

## **Title IV, Part A of ESSA: Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants**

The newly enacted bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program under Title IV Part A, which is authorized at \$1.65 billion in FY 2017. The Title IV Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants -- the third largest authorized program in ESSA-- combines (and eliminates) several targeted programs under No Child Left Behind, including the Math and Science Partnership Grants. The Math and Science Partnership grants, which received \$152.7M in FY2016, was the largest single program at the Department devoted exclusively to STEM-related purposes. Title IV, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:

- 1) Providing students with programs that ensure a **well-rounded education** (programs in STEM, college and career counseling, arts, civics, and access to IB/AP);
- 2) Supporting **safe and healthy** students (e.g. comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, health and physical education); and
- 3) Supporting the effective use of **technology** (professional development, blended learning, and devices).

### **Distribution of Title IV, Part A Grant 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 must expend **20 percent of its grant on safe and healthy school activities** and **20 percent on activities to provide a well-rounded education. The remaining 60 percent of the money can be spent on all three priorities, including technology.** However, there is a 15 percent 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 percent technology purchase cap would continue to apply.

### **Title IV Part A STEM Activities**

Districts can use Title IV Part A grants to provide students with a well-rounded education and improve instruction and student engagement in STEM by:

- Expanding high-quality STEM courses;
- Increasing access to STEM for underserved and at risk student populations;
- Supporting the participation of students in STEM nonprofit competitions (such as robotics, science research, invention, mathematics, computer science, and technology competitions);
- Providing hands-on learning opportunities in STEM;
- Integrating other academic subjects, including the arts, into STEM subject programs;
- Creating or enhancing STEM specialty schools;
- Integrating classroom based and afterschool and informal STEM instruction; and

- Expanding environmental education.

### **Appropriations for ESSA Title IV A**

The President requested \$500 million for the Title IV A flexible block in the Administration’s FY 2017 budget proposal, less than one-third of the authorized \$1.65 billion level. (The Administration also requested to include language in the appropriations bill that would allow states to distribute \$50,000 per year to districts on a competitive basis and would allow states to limit their spending to just one of the three listed priorities, or specific activities within one of the priorities.)

To date, the Senate Appropriations Committee has proposed funding of only \$300 million for the ESSA Title IVA, while the House-proposed spending level for this program is \$1billion. Both are far short of the \$1.65 billion authorized level in ESSA.

Since the Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants program is the third largest authorized program in ESSA, failing to adequately fund it will undermine the bipartisan Congressional intent in passing this important law.

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.

### **The Need to Adequately Fund ESSA Title IV and STEM Education**

K-12 STEM programs will have an impact on our nation’s economic future. In the past few years, U.S. businesses have voiced vocal concerns over the supply and availability of STEM workers. Growth in STEM jobs was three times as fast as growth in non-STEM jobs in the past 10 years, and at all levels of educational attainment, STEM job holders earn 11 percent higher wages compared with their same-degree counterparts in other jobs.

**Full funding of the ESSA Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enhancement Grants at the authorized level of \$1.65 billion would support state-led efforts to promote hands on STEM learning, STEM specialty schools, integration of informal and formal STEM programs, and computer science instruction.**

<b>Program</b>	<b>FY2016 Funding Level</b>	<b>Authorized Funding Level in ESSA</b>	<b>POTUS FY2017 Request</b>	<b>House FY2017 Bill</b>	<b>Senate FY 2017 Bill</b>
ESSA Title IV Student Support and Enrichment Grants	n/a	\$1.65 billion	\$500 million	\$1 billion	\$300 million