

Allowable Uses of Title II, Part A Funds

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) eliminates NCLB's definition of "core academic subjects" and includes the concept of a "well-rounded education," thus expanding the allowable use of Title II, Part A funds for professional development to a greater variety of activities and programs. Under ESSA, Title II, Part A funds can be used for subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the state or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience.

School districts can use Title II, Part A funds for a wide range of strategies and activities to support the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals and other school staff. Activities supported with Title II, Part A funds must be consistent with Title II, Part A's purpose and address the learning needs of all students, including children with disabilities, English learners, and gifted and talented students. Title II, Part A programs and activities may include:

“(A) developing or improving a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation and support system for teachers, principals, or other school leaders that—

“(i) is based in part on evidence of student achievement, which may include student growth; and

“(ii) 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—

“(i) expert help in screening candidates and enabling early hiring;

“(ii) 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;

“(iii) teacher, paraprofessional, principal, or other school leader advancement and professional growth, and an emphasis on leadership opportunities, multiple career paths, and pay differentiation;

“(iv) new teacher, principal, or other school leader induction and mentoring programs that are designed to—

“(I) improve classroom instruction and student learning and achievement; and

“(II) increase the retention of effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders;

“(v) 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

“(vi) 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—

“(i) effectively integrate technology into curricula and instruction (including education about the harms of copyright piracy);

“(ii) 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;

“(iii) effectively engage parents, families, and community partners, and coordinate services between school and community;

“(iv) help all students develop the skills essential for learning readiness and academic success;

“(v) develop policy with school, local educational agency, community, or State leaders; and

- “(vi) 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—
 - “(i) 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
 - “(ii) 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—
 - “(i) 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;
 - “(ii) 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;
 - “(iii) forming partnerships between school-based mental health programs and public or private mental health organizations; and
 - “(iv) 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—
 - “(i) early entrance to kindergarten;
 - “(ii) enrichment, acceleration, and curriculum compacting activities; and
 - “(iii) 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 Title II, Part A.