



## **Title IV-A Needs Assessment and Implementation**

### **Who might be the contact person in our district to get involved?**

In many large districts, your contact person may be your federal programs manager or the federal programs office. These are the people who coordinate all of your federal education dollars, including Title I. They will most likely lead the district-wide needs assessments for ESSA, including Title IV-A. In smaller districts, this might be your Title-I coordinator, who most likely will be in charge of coordinating the needs assessments for ESSA. Finally, don't forget that your curriculum supervisor or music supervisor may also be involved in this work – or should be!

### **Is Title IV-A funding something that my district is likely already looking into, and I should tag into the conversation?**

The answer is... maybe! District administrators are trying to learn all that they can about the new federal education law, and most likely are aware that there are new Title IV-A funds available. Since the funds are not available until the 2017-2018 school year, the amount of available funding is not yet known, and state and federal guidance has not yet been issued for the funds, my guess is that many districts will be aware but not doing anything yet.

You are more than welcome to contact your federal program manager or office to see what the timeline will be for the district wide Title IV-A needs assessment, and don't be surprised if the answer is "sometime next summer!" In the meantime, you can organize your music education colleagues and get your priorities identified for music education to then bring to the Title IV-A needs assessment committee once it gets up and running – whenever that may be!

### **I work in a very large urban district. Would I be able to apply for grants as an individual school, or am I bound to rely on the district?**

Title IV-A grants are block grants to each local education agency or school district. Unlike Title I-A, the funds are not then designated by school. Instead, the funds are applied for by the school district, representing the needs across the entire school district.

As we mentioned in the webinar, we encourage you to identify needs both at your school site or music program level as well as across the entirety of your school district. Prioritizing those needs in terms of immediate impact on students may well make a school-level need rise to the top in terms of priority. Finally, recall that music is just one curricular area under a well-rounded education, so your prioritized

needs then need to be consolidated into an ask involving many other subject areas in your district. Making certain a music educator or advocate is present for the consolidation discussion will be key to keeping music education in the funding application for Title IV-A.

## **Title IV-A Funding**

**Can you clarify that Title IV-A funds are able to be used for needs during the instructional day and not designated solely for after school?**

Yes. Title IV-A funds are able to be used for needs during the instructional day. They are not designated solely for after school. You may associate Title IV with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, which are federally funded after-school programs, normally funded competitively through state level grant competitions. Title IV-A is in the same chapter of the federal education law, but represents a new block grant to all school districts and is focused on funding needs within the instructional day. After-school activities would also be fundable under Title IV-A, but it is not the focus of the funding.

**Is Title IV tucked under Title 1 funding or can a non-Title 1 school apply?**

Title IV-A funds are available to all **school districts** in a state (or local education agencies). The funds are NOT school site specific, but ALL districts in a state will have access to the funds, so a non-Title I school can benefit from these funds as can a Title I school. The needs assessment and determination of where the Title IV-A funds will be spent is determined at the school district level, not the school site level.

**My school district is a targeted Title 1 district that directs all of its Title 1 funding to the 950 student elementary school. Can we apply for Title IV funding for the Middle School and High School? In other words, are Title 1 and Title IV funding linked?**

Title I-A and Title IV-A funding are NOT linked – however, the size of your school district’s Title IV-A allocation is determined by using part of Title I-A’s funding allocation formula. Title IV-A funds can be spent on any music education program (identified via a needs assessment!) within a school district. Remember that the determination of where and how these funds are spent will be determined at the district level, so it’s vital to be included in those district-wide conversations AND to have your needs assessment completed and your priorities identified as you sit down at the larger Title IV-A funding table.

## **Are there any limits to funding? Can they support capital, consumable, staffing investments?**

Yes... and no. All of the items listed above – capital, consumables, staffing – are fundable under Title IV-A. There are certain restrictions on federal education funding – for example, funds cannot be used for lobbying, and often the US Department of Education will put restrictions on the funds via rules and guidance to limit the amounts spent on food or other seemingly non-educational expenses.

Remember two things about these federal education dollars:

1) **These are supplemental funds.** In other words, they are funds in addition to what should already be spent in your school district from state and local funding sources. So, if a music teacher is currently being funded at your elementary school via local education dollars, you could not then pay for that same position in 2017-18 using these federal education dollars. That would be considered supplanting – swapping out federal for local funds.

2) **These supplemental, federal funds are finite and limited.** You will want to keep these ideas in mind as you determine what the needs are for music education in your school district. Most likely, there will not be enough Title IV-A funds to fund a staffing position that is new and identified as a need. IF there are enough Title IV-A funds to fund such a position, those funds may not be appropriated the next year, which can put a new position at risk.

