



## Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (SSAE)<sup>i</sup>

Designed by a bipartisan effort, one of the many new opportunities within the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA) is the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grant, housed under Title IV, Part A of the legislation. The purpose of Title IV, Part A, (SSAE) as defined in law, is:

“to improve students’ academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, local educational agencies, schools, and local communities to—

1. **provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;**
2. improve school conditions for student learning; and
3. improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.”

ESSA states that each State Education Agency (SEA) that receives an allotment for the implementation of Title IV, Part A must ensure that the funds are used to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in providing “programs and activities that offer well-rounded educational experiences to *all* students, including female students, minority students, English learners, children with disabilities, and low-income students who are often underrepresented in critical and enriching subjects, which may include activities and programs in music and the arts.”<sup>ii</sup>

As the nation’s largest music education organization, the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) fully supports the purposes and intent of SSAE, Title IV, Part A. NAfME advocates that all students gain equitable access to music education and seeks to advance music education by promoting the understanding and making of music by all.

## Title IV-A Available Funding: \$1.1 billion for FY18 and \$1.17 billion for FY 19.

While not the fully authorized amount of \$1.6 billion, these figures represent a substantial increase over the FY17 allocation (\$400 million) and will allow school districts to receive block funds and the flexibility Congress intended for schools to invest in a well-rounded education, including music and arts education.

Interested in knowing how much your school district has been allocated? You can ask your federal programs manager in your school district, or check in with your [SEADAE member](#) or your [NAfME ALF representative](#).

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## Distribution and Eligibility of Funds

To support its intent, SSAE may be used to provide states and school districts funding to support educational activities in three broad areas:

- 1) **Providing students access to a well-rounded education (e.g. music and arts);**
- 2) Supporting safe and healthy students; and
- 3) Supporting the effective use of technology.

### State Level

Each SEA that receives an SSAE allocation must use 95% of the funds to make block grant allocations to LEAs based in part on how Title I funds are allocated<sup>iii</sup>. Of the 5% remaining funds, states use the funds to support the administrative costs of managing Title IV (no more than 1%) and providing support and technical assistance to school districts in implementing activities in support of Title IV, Part A's goals and intent.

State activities may include:

1. Monitoring, training, and providing technical assistance for school districts that receive a Title IV-A allocation;
2. Identifying and eliminating state barriers that may impede coordination and implementation of the Title IV-A block grant; and
3. Supporting local educational agencies in providing programs and activities that support the three content areas (well-rounded education, safe & healthy students, and the effective use of technology).

#### ***State Set-Asides can benefit music and arts education***

##### **Georgia**

The Georgia Department of Education will designate \$250,000 from their Title IV, Part A set aside to fund 10 competitive \$25,000 grants to schools in rural parts of the state where little arts education is taking place. The money can be used towards part or full-time positions if the school did not have the position in the past, equipment and instruments, fine arts specific staff development, or Advanced Placement certification in one of the five fine arts courses currently certified by the College Board.

##### **California**

The state of California will designate \$44,080,000 from their Title IV, Part A set aside to support grants prioritized for enhancing visual and performing arts education, or expanding access to physical and mental health care, including dental and vision care, in schools by supporting school health centers. Division of funds between these two priorities, as well as details regarding the implementation of the grant program, has yet to be determined.

### District Level

Any school district that receives an allocation **\$30,000 or more**:

- must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that includes each of the content areas of Title IV as listed above;
- must engage stakeholders for input;
- must prioritize the distribution of funds;
- must allocate no less than **20% on well-rounded education programs** and activities;
- must allocate no less than 20% on safe and healthy school programs and activities; and
- must allocate a portion of the remaining funds on the effective use of technology.

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Districts may allocate more than 20% on well-rounded education and safe and healthy school programs and activities based on stakeholder input and priorities identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.

**Special Rule:** *No more than 15% of the portion allocated for the effective use of technology can be used on technology infrastructure (devices, equipment, software, and digital content).*

A school district that receives an allocation of **less than \$30,000**:

- **is not required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment;**
- must prioritize the distribution of funds; and
- must allocate funds in at least one of the content areas (well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, or the effective use of technology).

