

School Funding Cheat Sheet

It can be overwhelming to understand the various types of national funding sources available to schools. ExploreLearning is here to help!



What are the different types of Title funds?

Let's take a closer look at some of the different funds for learning under the Every Student Succeeds Act ([ESSA](#)).

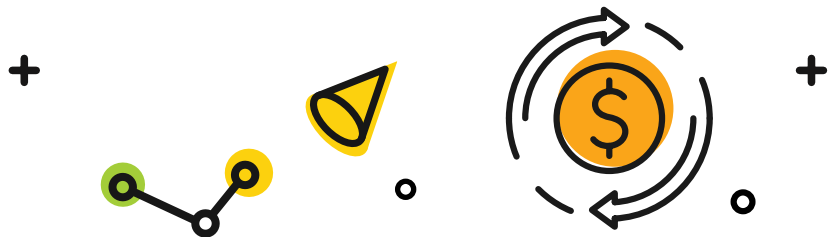
Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged: Title I Part A funds, Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies, provide assistance to state and local education agencies (LEAs) to acquire additional resources for schools serving a large population of students from low-income families. Title I funds can be spent on various resources to ensure all children meet challenging state academic standards, including “[personnel, instruction, and interventions to help close achievement gaps](#).” Schools can implement Title I funds using a targeted assistance plan (if the poverty rate is less than 40%) to provide services to eligible students identified with the greatest need. If more than 40% of the student population classifies as low-income, Title I funds must be allocated toward [schoolwide programs](#).

Title II – Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, or Other School Leaders: [Title II funds](#) are available to increase student academic achievement by increasing the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and leaders. Sample uses include professional development and in-service training to prepare educators to “help all students develop the skills essential for learning readiness and academic success.”

Title III – Language Instruction For English Learners and Immigrant Students: [Title III](#) aims to help ensure English language learners (ages 3-21) and immigrant youth attain English proficiency and meet high levels of academic achievement. [Sample fund uses](#) include costs associated with instructional opportunities (i.e., transportation or supplies), along with materials or technology to improve the instruction of English learners. State educational agencies (SEAs) can receive funds from [Title III state formula grants](#) to “help EL students achieve both English language proficiency and academic standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science.”

Title IV – 21st Century Schools: [Title IV is composed of six sections](#), and funds are meant to “support the comprehensive needs of students in a variety of settings, strengthen family engagement, and bring America’s schools into the 21st century.” [Sample grant fund uses](#) include increasing well-rounded education (examples include [career counseling](#), heightened [STEM](#) engagement, foreign language, and advanced learning opportunities), school safety, student health, and professional development to help educators improve achievement through the [effective use of technology](#).

Titles V-IX: For more information, visit the [ESSA legislation overview](#).



Other school funding sources

Schools and teachers may participate in state-funded efforts, along with personal [classroom-funded ventures](#) and other grants. The federal government also provides dollars through IDEA and ESSER funds.



IDEA: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ([IDEA](#)) is a law that supports free, appropriate public education for eligible children with disabilities. [Congress allocates IDEA funds](#) to “support early intervention and special education services for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families.” IDEA Part B supports children with disabilities ages 3-21, while IDEA Part C covers infants through age two. IDEA also authorizes state formula grants and discretionary grants for special education.



ESSER: In March 2020, Congress set aside billions of dollars to the Education Stabilization Fund through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER). [ESSER funds](#), which must be obligated by September 2024, provide grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) to supply local educational agencies (LEAs) emergency relief funds to address the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on elementary and secondary schools.

History of federal school funding

1965:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the **ESEA** with the goal of “full educational opportunity” for all children. [ESEA provided school districts grants](#) to support low-income students, purchase textbooks, award college scholarships, and fund special education centers. This aid was outlined in the first statutory section of ESEA, Title 1, Part A (commonly known as Title I).

2002:

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

Under President George W. Bush, Congress updated ESEA under the new name **NCLB** with the goal of closing the achievement gap between all groups of students. NCLB put a heightened focus on [highly qualified teachers](#), students reaching proficiency, and increasing achievement among [English-language learners](#), students receiving special education services, and low-income and minority children.

2015:

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

ESSA was signed into law under President Barack Obama to update and replace NCLB and reauthorize the 50-year-old ESEA. The [goal of ESSA](#) is to “provide all children a significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close educational achievement gaps.” [ESSA is composed of nine titles](#) and shifts more power back to states to make educational decisions.

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