

Leveraging Federal IV Title Funds in Missouri for Music Education

The Every Student Succeeds Act creates a new funding source that is designed to ensure a well-roundedness for all students. Under ESSA, music and the arts are designated as well-rounded subjects. These new federal funds, known as Title IV, Part A or Student Support Enrichment Grants (SSAEG) are distributed by DESE to school districts.

ESSA was passed with a recommendation of funding for Title IV at 1.65 billion. Congress \$1.1 billion for FY 2018 and is projected to approve \$1.2 billion for FY 2019. More advocacy work is needed to bring this closer to \$1.65 billion, but it is important to take steps to utilize these funds that are available for music and arts programs and to increase the hope of increasing federal funding allotments for education in the future. Title IV allocations for 2018 – 19 in Missouri for districts range from \$10,000 to \$1.1 million. The allocations for individual districts can be found at <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/ffm-Title-IV.A-FinalAlloc2018-2019.pdf>

How to Receive Title IV Part A Funds in Missouri

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) complete what is known as a *Consolidated Application* each year. This application addresses all ESEA titles. This application is due May 1 each year. As your LEA begins to discuss their budget for the next school year (usually in the winter), it is a good idea to be discussing your LEA's use of Title IV funds.

LEAs are required to complete a *Needs Assessment* to determine where Title IV, Part A funds can be used. You should ask your administration how you can be involved in the process to determine the use of these funds. Districts are required to engage stakeholders as part of the process in conducting and evaluating a well-rounded education.

Possible Uses of Title IV Funds

Musical Instruments
Sheet Music
General Music Supplies/Textbooks
Performance Space Upgrades
Music Technology (Computers, tablets, software)
Curriculum Materials
Content Area Specific Professional Development
Additional Music Courses (e.g. adding piano or guitar class)
Music Related Field Trips

A good resource to use in making the case for additional resources for music programs is NAFME's Opportunity to Learn Standards (OTL) https://nafme.org/wp-content/files/2014/11/Opportunity-to-Learn-Standards_May2015.pdf

You can find a checklist versions of the OTL standards and a NAFME podcast on using the OTLs for Title IV Assessment at <https://nafme.org/archived-webinar-otls-title-iv-lynn-tuttle-ronny-lau/>

LEAs must apply for funds by using the *Consolidated Application*, which describes the applicable use of funds.

- Analyze the gaps in accessibility to music instruction in your program. Music is not the only area requesting to use these funds so it is important to be prepared.
- These federal funds are required to be supplemental in nature and can not supplant what is already provided by the local district. If you are requesting to add a instruments to your program, you will need to show that there are no local dollars to support the specific purchases that you are requesting.
- LEAs do have the option under federal law to combine their Title IV Part A funds with other funding streams such as Title I; however the other titles are more restrictive than Title IV. If you provide a compelling argument for the use of funds in music, you might be able to convince your LEA to use the funds for a music-related project.
- These funds are not recurring. Requests should not be made for ongoing expenses. They can be used for new programs and expenses that increase well-roundedness.
- LEAs receiving less than \$30,000 do not need to conduct a needs assessment in their application for funds. This applies to the vast majority of districts in Missouri.

The Title IV Part A provision of ESSA was designed to provide LEAs with funding that would (a) ensure a well-rounded education, (b) promote safe and healthy schools, and (c) provide for effective use of technology.

- LEAs are required to spend at least 20% of Title IVA allocations on activities that support well-rounded opportunities.
- LEAs are required to spend at least 20% of the allocation goes to support safe and healthy students.
- LEAs must spend some of the allocation on the effective use of technology.
- LEAs must assure that it complies with sections 8501 – 8504, regarding equitable participation of private school children and teachers.
- LEAs must complete an annual report to the state on how funds for the SSAEG are being used.
- These requirements do apply to districts receiving allocations of less than \$30,000.
- The distribution of funds is to be prioritized to schools based upon one or more of the following factors
 - Have high numbers of students from low-income families
 - Identified as focus/priority under Title I, Part A of ESEA
 - Identified as persistently dangerous under section 8532 of ESEA

The application asks the applicants to address specifically how the LEA will use funds in the areas of well-rounded education. Unfortunately, Missouri did not list music and arts programs

a priority use in Title IV of its ESSA application. This is still an eligible use of funds as determined by federal and state law. An LEA does have to provide a narrative response describing the proposed use of funds. This is where your research will be useful to the district. They can use your argument as part of their case for funds.

Once an LEA submits their application, the Title IV application is reviewed along with other parts of the application. These are funds that the district will receive but they must be spent in accordance with the submitted plan.

This process will continue as long as ESSA remains federal law. You should stay part of the process even if you don't receive funds for your program. Your administrators may notice your work and find other areas of the budget to fill your program needs.