**Special Rule:** *If funds are allocated on the effective use of technology, no more than 15% of that portion can be used on technology infrastructure (devices, equipment, software, and digital content).*

Federal regulations allow LEAs to implement one program or activity to meet the objectives of all three content areas. Music is defined as part of a well-rounded education but can also help promote safe and healthy students by creating a supportive school environment and culture. Additionally, the effective use of technology can play a vital role in music education classrooms.

**Note:** Title IV-A funds are applied for by the district, not by a school site. The funds are distributed based on the needs assessment and/or priorities set by the district in its application process. A non-Title I school may receive Title IV-A funds if identified as a priority during the application process.

### **Examples of how Title IV, Part A funds support music education from across the country**

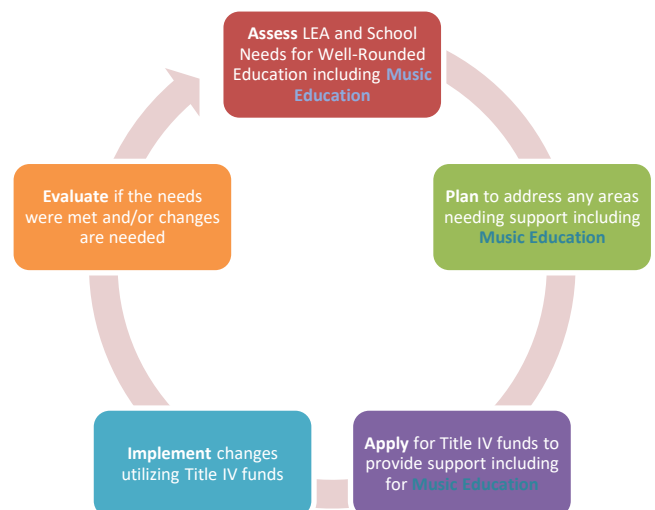
**Dayton, OH.** The district is purchasing instruments to re-build an instrumental program that has been dormant for the last decade. This meets the “supplement” requirement because local dollars are not currently supporting the purchase of instruments for students, and it meets the access intent of the law by increasing access to music education for students not currently participating in music instrumental classes.

**Longwood, NY.** The district is providing professional development on the new New York State Music Standards for its music educators. This meets the “supplement” requirement because the district has not routinely paid for music-specific professional development in the past, and it meets the intent of the law by supporting quality well-rounded education for all students.

## **Local School District Application - What is a ‘Comprehensive Needs Assessment?’**

Title IV, Part A requires LEAs implement a process to ensure student academic achievement. That process includes district assessment, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating. LEAs that receive \$30,000 or more must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment; however, all districts may use an assessment to identify barriers that prohibit students’ access to a well-rounded curriculum, which includes music education.

LEAs may use a tool to inform the development of a local improvement plan that identifies the LEA’s prioritized needs. LEAs may use district improvement plans, campus



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improvement plans, state priorities, and stakeholder and community input. Each can be used to validate a program or activity that supports a well-rounded education.

Upon the submission of the district's application, the state will review the application to ensure the application is aligned to the purpose of Title IV, Part A. The proposed activities must be consistent with the three areas of the SSAE program, be prioritized, and be considered an allowable activity of Title IV, Part A. Allowable use of funds must meet the federal statutory requirements, regulations, provisions and assurances, as well as, state and local laws, rules, provisions, and guidelines related to the use of federal grants<sup>iv</sup>.

Once the application is approved, the LEA will receive the funds and implement the plan. **At least once every three years**, districts receiving \$30,000 or more must reevaluate the outcomes and repeat the needs assessment process, and districts are encouraged to evaluate whether the activities they have funded with this program annually are succeeding in meeting the needs identified and prioritized for the students in their schools.

**Davidson County Schools (NC) completed a comprehensive needs assessment survey in November 2017, as a part of their application for ESSA Title IV, Part A funds, led by the district's arts coordinator, Past President of North Carolina MEA, James Daugherty.**

The needs assessment survey included input from a stakeholder group representing students, parents, principals, instructional program specialists, a faith-based organization, community-based organizations, and representation of local government.

The stakeholder group discussed the three main parts of Title IV including a well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and supporting the effective use of technology.

Questions for the stakeholder group were organized into three sections representing each major section of the subpart in Title IV. Before beginning the needs assessment, the stakeholder group was given the opportunity to delete or expand questions based upon their understanding of the purpose of the grant.

