



Title II, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Title II, Part A of the [“Every Student Succeeds Act”](#) (ESSA) contains programs used to improve teacher and principal quality. Funds of this Title have traditionally been focused on professional development. The use of funds in Title II, Part A may primarily be used for the purposes of:

- 1) The recruitment of teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
- 2) The training and retaining of teachers, principals, and other school leaders;

Through the elimination of “core academic subjects,” and the inclusion of a **“well-rounded education,”** music and arts educators have an expanded allowable use of Title II funds for these kinds of activities.

Highly Qualified Teacher Status

Under ESSA’s Title II, **“highly qualified teacher”** (HQT) requirements have been **ELIMINATED** and are no longer a part of federal education law. Credentialing and certification requirements for educators, including content expertise which was the main focus of “HQT” language in *No Child Left Behind*, have now been left up to the states. However, ESSA does maintain state-approved certification and licensure requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals working in Title I schools.

In addition, states are no longer required to have teacher evaluation systems, which include measures of student growth. Many states put teacher evaluation systems in place to compete for the U.S. Department of Education’s Race to the Top funding and/or to meet the requirements to receive an ESEA waiver from the more stringent accountability measures found in *No Child Left Behind*. While ESSA no longer requires these teacher evaluation systems be in place, many states may choose to continue using the systems, including measures of student growth, since these systems have been written into state law and administrative rule.

Professional Development by Definition in ESSA

Under Title VIII, Section 8002 of ESSA, the term **“professional development”** is defined as:

“activities that are an integral part of school and local education agency strategies for providing educators (including teachers, principals, and other leaders) with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education, and to meet challenging State academic standards.”

Allotted professional development opportunities may include activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers’ knowledge of the academic subjects they teach, understanding of how students learn, or ability to analyze student work and achievement from multiple sources;
- Integrate with a schoolwide and/or districtwide educational improvement plan;
- Support the recruitment, hiring, and training of effective teachers;
- Align with, or directly related to, academic goals of a school or school district;
- Provide appropriate training for teachers, principals, and other school leaders in the effective use of technology;
- Provide academic support services, and appropriate knowledge and skills training, for teachers who provide instruction for children with disabilities or developmental delays, and English learners.

Distribution and Eligibility of Funds

Distribution of Title II, Part A funds are done annually by each state to each district through funding formula with heavier weight given to districts with higher poverty. That weighting towards more funds for districts with higher poverty grows over time based on language in the law (Title II, Part A, Sec. 2101). Funds are traditionally spent at the district level, not school site level.