## **Can states/districts opt out of the needs assessment if they choose not to receive federal funds?**

The short answer is yes! Both states and districts can opt of receiving the federal funds associated with ESSA – or opt out of receiving specific ESSA funds, such as Title IV-A. If the state and/or district does not take the funds, then the state/district does not need to undertake the needs assessment.

With that said, in working with federal education funding for more than 13 years, I have **NEVER** seen a state opt out of taking the federal funding – even funding with many strings attached, such as Title I-A, or IDEA (special education funds). I have often seen and heard rhetoric from state politicians that they are going to refuse federal funds for education, but when it comes to making budgetary decisions, the federal education dollars are always accepted on behalf of the state.

I *have* seen school districts opt out of federal education funds, especially Titles other than Title I-A under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA). The districts which I have seen opt out are usually very small (50 students total in one case), and without the infrastructure to manage the grant, including undertaking needs assessments, filing for the funding, and monitoring and evaluating program outcomes.

I will be surprised to see many if any school districts opt out of Title IV-A funds, given that these funds are the most flexible pot of federal education dollars seen in the last 20 years! Truly, decision makers at the local level will get to determine how these dollars are spent, and that's why getting a music education needs assessment completed and your priorities identified early is so crucial to making music be part of the well-rounded education funding application for your school district.

**Are these Title IV-A funds applied through and granted from the State Education Agency OR can these funds be controlled by the Legislature?**

These funds are applied through and granted from the state education agency and/or the executive agency in your state government designated to receive federal education funding. Your state legislature will not be involved in controlling these funds, unless they choose to refuse all federal education funding as a state.

**Advocating for Title IV-A funding for music education**

**I am not yet a hired music educator, but am invested in my local district. Is there anything I can do? I have a child in the school system and she receives 45 minutes of music a week.**

Absolutely! ESSA requires that parents and community members be engaged in the planning process at district level for Title IV-A. Volunteer to help be a part of those planning committees or involved in the creation of the Title IV-A needs assessment or application for your school district (Section 4106c). Having a parent music educator advocate be part of the overall planning process for Title IV-A funds will be extremely helpful in supporting music education priorities within the Well-Rounded Educational Activities section of the Title IV-A application.

Given that the amount of time music is offered to your child does not meet the Opportunity to Learn Standards, you can also advocate within your district to increase the amount of instructional time that music is available to all students. Changing schedules is difficult, but volunteer to work with administrators to create a schedule that gets your school closer to (or meeting!) the OTL standards. This advocacy work can be a part of the Title IV-A planning committee, and/or be a separate advocacy opportunity within your district. Having a needs assessment completed against the OTL standards will support you in this advocacy work.

**I own a local musical school offering primarily private music lessons. How should I get involved and get my school up to code?**

As mentioned above, the law requires that districts involve community members and parents in their Title IV-A planning process, including the needs assessment work. So – volunteer by contacting your district’s music supervisor, or the federal projects manager for the district. Having a music education advocate at the larger Title IV-A planning table is a wonderful addition.

Also as mentioned above, getting your school district “up to code” will probably take more than supplemental Title IV-A funding. If you are able to be involved in a district-wide music needs assessment, you can work as a community advocate to plan out map of music education “asks” and the correct audience for those asks- be it your local school board, your school building administrators, or your

school district superintendent. While it's a long process, investing the time to identify music education needs, prioritize those needs, identify the appropriate people to ask for help, and then advocating persuasively is what we all need to be doing to support high quality music education in our nation's schools.

## Opportunity to Learn Standards

**I love the basic and Quality expectations. Is there a documentation of that in a policy document that I can show my principal as a professional policy?**

I think you will want to refer back to the full [2015 Opportunity to Learn Standards](#) document created by the Council of Music Program Supervisors. The opening introductory material lays out the intent of the OTL's, how they were constructed, and how they connect with the [2014 Music Standards](#). This material may help lay the policy groundwork for you with your principal, and show why OTL standards are important for measuring the resources available to provide a quality music education to all of your school's students.

## Sharing the Webinar

**Are we free to use the digital copy to present to other music educators in our district/state?**

**Will this presentation be made available in a digital copy (or is it already)?**

Yes – an archived version of the webinar is available, along with all handouts, and please do share it with your music education colleagues! All ESSA related resources can be found at <http://bit.ly/NCLBends>. The archived version webinar is available about 2/3rds of the way down this page under the title **NAfME Advocacy Webinar Series**.