

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

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

1. Use of Funds (ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(A)): Describe how the SEA will use funds received under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 for State-level activities.

Minnesota is committed to supporting local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—in their efforts to provide a well-rounded education for all students, improve school conditions for student learning, and strengthen the use of technology for access to effective instruction, improved academic achievement, and digital literacy (Sec. 4101). These purposes are aligned with state requirements under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, referred to as the “World’s Best Workforce.” As stated previously, under this legislation, the state requires LEAs to develop a plan that addresses the following five goals: all children are ready for school, all third-graders can read at grade level, all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed, all students are ready for college and career, and all students graduate from high school.

Central to providing a well-rounded education is the need to establish and implement a quality standards-based education system. Minnesota undertakes periodic, comprehensive reviews of its academic standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, arts, social studies, and physical education to ensure that all students meeting those standards are career- and college-ready. The review process also ensures that information literacy and technology skills are embedded in the standards for each academic area. Districts have also developed or adopted standards for other areas including health, world languages, and career and technical education (including computer science in many cases). Minnesota has a team of specialists to support the implementation of both state and local standards. In addition to academic standards, many schools have implemented the state’s social-emotional learning and cultural competencies which Minnesota stakeholders have indicated are essential for a well-rounded education. Minnesota’s School Safety Technical Assistance Center provides support to help schools improve their understanding of social-emotional learning and the school conditions that enhance learning for all students.

Minnesota recognizes the role of technology and digital learning tools in supporting a well-rounded education. In 2015, the department issued a legislative report on one-to-one technology devices. Information in the report was based on findings from a survey completed by 80 percent of Minnesota school districts. Of those who responded, 55 percent of schools indicated that they currently utilize technology for personalized learning and an additional 15 percent indicated that they were planning to implement initiatives that year. Minnesota plans to utilize federal Future Ready guidance and needs assessment tools to support districts in their effective use of technology.

Minnesota plans to leverage current personnel and existing programs to support LEAs. The current science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education specialist position, previously funded through the Mathematics and Science Partnership program, Title II, Part B in No Child Left Behind, will coordinate the technical assistance for supporting well-rounded experiences identified in section 4107, supporting safe and healthy students identified in section 4108, and increasing the access and effective use of technology identified in section 4109. Minnesota also will use funding under these sections for a specialist who will help districts align their student support and academic enrichment activities with the World's Best Workforce requirements.

Minnesota will establish a team of grant reviewers staffed by specialists in the agency. Training will be provided to ensure consistency among the reviewers. Up to 1 percent of Minnesota's allotment will support the process for awarding the funds to LEAs, public reporting on how funds are being expended by LEAs, and monitoring the progress of LEAs toward meeting the grant objectives.

2. Awarding Subgrants (ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(B)): Describe how the SEA will ensure that awards made to LEAs under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 are in amounts that are consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

Minnesota will award competitive subgrants for Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grants. The subgrants will focus on innovative programs that promote equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students. Funding priority will be given to programs designed to achieve the following: improved access to academic standards for all pre-K through grade 12 students; a collaborative professional culture that supports implementation of standards; and rigorous, relevant multi-disciplinary learning experiences. The LEA application will include the following requirements:

- Evidence of consultation with stakeholders included in section 4106 (c).
- Completion of a comprehensive needs assessment included in section 4106 (d).
- Description of activities and programs that the LEA will carry out included in section 4106 (e)(1).
- Assurances included in section 4106 (e)(2).

The funding for an individual LEA will not be less than \$10,000 as indicated in ESEA section 4105 (a)(2). LEAs will be informed of the opportunity to form consortia to more efficiently carry out the activities. The state will monitor the grant award process to ensure that at least 20 percent of the allocation is used to support a well-rounded education, at least 20 percent is used to support safe and healthy students, and a portion of the allocation is used for technology to support personalized learning. No more than 15 percent of the technology awards will be used to purchase devices, equipment, or software applications.