



Using Federal Funds for Professional Development Stipends

Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in 2015, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). With the new authorization, several questions have arisen regarding the allowability of using Title program funds to pay school instructional staff for professional development stipends and regarding the associated requirements.

Allowability of Professional Development Stipends

ESSA allows districts and area education agencies (AEAs) to use Title funds to pay school instructional staff for professional development stipends if the stipend is:

- For a professional development activity that is “sustained (not stand-alone, one-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused” (ESEA § 8101(42)(B));
- For a specific professional development activity that is outside regular employment or contract hours and is funded by the same Title program in which the specific activity is funded (e.g., stipend and professional development activity are both paid for by Title II, Part A);
- “Reasonable and necessary” for performance of the grant, which means the needs assessment indicated the activity as a need and is funded by the same Title program funds;
- Treated as taxable income, which compels the district or AEA to provide those receiving stipends with required tax documentation for their personal tax filings to the Internal Revenue Service; and
- Supplemental, and does not supplant, because the professional development activity is not required to be funded by another federal, state, or local law nor would the activity be funded by another funding stream. *Please note that Title I, Part A is an exception to this supplement, not supplant requirement.*

Nonpublic Addendum

In addition to the requirements outlined above, districts and AEAs with participating nonpublic schools may use Title funds to pay nonpublic school instructional staff for professional development stipends if the professional development activity stipend is:

- Also provided to district or AEA instructional staff member with the same Title program funds (e.g., Title II, Part A stipends are provided to both public and nonpublic staff);
- Paid directly to the nonpublic instructional staff member and not to the nonpublic school; and
- Provided only to those teachers who have an eligible Title I student in their classroom (Title I, Part A only) and the professional development is aligned to the eligible child's academic need.

Additional Guidance

For additional ESSA guidance, including resources and technical assistance, see the Department’s [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) webpage.