STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Unlocking Your Federal Funds:
Making the Funds Received Under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* as Amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* Work More Effectively for Students and Educators

June 2017

Updated 6/26/2017

Table of Contents

Updated 6/26/2017

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to empower school and school district leaders, grant administrators, educators, and other stakeholders to maximize the use of federal funds by providing information on how different federal funds may be used independently or together to meet specific, identified student and staff needs. To that purpose, this document provides information on federal funding flexibilities under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*—henceforth referred to as *ESSA*—and how *ESSA* funds can be used to support specific initiatives. This document may be most useful in helping a school or district that has already identified its student and staff needs to determine how the federal funds it receives can be most effectively utilized to address those needs.

In choosing the six sample initiatives highlighted in this document, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) considered statewide student academic achievement and college and career readiness data as well as stakeholder input[1] regarding what schools should focus on to promote student success. The six sample initiatives listed below were also chosen due to the availability of evidence that improvement or investment in them has the potential to improve student outcomes. The sample initiatives include:

- Implementing the New Jersey Tiered System of Support (NJTSS)
- Focusing on Grade-Level Literacy Rates
- Focusing on Algebra I Outcomes
- Supporting a Positive School Climate
- Focusing on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism
- Increasing Availability of Job-embedded Professional Development

Please note that no school or district is required to use its federal funds for programs or activities highlighted in this document. This document was created solely to demonstrate how some programs, strategies or initiatives may be supported with federal funds. For complete information on how different federal funds may be used, consult New Jersey's *ESEA* Guide or the relevant law or email the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

DISCLAIMER
Although this guide discusses federal laws and regulations, it is intended solely to provide general information and does not constitute legal advice. This guidance provides a general overview of allowable activities, but whether or not a particular cost can be supported with federal funds depends on the underlying facts and circumstances. Therefore, the fact that an activity is listed in this guidance does not mean it is allowable in all circumstances. Similarly, the fact that an activity is not listed in this guidance does not mean it is not allowable.

---

[1] See Appendix B of New Jersey's *Every Student Succeeds Act* Plan

Part I. District *ESSA* Funding Flexibility

ESSA provides school districts three types of funding flexibility: transferring funds, braiding or coordinating the use of funds, and consolidating funds in a Title I-A schoolwide program. Each of these flexibilities is described in detail below.

Transferring Funds

To provide districts the flexibility to use federal funds received under *ESSA* on those programs and services that would most effectively meet identified student and staff needs, the law allows for districts to transfer some of their federal formula grant funds from one Title to another.[2] A few general rules apply to transfers of funds:

- A district may transfer funds **only from** Title II-A and Title IV-A.
- There are no limits on the amount of funds a district may transfer from those Titles.
- If applicable, a district must consult with the appropriate nonpublic school officials before transferring funds.
- Once funds are transferred, they take on the identity of the Title to which they were transferred and must be spent under rules applicable to that Title.

Districts May Transfer All or Some Funds From:	Districts May Transfer Funds Into:
   - Title II-A, Supporting Effective Instruction - Title IV-A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment	- Title I-A, Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies - Title I-D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk - Title II-A, Supporting Effective Instruction - Title III-A, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement - Title IV-A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment - Title V-B, Rural Education Initiative

"Braiding" or Coordinating the Use of Funds

"Braiding" or coordinating the use of funds is a way for school districts and schools to use multiple federal grants to support various parts of an initiative while maintaining the award-specific identity of the funds and meeting the purpose of each specific grant program. Federal law authorizes LEAs to coordinate spending from different grant programs, provided the activities are permitted under the grant program and the LEA or school maintains documentation on how federal funds are spent. Using multiple funding sources in a coordinated manner to support specific educational initiatives can help to ensure consistency and eliminate duplication of services.

For clarity, an example of braiding funds to support a specific educational initiative is provided here:

---

[2] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 5103(b).

