



A Union of Professionals

Every Student Succeeds Act

A New Day in Public Education

Teacher Prep in the Every Student Succeeds Act

Title II—Preparing, Training and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals or Other School Leaders

While the majority of teacher preparation language remains in the federal Higher Education Act, Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act addresses allowable funding uses and competitive grants to develop, improve and expand preparation for teachers, principals and school leaders. Currently, Title II receives less than \$3 billion annually to be distributed nationally. ESSA authorizes the same funding amount for Title II for the span of the bill from fiscal years 2017 to 2020. The majority of the funding has been allocated in Part A of Title II. In the past, approximately 80 percent of Title II funding has been used on professional development and class-size reduction. The following sections in the bill address teacher preparation specifically.

Title II, Part A—Supporting Effective Instruction

The new law continues formula grants to states as in the law prior to ESSA. The state can choose from 21 activities that are allowed with the grant funding. The state also allocates subgrants to local educational agencies. LEAs have 16 allowable activities but none include preparation. The following allowable state activities include teacher preparation:

- **Reforming teacher preparation program standards and approval processes.** The law suggests reforms would include teachers having necessary subject-matter knowledge and teaching skills, which are measured as determined by the state, with teacher certification or licensing requirements aligned with state academic standards.
- **Alternative routes.** Programs that establish, expand or improve alternative routes for state certification of teachers.

Teacher residency programs. The law authorizes teacher residency programs to reform or improve teacher preparation. Title II defines these programs as school-based teacher preparation programs that allow a prospective teacher to teach alongside an effective teacher, who is the teacher of record, for not less than one academic year. The prospective teacher will also attend

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PRESIDENT

Loretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO • 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W. • Washington, DC 20001 • 202-879-4400 • www.aft.org



courses taught by the LEA or faculty of the teacher preparation program while teaching in the content area, which will achieve certification or license. The state or LEA determines the definitions of an effective teacher, a teacher of record, and effective teaching skills.

- **Teacher, principal or other school leader preparation academy.** A new, allowable use of state funds permits a public or other nonprofit entity, such as an institution of higher education or an organization affiliated with an institution of higher education, to establish an academy that will prepare teachers, principals or other school leaders. The law caps the amount of Title II funding that can be used on academies at 2 percent. Academies must be made allowable under state law, and other state laws must be amended accordingly—for example, allowing academies to be eligible for state student financial aid. The prospective teacher who attends an academy must serve in high-need schools and receive a significant part of training through clinical preparation.

The academy is described as having to produce effective teachers who will demonstrate success by increasing student academic achievement, without unnecessary restrictions on the methods that are used to train prospective teachers, such as requirements that faculty hold advanced degrees or have completed a specified number of courses. The academy will award a certificate of completion (or degree, if within or affiliated with an institution of higher education) after a teacher candidate demonstrates a record of increasing student academic achievement, and the certificate may be recognized as equivalent to a master’s degree for the purposes of hiring, retention, compensation and promotion.

Title II, Part B—National Activities

- **Subpart 1—Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program.** In the prior law, the Teacher Incentive Fund focused only on performance-based compensation systems. ESSA also includes “human capital management systems” for teachers as part of this competitive grant. An LEA would use a human capital management system to make personnel decisions including preparation.
- **Subpart 4—Programs of National Significance.** Under Section 2242, the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant program receives the majority of reserved funding under this subpart. This three-year competitive grant is continued from previous ESEA reauthorizations and is currently funded in fiscal 2015 at \$54 million. The secretary is authorized to award grants to national nonprofit organizations or institutions of higher education, or the Bureau of Indian Education (or a consortium of such entities) to improve preparation and professional development of teachers, principals and other school leaders by implementing evidence-based activities. There is a 25 percent nonfederal match of funds.