

## Changes in Professional Development Due to ESSA Requirements and Title Funding

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) recently completed a year of full implementation. While the law is authorized to continue programs from the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act until 2020, there is speculation that funding amounts could change or even be eliminated due to priorities in the annual budget. Even though educators must play the waiting game in order to plan, it is still important to know the features of the law as there have been some key changes.

### Title Funding

Formulas for Title II funds have been and will continue to be adjusted until 2020. The past formula rewarded districts with larger populations of students. The new formulas show a gradual increase in order to place a stronger emphasis on funding for districts serving children living in poverty.

Movement of money between specific Title programs is expanded to allow support for other activities. One hundred percent of Title II and Title IV funds (21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools) can be transferred into Title I funds to improve basic programs and ensure economically and socially disadvantaged students. Title II and Title IV programs can also have transfers between them. However, no money can be transferred out of Title I to another Title program.

### Professional Development

Use of Title II funding for **professional development** has been expanded beyond teachers of

“core academic subjects.” All teachers, counselors, librarians, and paraprofessionals are now included as well as support for **principals, superintendents, and teacher** leaders.

ESSA also recognizes the importance of staff **collaboration** and job embedded skills. Immediate application of those new skills has a greater impact on instruction which transfers to an increase in **student learning**.

Another point that has been emphasized is that **professional development** must be data driven, show results, and have **follow-up**. One-shot training without accountability is discouraged.

According to ESSA, funded programs must be **evidence-based**. This may include any activity, strategy, approach, or intervention that shows a statistically significant effect on student learning.

Professional development should be **customized** to the needs of a district. One size does not fit all when meeting the needs of any learning community.

### Find Funding, Get Creative

*Educators need to be encouraged to choose PD that challenges them and gives them a hard-earned sense of accomplishment.*

*Debbie Silver,*

*Former Louisiana Teacher of the Year*

It may be hard to predict what happens in the future with Title funding at the national level, but local leaders have to continue to provide oppor-

tunities for teacher growth as that will directly affect student learning. If Title funding is unavailable, the general fund and grants from private organizations may be the best options.

Utilize neighboring districts to pool your resources together. Create a small learning consortium while sharing skills of teachers and dollars.

If possible, offer choices for learning. Allow teachers to participate in a local professional

development day where they can select their topic. It will require more planning but positive results and use of the new skills are more likely to happen. Utilize local educators as experts as well as those outside the district. It is empowering to the presenters, establishes professional respect for their expertise in content and skills, and promotes the development of leadership capacity throughout the district.

### Getting Experienced Help

For more than 25 years, the Curriculum Leadership Institute (CLI) has provided challenging and quality **professional development** through partnerships with over 85 school districts across the United States. The continuous **follow-up** allows for a **customized** approach to meet a district's needs while building leadership capacity throughout a district. The systems approach is **evidence-based**. **Collaboration** is not only encouraged, it is required for success. **Teachers, principals, superintendents**, board members, and parent representatives from across the district meet regularly to discuss academic issues and make recommendations for **student learning**, school improvement, and accreditation requirements. It is easy to see how CLI meets the ESSA expectations for professional development. If you need or would like assistance, please give us a call at 620.794.1431 or email us at [info@cliweb.org](mailto:info@cliweb.org). We would love the opportunity to visit with you, establish a partnership, and help put you on the [map!](#)