School A receives Title I-A funds and is operating a schoolwide program. The school wishes to implement an early warning system to identify struggling students. The school could use Title I-A funds to support implementation of all aspects of the system.[3] If the school does not have enough Title I-A funds to pay for the entire cost of the system, the district in which it resides could choose to contribute funds it receives under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* to support part of the system.[4] The district could also choose to contribute Title II-A funds to help the school provide professional development to school staff on how to use the data produced by the system to improve student achievement. In this scenario, various grants are coordinated to support the early warning system. The activities are allowable under each applicable grant, yet these grants continue to maintain their identity, and expenditures for each are documented by the school or district.

To help support the braiding of federal funds, Part 2 of this document highlights how funds under different federal programs may be used to support six sample educational initiatives.

Consolidating Funds in a Title I-A Schoolwide Program

A school operating a Title I-A schoolwide program has the flexibility to consolidate (blend) funds from Title I-A with other federal funds as well as with state and local funds. Consolidating funds in a schoolwide program means that a school treats the funds it is consolidating as if they are a single "pool" of funds. In other words, the funds from the contributing programs in the school lose their individual identities and the school has one flexible pool of funds. The school may use this pool of funds to support any activity of the schoolwide program. By consolidating funds in a schoolwide program, a school may more effectively design and implement a comprehensive plan to upgrade the entire educational program in the school. A few general rules apply to consolidating funds in a school operating a schoolwide program:

- **Supplement, not supplant:** Consolidating funds does not exempt a school from the Title I-A "supplement, not supplant" requirement, which requires each district to ensure that each school receives all the state and local funds it would otherwise receive in the absence of Title I-A or other federal funds.[5]
- **Meeting the intent of federal programs:** If a school consolidates federal funds, it must maintain records that demonstrate that it meets the intent and purposes of each federal program that was consolidated.[6] For example, if a school consolidates Title III-A funds with other funds, it must demonstrate how it is still providing supplemental activities/services to English learners and, if applicable, immigrant students, as this is the purpose of Title III-A funds.

For more information on consolidating funds in a schoolwide program, see U.S. Department of Education guidance, NJDOE's website, or email titleone@doe.state.nj.us.

---

[3] U.S. Department of Education guidance, *Using ARRA Funds Provided Through Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Drive School Reform and Improvement*, Section B-2 (2009).
[4] U.S. Department of Education guidance, *Using ARRA Funds Provided Through Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Drive School Reform and Improvement*, Section B-2 (2009).
[5] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 1114(a)(2)(B).
[6] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 1114(a)(3)(C).

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Transferring, Coordinating and Consolidating *ESSA* Funds

	Question	Answer
1	How do school districts begin the process of transferring funds between Titles?	Districts will have the option to transfer funds from applicable Titles and to applicable Titles as part of their annual Electronic Web-Enabled Grant (EWEG) *ESEA* Consolidated application.
2	Can a school district decide to transfer funds from one Title to another during the middle of a grant period? If the answer is yes, is this something the school district must do by way of an amendment in EWEG?	A school district may transfer funds from one Title to another as long as the application has not yet been approved. Once an application has been approved, permission to transfer funds from one Title to another will be determined on a case by case basis. Email eweghelp@doe.state.nj.us for more information.
3	If a school district transfers Title IV, Part A funds to Title III, Part A, does the school district still have to use the funds under Title IV, Part A requirements?	No. Any funds transferred to another Title take on the identity of the Title to which they were transferred. For example, if a school district transfers all of its Title IV, Part A funds to Title III-A, the funds are now considered Title III-A funds and must be used in accordance with the law under Title III-A.
4	Can a school district transfer funds out of Title I-A or Title III-A?	No. Funding may only be transferred out of Title II-A or Title IV-A.
6	If a school district transfers all of its Title II-A funds into Title I-A, does the amount of Title I-A funds reserved for nonpublic schools get calculated using the new total after the transfer of funds?	**Yes.** In accordance with U.S. Department of Education guidance (see page 44), the amount used to provide equitable services to nonpublic school students and personnel must be determined based on the total amount of funding available *after the transfer of any funds*.
5	Can a school district blend funds from Title I-A and Title III-A? If allowed, do the spending rules for Title III-A funds still apply if funds are blended?	Funds may be blended in schoolwide programs only. While the funds lose their identity when consolidated in a schoolwide program, the school district must ensure the purposes of the funds being consolidated are still met (see U.S. Department of Education guidance, page 10). For more information on consolidated use of funds in schoolwide programs email titleone@doe.state.nj.us.

