LEAs may use district improvement plans, campus improvement plans, state priorities, and stakeholder and community input. Each can be used to validate a program or activity that supports a well-rounded education.

Upon the submission of the district’s application, the state will review the application to ensure the application is aligned to the purpose of Title IV, Part A. The proposed activities must be consistent with the three areas of the SSAE program, be prioritized, and be considered an allowable activity of Title IV, Part A. Allowable use of funds must meet the federal statutory requirements, regulations, provisions and assurances, as well as, state and local laws, rules, provisions, and guidelines related to the use of federal grants.

Once the application is approved, the LEA will receive the funds and implement the plan. **At least once every three years**, districts receiving \$30,000 or more must reevaluate the outcomes and repeat the needs assessment process, and districts are encouraged to evaluate whether the activities they have funded with this program annually are succeeding in meeting the needs identified and prioritized for the students in their schools.

## E. Assurances – The Prioritization of Funds

Although Title IV-A funds are not limited to support specific student populations or Title I schools, LEAs must fulfill legal requirements to ensure the distribution of funds is prioritized. A school district’s Title IV-A application must include detailed assurances that the district will prioritize distribution of funds to schools with the “greatest needs.” This is determined by the following criteria:

- Schools with the greatest needs, as defined by the school district or consortium, which can be through the required needs assessment and/or other prioritizing process (such as district or school improvement plans);
- Schools with the highest percentages or numbers of children receiving support under Title I, Part A;
- Schools that are implementing targeted support and improvement plans with consistently underperforming student subgroups; or
- Schools identified as persistently dangerous (elementary and secondary education), as defined by Sec. 8532 of ESEA.

## F. Advocating for Science Education through Title IV, Part A - Prioritizing Your Needs

Once you have conducted your needs assessment as outlined above, take time to prioritize the needs you have identified. You can do this program by program or by broad needs across the entire district. Focus on needs that address issues of equity and access for your district's students for Title IV, Part A funding requests, as that is at the heart of Congress' intent for these funds: how will these supplemental federal dollars allow more students, especially students who may have had barriers to access to music education, participate in quality science or STEM education programs in your district?

In addition, think about the range of possible funding sources that can be brought to bear on the needs identified. While Title IV-A represents a new funding opportunity, it will not be a pot of gold allowing science and all other well-rounded subject areas to have all that is currently lacking in their programs. Thus, what other funding sources might be available to you?

- Are you undertaking a curriculum review as a district, with the possibility of changing the schedule to allow more minutes for science instruction, especially in elementary grades?

## IV. Frequently Asked Questions

### A. Eligibility

**1. Can an individual educator apply for Title IV, Part A funds?**

No. Only school districts (LEAs) can receive for Title IV, Part A funds.

**2. How do rural school districts apply for Title IV, Part A funds?**

All eligible school districts may apply for Title IV, Part A funds. Eligible districts are not mandated to apply for Title IV, Part A. Rural school districts may REAP their Title IV, Part A funds to leverage the use of federal monies for all ESSA programs. To learn more, [click here](#).

**3. Are charter schools eligible to receive Title IV, Part A funds?**

In some states, open enrollment charter schools are the same as a local educational agency. Check with your State Educational Agency (SEA) to find out more about the rights of charter schools within the state and the local community.

**4. Are private schools eligible to receive Title IV, Part A funds?**

Federal statutory requirements, regulations, and guidelines are not the same for private non-profit (PNP) schools. LEAs must first consult with the PNP and determine the needs of the PNP. The PNP, if approved by the LEA, may receive equitable services to carry out programs and activities for Title IV, Part A; however, the LEA retains control of the funds. PNP cannot receive funds, only services.

**5. Can a local 501(c)3 non-profit apply for Title IV-A funds?**

**No, Title IV-A funds can only be allocated to SEAs to be distributed to LEAs. A 501(c)3 can help** provide and broaden access to science education should it choose to partner with the LEA to provide additional, supplemental science education activities or offerings to students,

such as after-school programming.

6. **How can I learn what funds have been allocated for my school district and how they are being spent?**

Contact your district's Title IV-A director, federal programs director, or science coordinator/curriculum supervisor.

7. **When do Title IV-A funds get released and when do school districts have to submit their applications?**

The Grant Award Notice (GAN) is available to states on July 1<sup>st</sup>, however, most states post a projected planning amount to LEAs to assist LEAs in planning the upcoming school year. The application deadline for the Title IV, Part A grant may vary from state to state. The best way to find out the deadline for your school district is to contact your district's Title IV-A director, federal programs director, or arts coordinator/curriculum supervisor.

8. **Is there a deadline to when a school district must spend their Title IV-A dollars?**

Yes. Districts have 24 months in which to spend their Title IV-A dollars. The dollars must be obligated by the end of the first year of the grant. If the grant has been obligated, the funds can then be rolled over, hence allowing the funds to be accessible for use for an additional 12 months. Title IV-A adheres to the Tydings Amendment, which allows the funds to be available for 2 years.