## Assurances – The Prioritization of Funds

Although Title IV-A funds are not limited to support specific student populations or Title I schools, LEAs must fulfill legal requirements to ensure the distribution of funds is prioritized. A school district's Title IV-A application must include detailed assurances that the district will prioritize distribution of funds to schools with the "greatest needs<sup>v</sup>." This is determined by the following criteria:

- Schools with the greatest needs, as defined by the school district or consortium, which can be through the required needs assessment and/or other prioritizing process (such as district or school improvement plans);
- Schools with the highest percentages or numbers of children receiving support under Title I, Part A;
- Schools that are implementing targeted support and improvement plans with consistently underperforming student subgroups; or
- Schools identified as persistently dangerous (elementary and secondary education), as defined by Sec. 8532 of ESEA.

## Allowable Use of Funds - Following Federal Requirements

Federal statute requires that activities funded by federal dollars "supplement, not supplant" non-federal funds (state and local funds). Federal funds must add to, enhance, expand, increase, or extend programs instead of replacing local/state dollars. Determinations of whether supplanting is occurring are made on a case-by-case basis. A supplemental use of funds in one LEA could be considered supplanting in another<sup>vi</sup>.

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## Advocating for Music and Arts Education through Title IV, Part A

### Key Strategies

**You** can be involved with your district during the process of **creating a needs assessment and evaluating programs**. ESSA explicitly states in Sec. 4106 the need for teacher and stakeholder participation. This is where **you can make the difference** – getting involved and making certain the needs of your music programs are fully identified and incorporated as appropriate into your Title IV, Part A plan and funding application for this and upcoming school years. Volunteer to be part of your school planning committee, and your district’s planning committee for Title IV. Invite your students’ parents to be part of this work, too. They are key stakeholders for your district. If you are unable to participate, encourage your district arts coordinator to be at the table and help your district understand the needs of music and arts education as the district puts together its needs assessment and funding plan.

For music educators who are working in a district that is part of a consortium, you may find a useful seat at the planning table along with your colleagues in the other consortium districts. Work with music educators in the consortium districts and determine what might be a shared ask based on your collective needs assessment work, such as shared professional development offerings.

### The Opportunity to Learn (OTL) Standards & Needs Assessment Model

NAfME recommends that music education advocates involved in their school district’s needs assessment use the NAfME [Opportunity to Learn \(OTL\) Standards](#).

[The OTL standards](#) identify and outline resources that need to be in place for students to have an opportunity to achieve music literacy. The standards are aligned with the [2014 National Core Arts Standards](#) and address four areas:

1. **Curriculum and Scheduling:** The curriculum must reflect a vision for helping students achieve the desired learning goals. The key to this vision is the scheduling of sufficient time so that students can carry out the four Artistic Processes (creating, performing, responding, and connecting) necessary for deep learning emphasized by the 2014 Music Standards.
2. **Staffing:** The standards will not be achieved by students unless the system for delivering instruction is based on certified educators with the requisite qualifications, augmented in a structured and appropriate way by community resources.
3. **Materials & Equipment:** Music education cannot exist without making music, and making music in most traditions requires instruments, accessories, texts, and, increasingly, access to and use of various technologies.
4. **Facilities:** Making and learning music requires the dedication of appropriate space for day-to-day instruction. Correct design and maintenance of this space is essential to the success of the program and of the students. (Note: Title IV-A funds cannot be used for major facility construction or development, Sec. 4109 of ESSA)

Each area is given indicators to provide distinction between basic and quality needs for music programs. The OTL standards also offer specific guidance for all grades and all music education content areas, including general music education, music technology, music composition, and ensembles, such as band, orchestra, and choir.

These OTL standards are not, therefore, a music teacher’s unfettered “wish list.” Rather, they are considered guidance on the Curriculum and Scheduling, Staffing, Materials and Equipment, and Facilities that must be in place if the promise inherent in the 2014 Music Standards is to be realized – that all American students must have the opportunity to achieve music literacy.

