

# EXERCISE THEIR MINDS™ PROTECT PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

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

### Supplemental Information for FY2017

I understand that for FY 2017, states could have a competitive application process across school districts for SSAE grant funds. How does this work?

While ESSA authorized SSAE grants at \$1.65 billion, Congressional appropriators only funded the program at \$400 million for FY17, the first year of funding. Funding this program at less than 25 percent of its authorized level has presented distribution issues, given the minimum threshold included in the statute. Thus, as part of the FY17 funding stipulations, appropriators modified how the states were allowed to allocate funds to districts, allowing competitive grants in order to give at least a handful of districts the opportunity to make meaningful investments in SSAE programs. Many districts will not receive the statutory minimums under ESSA and some will receive no funding at all due to this extremely low funding level. States interested in this option have until September 30, 2018, to distribute such funds.

SSAE funds must continue to be distributed to districts (or consortia of districts) across the same three priority activity areas: well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and technology. States interested in distributing funds via competition are required to:

- distribute one-year grants to local education agencies (LEAs) with the greatest need, in a manner that ensures geographic diversity and with a minimum grant award of \$10,000;
- maintain the set-aside requirements to ensure that on a statewide basis, at least 20 percent of funds are distributed to grantees for well-rounded education programs, 20 percent for safe and healthy programs, and the remaining 60 percent to support any of the three priority areas (individual LEA grantees do not have to fund each of the three activity areas under this competitive approach);
- ensure that grantees use no more than 25 percent of funding to purchase technology infrastructure; and
- require LEAs to complete a needs assessment as part of the application process.

How can physical education programs in my state benefit from Title IV, Part A?

Some states are still making decisions about whether to allocate their Title IV, Part A funds using the Title I formula or if they should run a competition across school districts to distribute these funds. Either way, the minimum award to districts must be \$10,000.

If states choose to allocate their funds using a formula, they can use the five percent of the Title IV, Part A dollars that stay with the state to provide matching grants to school districts for specific programs or priorities that the state designates, to provide professional development to districts and/or technical assistance to them on their Title IV, Part A programs.

If they choose to run a competition, they must maintain the integrity of the three priority activity areas, but they can put a priority on certain program areas within those three areas. States can choose to accept or reject school districts applications for funding based on whether they align with the state priority areas.

In both situations, it is critical to advocate to the state department of education about the importance of using a portion of the Title IV, Part A funds for physical education programs. State departments of education receive their allocation of funding from the federal government and are responsible for distributing those funds to school districts. The role or title of the person responsible for distributing these funds varies state by state. Critical stakeholders at the state level include: state superintendent of education, state board of education, state ESSA committees, state title funding coordinators, state department of education physical education specialists, state department of education curriculum specialists/coordinators.