Part II. Using Federal Funds to Support Specific Programs, Activities, and Initiatives

The remainder of this document describes how districts and schools can use different federal funds to support specific educational programs, activities, and initiatives. This guidance focuses on the six initiatives below due to the availability of evidence demonstrating how improvement or investment in them has the potential to improve student outcomes.

- Implementing the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS)
- Focusing on Grade-Level Literacy Rates
- Focusing on Algebra I Outcomes
- Supporting a Positive School Climate
- Focusing on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism
- Increasing Availability of Job-embedded Professional Development

Using Federal Funds to Support the Implementation of the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS)

Implementing the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports

Why Invest in this Initiative?

The New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) is a framework of academic and behavioral supports and interventions to improve student achievement, based on the core components of multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS) and the three-tier prevention logic of Response to Intervention (RTI). With a foundation of strong district and school leadership, a positive climate, and family and community engagement, NJTSS builds upon intervention and referral services, and gives schools a structure to meet the academic, behavioral, health, enrichment and social-emotional needs of all students.
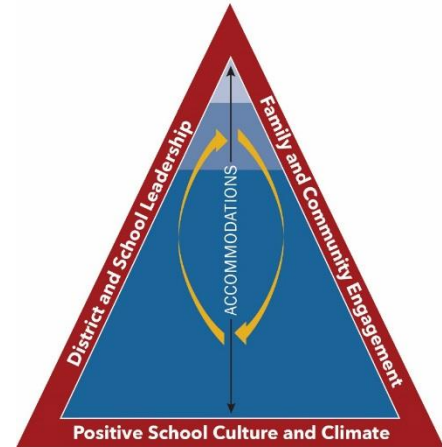
This System Can Help Address:
- Academic, behavioral, social-emotional and health needs of students
- Disproportionality among subgroups in disciplinary practices and in identification for special education services
- Suspension rates
- Academic achievement and achievement of post-secondary goals

NJTSS was developed in collaboration with New Jersey stakeholders, including administrators and other educators from districts implementing an RTI/MTSS model, higher-education experts, and parents. The tiered framework gives schools and districts a systematic way to address learner variability and engage all students in learning the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

NJTSS maximizes the efficient use of resources to improve support for all classroom teachers and targets interventions to students based on their needs. Through regular monitoring of student progress, along with data-based decision making by problem solving teams and providing a continuum of supports and interventions based on student performance, NJTSS offers a variety of evidence-based practices designed to improve achievement and promote positive student outcomes.

Find more information through the NJTSS webpage.

9

How Federal Funds May be Used to Implement the NJTSS

Below you will find some strategies and activities a school or district could support with federal funds to implement the NJTSS. These do not represent all the strategies and activities that may be paid for with federal funds for this purpose. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[7] or contact the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies That May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	In general, **Title I, Part A funds may be used for some or all activities associated with implementing the nine components[8] of NJTSS,[9] including those listed in each of the Titles below.** **Example:** A school receiving Title I funds (schoolwide or targeted) offers a small group intervention for reading to students who demonstrate a need based on the results of a universal screening tool. In such a scenario, Title I funds may be used to: • **Hire/pay for intervention teachers** (e.g., salary) • **Purchase supplementary materials** needed to address students' needs in specific areas of reading • **Purchase and use a data management system**, including data analysis tools, such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g., EdConnect NJ), to help educators manage and analyze student data to improve instruction and decision-making • **Provide professional development on intervention strategies** (e.g., hire consultants, send educators to training, purchase materials) to ensure the effective implementation of interventions
Title II, Part A	In general, **Title II, Part A funds may be used to support professional development for all educators, or a subset of educators, on effectively implementing the nine components of NJTSS**, which may include training on how to[10]: • **Deliver targeted, small group interventions** • **Deliver intensive, customized interventions** aligned to a student's needs • **Use techniques, supports, and referral mechanisms to identify students** at-risk of academic or behavioral difficulties • **Support programs that implement systems and supports for educators** to learn to effectively use data to improve instruction[11] • **Make data-based decisions** regarding when to provide a student with a support or service[12]

