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ESSA and the Arts Introduction

Purpose of this guide: To provide arts educators and supporters of the arts with information about funding opportunities that exist within ESSA that support both the arts and a well-rounded education. Additionally, this guide serves to provide administrators writing needs assessments, Continuous Improvement Plans, and applications for federal funds. This guide focuses specifically on arts funding opportunities through Title IV, Part A.

What is ESSA and what are the opportunities for the arts?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was a bipartisan measure signed into federal law in 2016. It reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. This authorization increases local control and state-level accountability, and also provides new opportunities for arts education. Under current federal law, the arts and music are included as part of well-rounded education. In this respect, the arts continue to have equal billing with reading, math, science, and other disciplines. This designation means that the arts may be an eligible expenditure of funds for federal education programs (such as Title I, Title II, and Title IV, Part A).

Title I, Part A and the Arts

[Title I, Part A - Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged](#)

[Allowable Activities for Title I](#)

"The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments." Title I provides an opportunity to explore arts integration as an instructional strategy for students to access content. Arts integration offers a systematic approach to meeting the needs of students who are at-risk of not meeting standards with a focus on weaving the arts into the fabric of the school, providing professional development for teachers and administrators, using strategies in arts integration to improve student achievement, and fostering a school climate that engages parents and students alike.

Title II, Part A and the Arts

[Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction](#)

[Allowable Activities for Title II, Part A](#)

Funding provided under Title II, Part A helps ensure that all students have access to teachers and school leaders who can support them in achieving state standards. ESSA creates multiple avenues for including the arts in Title II grant funding, including professional learning opportunities for arts educators and programs using arts-based techniques or arts-integrated strategies to build the capacity of teachers.

Title IV, Part A and the Arts: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

[Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance](#)

[Allowable Activities for Title IV, Part A](#)

Title IV, Part A is a new funding opportunity that provides districts with funding to support greater access to a well-rounded education, a safe and healthy learning environment, and a personalized learning experience through the effective use of data and technology. Many opportunities for the arts exist within these applications, including arts education programs initiatives that use the arts for student engagement and programs that integrate the arts into other subjects.

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)
- Supporting safe and healthy students (e.g., comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education) and
- Supporting the effective use of technology (e.g., professional development, blended and personalized learning, and devices).

For more information on Title I; Title II, Part A; and Title IV, Part A please visit the [Vermont Agency of Education Consolidated Federal Programs webpage](#). For a list of references and more information please visit Title IV, Part A and the Arts. For a references list and more information on Title IV, Part A and the Arts visit [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and Arts and [Level of Evidence](#).