



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015

Background

When the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* was passed in 1965, it committed new funding to education to ensure equitable access to educational resources and opportunities for all students. The Act, then and now, provides requirements that states and schools districts must follow to qualify for funds. Most of the funds flow through the state, to school districts, and then to schools to spend on students.

Every several years, Congress reauthorizes *ESEA* (i.e. it sets new changes to the law). *No Child Left Behind* in 2001, and *Every Student Succeeds Act* or *ESSA* in 2015 are the Acts that most recently reauthorized *ESEA*. Through the reauthorization, the way funding is distributed to states and school districts and the activities that may be paid for with those funds are subject to change. This document highlights some of the major aspects of *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA*. While this document provides a helpful overview, readers should reference the federal law for the most accurate information.

Major School District Funding Streams Reauthorized in *ESSA*

	Purpose	How are these funds distributed to schools ¹ and school districts?	How may the funds be used? <i>(see law for full list of uses)</i>
Title I, Part A Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies	Provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps	Funds are distributed based on the number and percentage of students ages 5-17 living below the poverty line in a given school district	School districts must use these funds to serve schools with high concentrations of low-income students; in those schools, funds must be used to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A schoolwide program which may meet the identified need(s) of all students²; or • A targeted assistance program to meet the identified need(s) of a subset of at-risk students
Title II, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of educators who are effective in improving student achievement • Provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of the state’s allocation is distributed based on the number of students living below the poverty line in a school district • 20% of the allocation is distributed based on total student population in a school district 	Funds are meant to be used to increase equitable access to effective educators and may be used to support a wide variety of activities and programs designed to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator recruitment and retention • Educator preparation, certification and induction • Educator evaluation and professional growth
Title III, Part A English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the academic achievement of English learners and immigrant children • Help ensure English learners (ELs) become proficient in English 	There are two pots of funds: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One distributed based on the number of students in the district who are ELs* 2. One distributed based on the number of students in the district who are immigrant children <p>*For EL funds only, a school district must be eligible for or combine funds with other school districts to reach at least \$10,000 to accept funds to support English learners</p>	Funds must be used to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development for teachers to improve the instruction and assessment of ELs Funds may be used to support various activities and programs that provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental language and/or academic opportunities (including coursework for college credit and career-technical education) for ELs and/or immigrant students

¹ Note: traditional public, charter, renaissance, and non-public schools may be eligible for *ESEA* funds.

² A school or district must have at least 40% of students living below the poverty line or receive a state waiver in order to be eligible to run a schoolwide program (see *Section 1114(a)(1)(A) of ESSA*).



Major School District Funding Streams Reauthorized in ESSA (continued)

	Purpose	How are these funds distributed?	How may the funds be used? <i>(see law for full list of uses)</i>
Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants	Improve academic achievement by increasing the capacity of schools and districts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to a well-rounded education; • Improve school conditions for learning; and • Improve digital literacy 	If a school district qualifies for Title I, Part A funds, it also qualifies for Title IV, Part A funds A school district must be eligible for or combine funds with other school districts to reach at least \$10,000 to accept these funds	Funds may be used on a wide variety of activities and programs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College and career guidance and counseling programs • Drug and violence prevention • School-based mental health services • Building technological capacity and infrastructure, including purchasing devices • Blended learning projects that use traditional and web-based instruction • Preventing bullying and harassment
Some school districts/organizations are eligible for or may compete for additional funds, which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I, Part D-Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk • Title IV, Part B-21st Century Community Learning Centers • Title V, Part B, Subpart 1-Small Rural School Achievement Program • Title V, Part B, Subpart 2-Rural and Low-Income School Program • Title VII-Impact Aid • Title IX-Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program 			

Some Key Requirements for States Established or Reauthorized in ESSA

	Requirement				
Stakeholder Engagement	States, schools, and school districts must consult with a wide variety of stakeholders (including teachers, administrators, parents, community members and more) regarding how to carry out the requirements of <i>ESEA</i> and how to spend the funds it receives under the law.				
Reporting	States must make public annual reports on school performance, which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic measures, including performance and growth on state tests • Graduation rates for high schools • Per-pupil expenditures • School quality measures, including suspension, expulsion, and violent incident rates • Post-secondary enrollment data 				
Accountability	States must establish a system to measure school performance that allows for the meaningful differentiation of schools each year. Indicators in the system must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic achievement (proficiency) • Academic progress (growth or another measure) • Graduation rates (high schools only) • Progress toward English language proficiency • At least one other student success or school-climate indicator 				
Intervention	States must identify and require school improvement plans to be implemented in, at the minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lowest performing 5% of Title I eligible schools, based on the state accountability system; • High schools failing to graduate a third or more of students; and • Any school with a consistently underperforming subgroup, as defined by the state. 				
Assessment	States must test all students in the following grades and subjects: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Math and English Language Arts:</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Science:</td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of grades 3-8 • Once in grades 9-12 </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once in grades 3-5 • Once in grades 6-9 • Once in grades 10-12 </td> </tr> </table>	Math and English Language Arts:	Science:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of grades 3-8 • Once in grades 9-12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once in grades 3-5 • Once in grades 6-9 • Once in grades 10-12
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English Language Learners	States must ensure the English proficiency of English learners is tested each year and that English learners are making progress toward attaining English proficiency.				