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**Keeping the OTLs in mind, below are potential steps in creating your district's music education needs assessment:**

1. Determine who should participate in your music education needs assessment. All Music Teachers? Music Supervisor? Curriculum Coordinator? Superintendent? Principals?
2. Get input from the community (parents, local businesses, music merchants, private music schools, etc.). Make note in the assessment that there is strong community involvement.
3. Determine which sections of the OTL standards apply to your programs.
4. Start local first. Have teachers fill out the checklist for the music education offerings at their schools.
5. Compile the local findings and compare – are there discrepancies in OTL supports across your district?
6. Build a summary of the local program-specific OTL findings, and work as a committee to determine the district-wide OTL supports.
7. As a committee, determine priorities of stated needs.

Again, being thoughtful here will show your district administrators that you understand the larger picture, and that you are attempting to make good use of the public funds entrusted to your program.

## Prioritizing Your Needs

Once you have gone through your needs assessment as outlined above, take time to prioritize the needs you have identified. You can do this program by program – e.g. Band and General Music – or by broad needs across the entire district. Focus on needs that address issues of equity and access for your district's students for Title IV, Part A funding requests, as that is at the heart of Congress' intent for these funds: how will these supplemental federal dollars allow more students, especially students who may have had barriers to access to music education, participate in quality music education programs in your district?

<i>Example Prioritization Chart</i>				
<i>Category</i>	<i>Limitation</i>	<i>Immediate impact on outcomes</i>	<i>Long-term resource solution (request)</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>
<i>Curriculum &amp; Scheduling</i>	Lack of dedicated professional development for music educators	Students are not able to meet the new standards recently adopted by the state in music		Title IV, Part A – support for PD for all music educators
<i>Staffing</i>	Unequal instructional minutes distribution in the elementary music classes across schools.	Equity of opportunity for students across all schools within the district	Work with the board on scheduling changes	Might need 1 additional teacher – could be Title IV, Part A if addressing equity issue
<i>Materials &amp; Equipment</i>				
<i>Facilities</i>	Lack of acoustical buffers in 2 of 4 high school instrumental programs	Quality of sound – for both participants and remainder of the school	Request funds for the needed acoustic tiles	Facilities fund (local property taxes) or Title IV-A

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In addition, think about the range of possible funding sources that can be brought to bear on the needs identified. While Title IV-A represents a new funding opportunity, it will not be a pot of gold allowing music and all other well-rounded subject areas to have all that is currently lacking in their programs. Thus, what other funding sources might be available to you?

- Are there capital outlay bonds available for upgrading rooms, purchasing instruments, or upgrading technology?
- Do you have allocated supply funds which could help with materials?
- Are you undertaking a curriculum review as a district, with the possibility of changing the schedule to allow more minutes for music instruction?

### **Additional Resources**

- Another resource that will be helpful to music educators in your state is a [document](#) created by the [Pennsylvania Music Educators Association \(PMEA\)](#) on leveraging Title IV funds.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Eligibility

**1. Can a music educator apply for Title IV, Part A funds?**

No. Only school districts (LEAs) can apply for Title, IV, Part A funds.

**2. How do rural school districts apply for Title IV, Part A funds?**

All eligible school districts may apply for Title IV, Part A funds. Eligible districts are not mandated to apply for Title IV, Part A. Rural school districts may REAP their Title IV, Part A funds to leverage the use of federal monies for all ESSA programs. To learn more, [click here](#).

**3. Are charter schools eligible to receive Title IV, Part A funds?**

In some states, open enrollment charter schools are the same as a local educational agency. Check with your State Educational Agency (SEA) to find out more about the rights of charter schools within the state and the local community.

**4. Are private schools eligible to receive Title IV, Part A funds?**

Federal statutory requirements, regulations, and guidelines are not the same for private non-profit (PNP) schools. LEAs must first consult with the PNP and determine the needs of the PNP. The PNP, if approved by the LEA, may receive equitable services to carry out programs and activities for Title IV, Part A; however, the LEA retains control of the funds. PNP cannot receive funds, only services.

**5. Can a local 501(c)3 non-profit apply for Title IV-A funds?**

No, Title IV-A funds can only be allocated to SEAs to be distributed to LEAs. A 501(c)3 can help provide and broaden access to music education should it choose to partner with the LEA to provide additional, supplemental music education activities or offerings to students, such as after-school programming.

**6. How can I learn what funds have been allocated for my school district and how they are being spent?**

Contact your district's Title IV-A director, federal programs director, or fine arts coordinator/curriculum supervisor.

