



A Union of Professionals

Every Student Succeeds Act

A New Day in Public Education

Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act and Teachers

The reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as No Child Left Behind and now officially known as the Every Student Succeeds Act, is a long-overdue reset of the federal role in education policy. ESSA paves the way for a public education system that's much more focused on teaching and learning, and that gives states and educators more latitude while maintaining federal funds for the students who need it most. While not perfect, there have been tremendous gains in this overhaul.

This is an opportunity for states to reshape their education systems. It will not happen overnight, but without federal prescriptions on exactly what accountability, interventions for struggling schools, and teacher evaluation must look like, there is a path forward for states to reset these systems.

Specifically, Title II of ESSA remains focused on grant funding to be used to increase student achievement while increasing quality and access to effective teachers, principals and other school leaders.

Title II, Part A—Supporting Effective Instruction

Title II, Part A, is the main source of funding that is distributed to states and then to districts based on a formula grant. Under ESSA, the state formula grant will now give more weight to the number of children in poverty than to the overall number of children in the state, and it will be implemented gradually over a multiyear period.

Resources will be provided to states and school districts to implement activities to support teachers, paraprofessionals, principals and other educators. Title II, Part A, maintains a broad focus on making funds available for professional development, professional growth and leadership opportunities for paraprofessionals and teachers. Specific language says that a state can use funds for centers on induction, mentoring, career pathways and recruiting a diverse teacher workforce.

Title II, Part A:

- **Ends federally mandated evaluations.** ESSA ends the federal mandate on teacher evaluations. States will be allowed to develop, improve and implement teacher evaluation systems, so long as they consult with stakeholders including teachers, paraprofessionals and their unions. But whether and how they do so is not a condition of getting funding as it was with Race to the Top and waivers.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.6 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Lorretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO • 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W. • Washington, DC 20001 • 202-879-4400 • www.aft.org



- **Protects collective bargaining.** ESSA provides that no program funded through Title II can overturn existing collective bargaining agreements or memoranda of understanding. The collective bargaining clause in Title I was also maintained.
- **Requires consultation with teachers.** States and districts now must consult with stakeholders, including educators, in their plans for the use of Title II funds. Through strong labor-management relationships, union and school leaders can drive teacher quality and advance student and school improvement. All stakeholders—educators, union leaders, administrators, policymakers, parents and the broader community—can and should work together and be held collectively responsible for our education system.
- **Allows collaboration on teacher licensure standards.** States would be allowed to use Title II funds to voluntarily develop, as a consortium, a process that allows teachers who are licensed or certified in a participating state to teach in another participating state without completing additional licensure or certification requirements. With shifting demographics and teacher shortages, this language has the potential to make it easier for districts to recruit and hire certified veteran teachers in neighboring states.
- **Supports efforts to improve teaching and learning conditions.** ESSA allows districts to use Title II funds to conduct and publicly report on an assessment of educator support and working conditions. While the conditions will not change immediately, this report can offer sensible idea recommendations and a path to reducing stress at school and helping educators better focus on their primary responsibility of helping all students reach their potential.

Title II, Part B—National Activities

Title II, Part B, specifically authorizes several activities and grant programs, including:

- **Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program**
(currently referred to as the Teacher Incentive Fund)
This competitive grant program allows states, districts or a partnership to apply as a way to address performance-based compensation systems. The program is not mandatory.
- **Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN)**
The purpose of these grants is to improve student academic achievement in reading and writing by helping states develop, revise or update comprehensive literacy instruction plans.
- **American History and Civics Education**
The goal of this program is to improve the quality of American history, civics and government education by educating students about the history and principles of the Constitution.
- **Programs of national significance**, which include four subgrants:
 - **Supporting Effective Educator Development**
SEED grants are competitive grants to improve preparation and professional development of teachers, principals and other school leaders by implementing evidence-based activities.
 - **School Leader Recruitment and Support**
 - **Technical Assistance and National Evaluation**
 - **STEM Master Teacher Corps**
The goal is to use state grants to elevate the status of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics teaching profession by retaining outstanding teachers in these fields as well as supporting the implementation, replication or expansion of effective professional development programs in these fields.