

Title IV Summary

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015



Overview

The purpose of Title IV is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, local educational agencies, schools and local communities to provide all students with access to a well-rounded education and to improve school conditions for student learning. Only a few Title IV programs from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act/No Child Left Behind Act (ESEA/NCLB) were included as standalone programs in Title IV of the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The inclusion of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) as a standalone competitive grant program in Part E of Title IV is significantly important to PTA's mission.

ESSA divides Title IV into six parts which include:

1. Family Engagement in Education Programs
2. Student Support and Academic Enhancement Grants
3. 21st Century Community Learning Centers
4. National Activities
5. Expanding Opportunities Through Quality Charter Schools
6. Magnet Schools Assistance

The following sections are a brief description of the federal programs included in Title IV of ESSA.

Family Engagement in Education Programs

The inclusion of Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) as a standalone program in Title IV of ESSA is of great significance to the PTA. For years, PTA members and families nationwide have been advocating for the prioritization of family engagement, as it is critical to student success and school improvement efforts. SFECs are a reauthorized and improved form of the Parental Information and Resources Centers (PIRC) program in ESEA/NCLB. The SFECs program is a competitive grant that focuses on providing much-needed technical assistance and partnership development for states and school districts to better support schools and educators in engaging with families to further the academic and developmental progress of their children. The SFECs will help to implement more evidence-based approaches to family engagement in schools and will help build capacity across states to support student achievement and positive outcomes.

In order to support family engagement at the state and district levels, SFECs must be funded by Congress each year. A key priority for PTA is securing federal investment in the SFEC program to

make sure families are always being considered in the policies and practices affecting education and children. National PTA is calling on Congress to adequately fund the program for fiscal year 2017. If funded, applications for these competitive grants can be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by state education agencies, local education agencies, nonprofit organizations or a consortium of state groups.

Student Support and Academic Enhancement Grants

This section of Title IV was created as a new flexible block grant and combines many individually funded programs from ESEA/NCLB into one large fund—typically called a block grant—under ESSA. The block grant allows local education agencies (LEAs) to decide how to use the allocated monies to fund certain programs that their schools may need. In order to receive funding for the Student Support and Academic Enhancement Grants, state education agencies (SEAs) need to submit a state plan to the U.S. Secretary of Education for review and approval. If approved, each state receives a funding allocation based on the proportion of funding that states receive under Title I. Each state receiving Title IV allocations will then re-allocate Title IV funding to LEAs using the same proportion of funding provided to schools in Title I. The funds allocated to LEAs in this section are to be used for three specific areas. Examples of the use of funds for each area are listed below.

- Well-rounded educational experiences
 - Accelerated learning courses (i.e., Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs)
 - College and career guidance and counseling programs
 - Science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses (STEM), including computer science
 - Foreign language courses
 - Music and art programs
 - Programs to teach American history, civics, economics, geography and government
- Foster safe, healthy, supportive and drug-free environments
 - Bullying prevention programs
 - Drug and violence prevention programs
 - Plans to reduce exclusionary discipline practices (Youth PROMISE)

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- Resources for school-based counseling and mental health programs (including early identification and intervention programs)
- Health and safety practices
- High-quality training for school personnel on suicide prevention, school-based violence, trauma, crisis management and conflict resolution
- Physical and sexual abuse awareness and prevention
- Schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports
- Increase access to personalized learning experiences through the use of technology
 - Support and train teachers and school personnel on effectively using data to improve the instructional experience
 - Address technology access and readiness needs
 - Develop specialized and rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology
 - Implement personalized learning and blended learning opportunities
 - Purchase devices, equipment, software applications and digital instructional resources

LEAs that receives a formula allocation above \$30,000 must conduct a needs assessment once every three years to determine the greatest area of need in the three categories. In addition, LEAs that receive an allocation of more than \$30,000 must reserve 20% of their funding for well-rounded education programs and 20% of their funding for safe and healthy school programs. The remaining percentage of funds may be used for technology, personalized learning, professional development or any of the other programs listed. However, no LEA shall use more than 15% of their grant for purchasing technology infrastructure (devices, software, etc.).

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program provides grants to LEAs and community learning centers to offer academic enrichment activities for students in low performing schools during non-school hours or when school is not in session (before and after school and during summer break). The 21st CCLC program is a reauthorized program from ESEA/NCLB with some additional uses for the funds. In ESSA, 21st CCLC funds can be used for expanded learning activities before, during or after the school day in cases where at least 300

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hours are added during the school year and do not take the place of regular school day requirements. Local grant recipients may also use the funding to offer programs to promote family engagement, family literacy, tutoring services, well-rounded education opportunities, mentoring programs and healthy and active lifestyles programs, among other programs.

National Activities

Many of the national activities listed in ESSA that may receive competitive grants from the U.S. Secretary of Education are reauthorized and consolidated programs from Title V in ESEA/NCLB. The following competitive grants are available to SEAs, LEAs, nonprofit organizations or a consortium of groups.

- Education Innovation and Research grants are awarded to create, develop and implement evidence-based innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students
- Promise Neighborhoods and Full Service Community Schools grants are awarded to offer services and improve the academic and developmental outcomes for children and families living in distressed communities
- Project School Emergency Response to Violence program (Project SERV) grants are awarded to strengthen violence prevention activities as part of the activities designed to restore the equilibrium of a learning environment that was disrupted by a violent or traumatic crisis at a school
- Academic Enrichment grants are awarded to support arts education programming and digital content for preschool and elementary school classrooms (such as Ready To Learn Programming), as well as support high-ability learners and learning (also known as the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program)

Charter Schools and Magnet Schools

The charter school grants program and the Magnet Schools Assistance programs were part of Title V in ESEA/NCLB—both programs are now standalone programs in Title IV of ESSA. The charter school program is a competitive grant program that awards grants to state entities and subgrants to local entities to open, expand or improve high-quality charter schools. The Magnet School Assistance program provides competitive grants to eligible LEAs to develop and design innovative education methods and practices that promote diversity and increase choices in public education programs.

Questions

If you have questions about this memorandum or Title IV in general, please contact Joshua Westfall, government affairs manager at jwestfall@PTA.org or (703) 518-1249.