

# Title II, Part A

## Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants



Technical Assistance Document

### PURPOSE OF TITLE II, PART A PROGRAM FUNDS

The purpose of Title II, Part A is to provide grants to State educational agencies and subgrants to local educational agencies to:

- increase student achievement consistent with the challenging State academic standards,
- improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders, increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools,
- and provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

### PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is designed to provide an overview of the purpose and appropriate uses of Title II, Part A funding while providing guidance regarding considerations related to other provisions in the laws impacting LEA and school use of Title II, Part A funds.

For more information related to Title II, Part A, please refer to the following federal sites and documents:

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Homepage (<https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>)
- Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants – Title II, Part A Homepage (<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/instruction-state-grants-title-ii-part-a/>)
- Non-Regulatory Guidance for Title II, Part A (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiipartaguidance.pdf>)
- Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, Non-Regulatory Guidance (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.pdf#a=>)
- Non-Regulatory Guidance: Fiscal Changes and Equitable Services Requirements Under ESSA (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaguidance160477.pdf>).

## AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Applications for Title II, Part A funds must be completed in November of each calendar year. Awarded funds are then available on a 27-month cycle beginning on July 1 of that calendar year. For example, LEAs apply for fiscal year 2023 funds in November 2022 and may seek reimbursement on those funds for expenses incurred between July 2022 and September 2024.

## APPLYING FOR FUNDS

To receive funds, LEAs must complete and submit application materials in a timely fashion and view the *Title II, Part A Overview* video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQ-UCeftAA>) Applications should be completed after LEAs have engaged in meaningful consultation with and sought advice from teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, instructional support personnel, parents, and community partners regarding how to best use the funds to meet identified purposes.

The USBE-provided application template provided online at <https://www.schools.utah.gov/eseastateinitiatives/buildingsystems?mid=5574&tid=1> must be completed and submitted as an attachment in the Utah Grants Management System when LEAs accept their designated award. In conjunction with federal requirements, the application template requires that LEAs:

- Describe the activities the funds will be used for and how the activities align with challenging academic standards,
- Describe LEA systems of professional growth and improvement,
- Describe how the LEA will prioritize funds to schools to ensure targeted support and improvement in schools with highest percentages of students,
- Describe how the LEA will use data and ongoing consultation to continuously update and improve funded activities,
- Assure compliance with equitable access provisions for private school students within the LEA boundaries, and
- Assure that funded professional development activities are coordinated with other professional development activities being provided.

## ALLOWABLE USE OF LOCAL FUNDS

The Title II, Part A program offers an LEA the flexibility to design and implement a wide variety of activities designed to promote development of a highly qualified staff who are capable of supporting all students in achieving at high levels. Funds may also be used to provide school principals with necessary knowledge and skills for effective leadership.

The following are specifically authorized in the statute, but do not represent an exhaustive list of acceptable uses:

- Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist schools to effectively recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, principals, and specialists in core academic areas.
- Developing and implementing strategies and activities to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified teachers and principals. This may include:
  - monetary incentives (e.g., scholarships, signing bonuses, or differential pay) for teachers in academic subjects or schools where the LEA has shortages,
  - reducing class size,
  - recruiting teachers to teach special needs children, including students with disabilities, and
  - recruiting qualified paraprofessionals and teachers from populations underrepresented in the teaching profession and providing those paraprofessionals with alternate routes to obtaining teacher certification.
- Providing professional development activities that improve the knowledge of teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, regarding effective instructional practices that:
  - Involve collaborative groups of teachers and administrators;
  - Address the needs of students with different learning styles, particularly students with disabilities, students with special needs (including students who are gifted and talented), and students with limited English proficiency;
  - Provide training in improving student behavior in the classroom and identifying early and appropriate interventions to help students with special needs;
  - Provide training to enable teachers and principals to involve parents in their children's education, especially parents of limited English proficient and immigrant children, and
  - Provide training on how to use data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning.

- Developing and implementing initiatives to promote retention of highly qualified teachers and principals, particularly in schools with a high percentage of low-achieving students, including programs that provide teacher mentoring from exemplary teachers and administrators, induction, and support for new teachers and principals during their first three years; and financial incentives to retain teachers and principals with record of helping students to achieve academic success.
- Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of the teaching force, such as innovative professional development programs that focus on technology literacy, tenure reform, testing teachers in the academic subject in which they teach, and merit pay programs.
- Carrying out professional development programs that are designed to improve the quality of principals and superintendents, including the development and support of academies to help them become outstanding managers and educational leaders.
- Hiring highly qualified teachers, including teachers who become highly qualified through State and local alternate routes to certification, and special education teachers, in order to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades.
- Carrying out teacher advancement initiatives that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (e.g., paths to becoming a mentor teacher, career teacher, exemplary teacher, or teacher leader) and pay differentiation.

## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While professional development is a viable and common use for Title II, Part A funds, it is important to note what is meant by “high quality professional development.” Such professional development meets the criteria contained in the definition of professional development in Title IX, Section 9101(34) ([http://www.greatexpectations.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/OU\\_High\\_Quality\\_Professional\\_Development.pdf](http://www.greatexpectations.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/OU_High_Quality_Professional_Development.pdf)). Under this definition, professional development includes, but is not limited to, activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers’ knowledge of academic subjects and enable teacher to become highly qualified.
- Are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans.
- Give teachers and principal the knowledge and skills to help students meet challenging State academic standards.
- Improve classroom management skills.
- Are sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused and are not one-day or short-term workshops.
- Advance teacher understanding of effective instruction strategies that are based on scientifically based research.
- Are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators.

## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT SUPPLEMENT vs SUPPLANT

According to Sections 2123(b), Title II, Part A funds must be used to **supplement**, and not supplant, any non-Federal funds that would otherwise be used for allowable Title II, Part A activities. If, in the absence of Title II, Part A funds, an LEA would use State or local funds to implement allowable activities, particularly those mandated by the Utah State legislature or Utah State Board of Education, then using Title II, Part A funds for those activities would violate the non-supplanting requirement. In some cases, if an LEA can provide documentation that it would not be able to meet such mandates without the use of Title II, Part A funds, then the LEA may overcome the presumption of supplanting.

## SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE USE OF FUNDS

To promote and ensure that funding is used to facilitate increased academic achievement of all students, LEA leadership can:

- Consult with teachers of all grades and subject areas, particularly teachers in high-need schools, to effectively identify needs for professional development and hiring.
- Develop sound multi-year programs that include teacher mentoring and incentives, provisions of professional development in subject-matter, and effective instructional strategies, and focus attention on addressing needs of students at highest risk of failing to meet academic standards.
- Incorporate objective benchmarks for success and clearly stated outcomes.
- Continuously examine standards, assessments, curricula, and teaching practices for alignment.
- Institute financial incentives to make teaching attractive to mid-career professionals and others with special knowledge and skills, encourage retention of the most effective teachers, and encourage effective teachers to teach and remain in the highest-need schools.
- Instill a strong commitment to professionalism among teachers, principals, and other school leaders, actively promoting the importance of strong school leadership.
- Create strong community expectations for student and school success and teacher knowledge and skills.

## PRIVATE SCHOOL PARTICIPATION AND EQUITABLE SERVICES PROVISIONS

Under the Title II, Part A program, private school teachers, principals, and other educational personnel are eligible to participate to the extent that the LEA uses funds to provide for professional development for teachers and other school personnel. The statute requires LEAs to provide private school children, their teachers, and other educational personnel with **educational services on an equitable basis and in a timely manner**. Support in determining the minimum amount required for equitable services to private school teachers and other educational personnel can be found in the Non-Regulatory Guidance document provided at <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/07/essguidance160477.pdf>.

Participation is considered to be equitable if the public and private educational agencies and institutions:

- Assess, address, and evaluate the needs and progress of both groups of teachers in the same manner,
- Provide approximately the same amount of training and, where appropriate, instruction to teachers with similar needs,
- Spend an equal amount of funds per student to serve public and private school teachers, and
- Provide private school teachers with an opportunity to participate in Title II, Part A program activities equivalent to the opportunity provided public school teachers.

LEAs must consult with appropriate private school officials during the design, development, and implementation of professional development programs on such issues as:

- How the needs of children and teachers will be identified,
- What services will be offered,
- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided,
- How the services will be assessed and how the results of the assessment will be used to improve those services.
- The size and scope of equitable services.
- The amount of funds available for those services.
- How and when the LEA will make decisions about the delivery of services.

Such consultation must also include a thorough consideration and analysis of the views of the private school officials on the provision of contract services through potential third-party providers. Professional development programs provided for private school teachers do not have to be the same as those provided to public school teachers. Consultation and coordination are essential to ensuring high-quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused professional development activities are available to private school teachers.

## IMPORTANT:

- No portion of Title II, Part A funds may be used to pay a private school teacher's salary or benefits.
- Title II, Part A funds may not be used to hire substitute teachers for private school teachers who attend professional development activities.
- An LEA is required to contact appropriate officials of all private schools within the boundaries of the school district **annually** to determine if they want their teachers to participate in the Title II, Part A program.
- LEAs may request documentation, as needed, from private school officials to help identify services that may be appropriate to the needs of private school teachers, but such efforts should not place undue burden on the private schools.

LEAs must administer and retain control over Title II, Part A funds. LEAs may **not** provide program funds directly to private schools. LEAs may pay third-party providers directly on behalf of the private schools or reimburse private school teachers for approved professional development expenses incurred, but at no time should funds be sent from the LEA directly to the private school.