

## **Title IV, Part A of the *Every Student Succeeds Act*: Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants**

### **Description**

The bipartisan *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program under Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants (SSAEG) which is authorized at \$1.65 billion in FY 2017. Title IV, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:

- 1) Providing students with a well-rounded education (e.g., college and career counseling, STEM, music and arts, civics, IB/AP)
- 2) Supporting safe and healthy students (e.g., comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education) and
- 3) Supporting the effective use of technology (professional development, blended learning, devices).

### **Distribution of Funds**

Each state will receive an allocation based on the Title I funding formula. Using the same Title I formula, the states will then allocate funds to school districts.

Any school district that receives a formula allocation above \$30,000 must conduct a needs assessment and then must expend 20% of its grant on safe and healthy school activities and 20% on activities to provide a well-rounded education programs. The remaining 60% of the money can be spent on all three priorities, including technology. However, there is a 15% cap on devices, equipment, software, and digital content.

If a district receives an allocation below \$30,000, the law does not require a needs assessment or setting aside percentages for well-rounded and safe and healthy students programs. It must spend money on activities in at least one of the three categories. The 15% technology purchase cap would continue to apply.

### **The FY17 Budget Request**

The Senate's FY 2017 LHHS-Ed appropriations bill would provide \$300 million for the Title IV, A block grant while the House's allocation would provide \$1 billion, both falling far short of the authorized level. If Congress decides to fund Title IV, Part A below the authorized level, our nation's school districts will face tough choices in deciding which important SSAEG program areas merit investment - safe and healthy school programs, well-rounded curriculum development, or the effective use of technology. No matter how schools make this decision, critical program areas will face limited investments - or none at all - shortchanging our students, educators, and communities in significant ways.

Since the SSAEG program is the third largest authorized program in ESSA, failing to adequately fund it would undermine the bipartisan congressional intent included in this important law.

The FY17 Continuing Resolution that funds government programs through April 28, 2017 does not address any of the changes made to education programs through ESSA. It is essential to fully fund Title IV, Part A in any appropriations legislation for the remainder of FY17 and for FY18.

### **Program Funding Need**

Strong evidence demonstrates the need for students to have access to programs that meet their comprehensive needs, including their mental and physical health and safety and providing a challenging learning environment that effectively uses technology.

- Evidence supports a direct correlation between physical and mental health and learning that is essential to academic success, school completion, and the development of healthy, resilient, and productive citizens. Schools are uniquely positioned to promote student engagement and help them acquire life-long knowledge and skills through comprehensive health education, physical education, nutrition, comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services, counseling, and integration among all education and health programs.
- In order to prepare all students for success in school and in life, they need access to a well-rounded and challenging curriculum. Funds through the block grant will help schools expand music, art, STEM, computer science, accelerated learning, history, and civics courses, as well as expand access to college and career guidance and counseling.
- Federal investments in education technology ensure schools have technology-proficient educators, well equipped classrooms, sufficiently supported administrative structures, and a curriculum optimized to take advantage of the benefits technology offers to all students – such as closing the opportunity and learning gaps and providing students with essential modern workforce skills.

Given the elimination through ESSA of numerous programs that support the overall health and safety of students, the investments in education technology, as well as helping districts ensure access to a well-rounded education, a robust federal investment in support of these programs is absolutely essential through Title IV, Part A. Without a significant investment in Title IV, Part A, districts will be forced into choosing which of the priorities to invest in, even though an ample investment in all three is necessary to providing students with a comprehensive education.

For further information, or if any questions arise, please contact any member of the Title IV, Part A Coalition Steering Committee listed below.

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