## **B. Allowable Use of Funds**

9. **How likely is it for a School District or state to spend their federal dollars on science or STEM education?**

The likelihood is completely dependent on your district's Title IV-A application, which is based off the comprehensive needs assessment results. Your district's needs assessment is meant to reveal deficiencies, which will then be translated into priorities for your district's Title IV allocation. This is why it is so important to have educators involved with the needs assessment process. It is one of the key moments where the law explicitly states the necessity to include parents, teachers, principals, and other school personnel during the development of its Title IV application.

10. **Do the requests have to be for new curricular programs, or can they be used to maintain, sustain, and/or build up existing programs?**

### Building up an existing program

As with most answers to federal funding questions, the first answer is, "It depends." Title IV-A funds can be used to build existing programs, **provided this is done in a "supplemental" manner**. This ties back to your district's comprehensive needs assessment and its overall prioritization of needs and to how building an existing program will help increase access to science or STEM education for students in your district. Remember that federal education dollars are meant to **supplement**, not supplant, existing dollars. These dollars cannot "replace" what your school district spends on music education already.

### Maintain or sustain an existing program

The use of federal dollars to maintain or sustain an existing program requires specific

documentation. In most instances, the deficiency or lack of funding due to local or state funds no longer in existence requires careful documenting so the request meets the supplemental test of federal funds. Please work with your federal programs director in your school district to learn more about what might be possible, and what guidelines your district has in place to make such a request if prioritized through your district's needs assessment process.

**11. Can Title IV-A be used to hire new educators?**

It depends. If found as a deficiency by your school district's comprehensive needs assessment, Title IV-A funds could be used to hire additional educators, specialists, or create partnerships with local community partners. However, like all federal funds, Title IV-A dollars must be used to supplement, not supplant (or replace) state and local dollars.

**12. Can Title IV-A funds be used for extended learning opportunities, such as field trips or competition participation?**

It depends. If the activity is curricular, extracurricular, or co-curricular, it may be supplanting. LEAs generally use a budget line code for curricula, extracurricular, or co-curricular programs and activities. Field trips will most likely require the approval of the Title IV, Part A state director or grant administration. Additional supporting documentation will most likely be needed to ensure the field trip meets federal regulations.

**13. What are the transferability provisions of Title IV, Part A? Are there dollar thresholds to transferability? Who makes that decision at the district level?**

Under Title IV, Part A, the LEA has the flexibility to transfer up to 100% of Title I, Part A to either Title I, Part A, C, or D, Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A or to Title V, Part B. When the funds are transferred to another federal program, the funds must then be used to support the purpose and intent of the program as well as follow the guidelines of the program. The decision to transfer funds is made by LEA leadership.

**14. How do I contact my state Title IV, Part A program director?**

[Click here.](#)

**15. My state's ESSA Plan indicates that Title IV-A funds will be devoted towards STEM education. What does this mean for music and other content areas of education?**

Keep in mind when reading your state's ESSA plan, your state is outlining how it intends to spend its state set aside or allocation of funds. Under Title IV-A, all states receive a minor portion for the administration and management of Title IV-A grants, as well as funds for state-level activities and priorities.

The state, however, cannot affect how school districts determine their spending. If receiving an allocation of \$30,000 or more, ESSA requires districts to spend 20% of their funds on a well-rounded education. In addition, districts must adhere to the findings of their needs assessment for their remaining dollars, which could lead to more spending for a well-rounded education that includes music, arts, etc.

**16. Are there other names for Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A?** Title II, Part A can be termed Preparing, Training and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals or as Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants. Title IV, Part A is listed on some spreadsheets as "Grants".

## C. Future Revisions and Funding Levels

### 17. Can we hope to see a similar amount (\$1.1 billion) allocated for Title IV-A past 2019?

Future funding depends on national priorities, the economy, and where the budget caps are set two years from now. That is why it is vital to demonstrate and provide Title IV success stories while we have increased funding in FY 2018 and FY 2019.

## V. Additional Resources

1. The National Science Teachers Association has a number of resources about ESSA, Title II and Title IV [here](#). Without a doubt, this is the first place to go, even before going to the US ED sites.
2. The National Association of School Psychologists have a useful [site](#). They have numerous short documents including an advocacy to do list and state ESSA plans and information (though somewhat dated).
3. The National Council of Teachers in Math (NCTM) has created an [ESSA Toolkit](#). This is largely for Title II, Part A.
4. The National Association for Music Education has a comprehensive [site](#) with many tools and lots of information about both Title II and Title IV.
5. The National Head Start Association also has a [toolkit](#).
6. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages has a toolkit with videos [here](#).