**7. When do Title IV-A funds get released and when do school districts have to submit their applications?**

The Grant Award Notice (GAN) is available to states on July 1<sup>st</sup>, however, most states post a projected planning amount to LEAs to assist LEAs in planning the upcoming school year. The application deadline for the Title IV, Part A grant may vary from state to state. The best way to find out the deadline for your school district is to contact your district's Title IV-A director, federal programs director, or arts coordinator/curriculum supervisor.

**8. Is there a deadline to when a school district must spend their Title IV-A dollars?**

Yes. Districts have 24 months in which to spend their Title IV-A dollars. The dollars must be obligated by the end of the first year of the grant. If the grant has been obligated, the funds can then be rolled over, hence allowing the funds to be accessible for use for an additional 12 months. Title IV-A, adheres to the Tydings Amendment, which allows the funds to be available for 2 years.

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## Allowable Use of Funds

### 9. How likely is it for a School District or state to spend their federal dollars on music and arts education?

The likelihood is completely dependent on your district's Title IV-A application, which is based off the comprehensive needs assessment results. Your district's needs assessment is meant to reveal deficiencies, which will then be translated into priorities for your district's Title IV allocation. This is why it is so important to have music educators involved with the needs assessment process. It is one of the key moments where the law explicitly states the necessity to include parents, teachers, principals, and other school personnel during the development of its Title IV application.<sup>vii</sup>

It is important to recognize that music's enumeration as part of a well-rounded education is not a mandate for states and school districts to spend their federal dollars, like Title IV-A, on music education programs. Rather, it created the opportunity and flexibility to do so. Nevertheless, this is still an unprecedented step forward for music education and these opportunities could not have existed without the concept of a "well-rounded education."

### 10. Do the requests have to be for new curricular programs, or can they be used to maintain, sustain, and/or build up existing programs?

#### Building up an existing program

As with most answers to federal funding questions, the first answer is, "It depends." Title IV-A funds *can* be used to build existing programs, provided this is done in a "supplemental" manner. This ties back to your district's comprehensive needs assessment and its overall prioritization of needs and to how building an existing program will help increase access to music education for students in your district. For example, if your district identifies a need for purchasing additional instruments so more students can access an instrumental music program, this may be addressed with Title IV-A dollars to provide additional support to your program. Remember that federal education dollars are meant to **supplement**, not supplant, existing dollars. These dollars cannot "replace" what your school district spends on music education already.

#### Maintain or sustain an existing program

The use of federal dollars to maintain or sustain an existing program requires specific documentation. In most instances, the deficiency or lack of funding due to local or state funds no longer in existence requires careful documenting so the request meets the supplemental test of federal funds. Please work with your federal programs director in your school district to learn more about what might be possible, and what guidelines your district has in place to make such a request if prioritized through your district's needs assessment process.

### 11. Can Title IV-A be used to hire new educators?

It depends. If found as a deficiency by your school district's comprehensive needs assessment, Title IV-A funds could be used to hire additional music educators, specialists, or create partnerships with local community partners. However, like all federal funds, Title IV-A dollars must be used to supplement, not supplant (or replace) state and local dollars. So, if your school district routinely pays for music educators, the expenditure would not meet the federal statutory requirements. However, if the hire improves access to music education for students not currently participating in music education, the case could be made as the request ties back to Title IV's intent. Federal dollar allocations may also vary from year to year, making it difficult to maintain funding for a staff position year after year.

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**12. Can Title IV-A funds be used for extended learning opportunities, such as field trips, or festival and competition participation?**

It depends. If the activity is curricular, extracurricular, or co-curricular, it may be supplanting. LEAs generally use a budget line code (36) for curricula, extracurricular, or co-curricular programs and activities. Field trips will require the approval of the Title IV, Part A state director or grant administration. Additional supporting documentation will be needed to ensure the field trip meets federal regulations. Festivals and competitions also fall under curricula, extracurricular, or co-curricular activities.

**13. What are the transferability provisions of Title IV, Part A? Are there dollar thresholds to transferability? Who makes that decision at the district level?**

Under Title V, Part A, the LEA has the flexibility to transfer up to 100% of Title I, Part A to either Title I, Part A, C, or D, Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A or to Title V, Part B. When the funds are transferred to another federal program, the funds must then be used to support the purpose and intent of the program as well as follow the guidelines of the program. The decision to transfer funds is made by LEA leadership.

