

THIS IS TITLE IV-A

Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants Education Technology Provisions

Description

The bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program under Title IV, Part A (Title IV-A), which is authorized at \$1.6 billion through FY 2021. Title IV-A, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:

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

Current Funding Level

\$1.17 billion

Supporting Technology Needs

In order to meet the increasing demands to effectively use educational technology in classrooms and the need for professional development, Title IV-A should receive maximum funding so that districts can adequately support the growth and expansion of digital learning in classrooms. Such an investment is necessary to create a competitive workforce, technology-proficient educators, well-equipped classrooms, sufficiently supported administrative structures, and a curriculum optimized to take advantage of the benefits technology offers to students. It is crucial that the federal government continues to invest in these key components of digital teaching and learning as schools cannot afford to make these significant investments alone.

The use of technology has opened a wide array of exciting learning avenues in classrooms—from streaming educational videos to 3D printing to hands-on-robotics. Teachers no longer stand statically in front of a chalkboard and lecture. Instead they cultivate digital resources and foster creativity by utilizing a plethora of learning devices that engage students in all aspects of learning. Rather than learning solely from their desks, students use technology to collaborate to solve real-world problems, collectively analyze and use data to create advanced science models, and sharpen their 21st Century workforce skills. Maximum funding of Title IV-A would ensure the federal government prioritizes support for the shift to modern classrooms and that all students, regardless of where they live, have the opportunity to engage in digital learning. While the program does not require a specific portion of funds to be used on technology, at least some money must be spent on the effective use of technology activities, including but not limited to:

- Instructional support for technology
- Blended learning strategies
- Personalized learning
- Securing open and free resources
- Specialized professional development opportunities
- Hiring IT and edtech coaches

The program also restricts school districts to using no more than 15% of their allocations for devices, software, equipment and infrastructure.

How are districts using the funding?

Of the 652 Districts Surveyed:

- 54.6% - Teacher professional development
- 44.3% - Blended learning strategies
- 42.3% - Digital devices
- 36.7% - Personalized learning

What Educators Are Saying:

“Our district was able to use Title IV-A funds for various edtech professional development opportunities, which are critical to ensuring educators can effectively incorporate technology into all aspects of learning.”

-Ben Lewis, Technology Coordinator,
Dickson County Schools, TN

“The SSAE grant program, if fully funded, has the potential to improve the lives of our educators and students by strengthening the opportunities to incorporate various technologies into classrooms that support personalized and blended learning to provide a brighter future for all students, no matter where they live.”

-Pete Just, Chief Operations &
Technology Officer, MSD of Wayne
Township, Indianapolis, IN

“Our educators support full funding of Title IV-A so that states and districts can adequately invest in education technology initiatives and technology professional development for educators. The School District of Janesville uses these funds to provide robust professional development and training for teachers that enhances the way technology is used in the classroom to successfully engage students and advance student learning.”

-The Wisconsin Educational Media
Technology Association