



Talking Points for Outreach to School District Administrators: Use of ESSA Funding for Environmental Education

Overview

- Title IV of the Every Student Succeeds Act makes environmental education explicitly eligible for funding for the first time.
- In Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment), environmental education is one of the many eligible activities associated with providing students with a “well-rounded education”.
- In accordance with certain parameters, LEAs have tremendous flexibility in how they use these block grants.
- The FY2018 federal budget includes \$1.1 billion for Title IVA, nearly three times more than the FY17 budget.
- Funds in Title II of ESSA may be used for professional development to support teachers’ ability to provide a “well-rounded education,” including environmental education.
- [Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education](#) to the states on Title IVA highlights environmental education as one of the activities eligible for funding.

The Case for EE

- Integrating EE into the curriculum can help to achieve other academic goals, including meeting Next Generation Science Standards and providing students with opportunities to practice STEM skills.
- Research demonstrates that EE helps students gain not just knowledge, but also important skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. [More on what the research tells us about the benefits of EE for K-12 education can be found here.](#)
- For states that have an environmental literacy plan or priorities for environmental literacy, these funds offer a new opportunity to advance goals associated with those plans and priorities.

Process

- Federal funds in Title IVA are distributed by Title I formula to the states and, in turn, distributed according to formula by states to each LEA.
- LEAs will submit an application to their State Education Agency describing their plans for use of funds.
- LEAs that receive more than \$30,000 are required to conduct a needs assessment and include a wide variety of stakeholders in the needs assessment.
- A [comprehensive timeline for ESSA implementation](#) has been developed by the Council for Chief State School Officers and provides additional detail.