**14. How do I contact my state Title IV, Part A program director?**

[Click here.](#)

**15. My state's ESSA Plan indicates that Title IV-A funds will be devoted towards STEM education. What does this mean for music education?**

Keep in mind when reading your state's ESSA plan, your state is outlining how it intends to spend its state set aside or allocation of funds. Under Title IV-A, all states receive a minor portion for the administration and management of Title IV-A grants, as well as funds for state-level activities and priorities.

The state, however, cannot affect how school districts determine their spending. If receiving an allocation of \$30,000 or more, ESSA requires districts to spend 20% of their funds on a well-rounded education. In addition, districts must adhere to the findings of their needs assessment for their remaining dollars, which could lead to more spending for a well-rounded education that includes music.

Again, the primary ask is to tie how these off-campus experiences will provide greater access to music education in your district, how they tie back to your curricular musical offerings and courses, and how they are a supplemental funding request above and beyond current district programs.

## **Future Revisions and Funding Levels**

**16. Can we hope to see a similar amount (\$1.1 billion) allocated for Title IV-A past 2019?**

Because the most recent [Congressional budget deal](#) is only for two fiscal years, we do not know what the allocations will be for FY 2020 and on. Future funding depends on national priorities, the economy, and where the budget caps are set two years from now. That is why it is vital to demonstrate and provide Title IV success stories while we have increased funding in FY 2018 and FY 2019.

**17. I am entering the freshman year of my bachelor's in music education this coming fall. Do you expect this legislation to change within the next four years?**

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) will more than likely remain unchanged and continue to serve as the "law of the land" for K-12 public education, including music's listing as part of a well-rounded education. *No Child Left Behind*, ESSA's predecessor, lasted for nearly fifteen years.

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This isn't to say music educators and advocates should not be engaged. ESSA is still very new to many, including to stakeholders and decision-makers at the local level. Thanks to the inclusion of music as part of a well-rounded education, music education now has a seat at the table. As advocates, it should be our utmost priority to educate all participants and parties about the potential impact Title IV-A can make to provide supplemental funds to increase access to quality music education programs.

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<sup>i</sup> [P.L. 114-95, §§ 4101-4110]

<sup>ii</sup> [P.L. 114-95, Sections 4104 (b), (3)(A), and (i)(II) and Section 4107]. In the *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants* (2016), the U.S. Department of Education recognizes that increasing equitable access to a well-rounded education is central to the shared work across all ESSA programs (pg. 5). Federal regulations stress the importance of SEAs, LEAs, schools, and local communities to support and offer a well-rounded education with more holistic and integrated approach.

The provision of equitable access is also supported by multiple Federal Civil Rights Acts. To learn more about the civil rights foundation of ESSA, and of this particular section of the law, please email [advocacy@nafme.org](mailto:advocacy@nafme.org).

<sup>iii</sup> To learn more about how funds are allocated in your state, email [advocacy@nafme.org](mailto:advocacy@nafme.org).

<sup>iv</sup> To learn more about allowable and unallowable use of funds, see [Non-regulatory guidance](#).

<sup>v</sup> In accordance to Sec. 4106 of ESSA

<sup>vi</sup> In order for a program or activity to be considered an allowable use of funds, the LEA must be able to meet the requirements in federal statute, regulatory guidance and federal provisions and assurances. Additionally, each SEA may require LEAs to meet state laws, rules, and provisions and assurance that related to the implementation of the federal grant. Each LEA must be able to respond to the following questions and provide supporting documentation:

*How is the expenditure reasonable and necessary to carry out the intent and purpose the program?*

*What need, as identified in the comprehensive needs assessment, does the expenditure address?*

*Explaining how the expenditure addresses this need.*

*How will the expenditure be evaluated to measure a positive impact on student achievement?*

*How is the expenditure supplemental to other non-federal programs?*

For more information on supplanting and other federal requirements regarding the use of federal funds, please consult your district's federal programs director or email [advocacy@nafme.org](mailto:advocacy@nafme.org) for more information.

<sup>vii</sup> ESSA, Title IV-A, Sec. 4106(c)(1).