

# Supporting Students and Academic Success Under Title IV-A of ESSA

A call for full funding for school counseling and career services

[www.titleiva.org](http://www.titleiva.org)

The American Counseling Association (ACA), as part of the Title IV-A coalition, is working to advocate for full funding and the successful implementation of the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grants under Title IV-A of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This flexible block grant, authorized at \$1.6 billion through fiscal year 2021, is designed to ensure that districts have access to programs that 1) foster safe and healthy students, 2) provide students with a well-rounded education, and 3) increase the effective use of technology in our nation's schools.

If fully funded and administered the way Congress intended under ESSA, the SSAE grant program has the potential to support school districts in their central mission of providing our students with the skills, resources, and support they need to succeed. The additional funding will help schools hire more school counselors, offer more mental health related programs, and provide all students with increase access to mental health services and support.

**Title IV, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:**

**Providing students with a well-rounded education** (e.g., college and career counseling, STEM, music and arts, civics, IB/AP, computer science). Access to a well-rounded education and variety of educational experiences is vital for student development. This can include afterschool and summer programming, creative arts classes, language development, and social-emotional learning.

**Fostering safe and healthy students** (e.g., comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education) To achieve their full potential, students must be physically, mentally, and socially healthy and feel safe which requires supportive learning environments and behavioral and mental health services.

**Increasing the effective use of educational technology** (e.g., professional development, blended and personalized learning, and purchase of devices). Today's students use technology to collaborate to solve real-world problems, analyze and use data, and sharpen their 21st Century skills. This requires infrastructure, tools and resources that increase access for all students.

## **Program funding need**

Students need to have access to programs that meet their comprehensive needs, including their mental and physical health and safety and providing a challenging learning environment that effectively uses technology. The continued funding in these critical areas, especially during these uncertain times, will give districts the opportunity to build on the successes from the past three years as well as the ability to use Title IV-A funds to address issues that the COVID-19 crisis has made apparent and exacerbated. This pandemic has made clear that districts face a wide range of unique challenges, whether it's ensuring all children have access to technology to do remote learning or the ability to provide mental health supports from afar.

Title IV-A is vital to the well-being of our nation's students. The President's 2022 fiscal year budget includes a request for \$1.22 billion for the SSAE program. We are grateful to President Biden for this proposal and look forward to Congress fully funding Title IV-A of ESSA at a minimum of \$2 billion in the coming year.

Thank you for your support and please contact the ACA Government Affairs and Public Policy team at [advocacy@counseling.org](mailto:advocacy@counseling.org) with any questions!