---

[7] The *Every Student Succeeds Act.* Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.
[8] See list of nine components of NJTSS.
[9] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Sections 1114(b)(7)(A)(iii)(III) and 1115(b)(2)(B)(ii).
[10] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(F).
[11] U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Support Technology Integration (pg. 3).
[12] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(ii).

Updated 6/26/2017

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies That May Be Funded
Title III, Part A	While funds received under Title III, Part A may be used to support implementation of NJTSS, the allowable uses are more situation specific. Funds may be used to implement some or all activities associated with implementing the nine components of NJTSS **for English language learners (ELLs) and/or immigrant students only.** **Example 1**[13]**:** A school receives an influx of Syrian students with interrupted formal education (SIFEs). Many of these students are several grade levels behind. The district may use Title III, Part A Immigrant funds for the salary of a new trauma counselor to help students with their adjustment to the school. **Example 2**[14]**:** A school has ELLs who need additional instructional time to master the third-grade math curriculum. The district may use its Title III, Part A funds to provide an extended day bilingual math tutorial program (e.g., stipends for teachers, materials and supplies).
Title IV, Part A	In general, **Title IV, Part A funds may be used for many of the activities associated with implementing the nine components**[15] **of NJTSS.**[16] **Note:** These funds may be used in isolation or in coordination with Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A; or *IDEA*, Part B and other funds to implement these components.

---

[13] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(e)(1)(B)
[14] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(3)
[15] See list of nine components of NJTSS.
[16] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(1)-(3) and 4108(5)(G)

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies That May Be Funded
IDEA, Part B	Please note that *IDEA,* Part B funds must be used only to pay the **excess costs** of providing a free and appropriate education (FAPE) to students with disabilities.[17] **Use of *IDEA*, Part B funds to implement NJTSS components may include:** [18] • **Supplementary materials, curricula and services** specific to the needs of only students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), in any of the three tiers of instruction and intervention • **Supplementary assessments and accommodations** that are necessary to include students with disabilities in any district assessment process (e.g., an alternate assessment for reading administered to students with more significant disabilities on the same schedule as the district's reading assessment administered to all other students) • **Staff members** whose participation in instruction, problem-solving, data analysis and professional development relates to students with disabilities (e.g., special education teacher, school psychologist, learning consultant, behaviorist, social worker)[19] • **Activities to promote parent and family engagement and positive school climate** when including students with disabilities and/or their families • **Supports, interventions, and activities necessary for the integration/ inclusion** of students with disabilities • **Activities to help reduce paperwork**[20], including expanding the use of technology in the IEP process (e.g., a data management system, such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g., EdConnect NJ)) Students with IEPs may receive instruction at any tier in NJTSS in addition to the supports provided in their IEPs. Some examples include: **Example 1:** A student with an IEP is receiving a small-group intervention for reading, available to students with and without IEPs who demonstrate need. IDEA, Part B funds may be used to purchase a tablet for the student with an IEP since it is an excess cost specific to the needs of that student. The tablet is an individualized support that enables the student to participate with nondisabled peers in the general education, small-group intervention. **Example 2:** A student with an IEP uses a specific software program during small group time in the literacy block (general education class, Tier 1) as per his IEP. IDEA, Part B funds may be used to purchase the software.

---

[17] *IDEA* 613(a)(2)(A)

[18] *IDEA* 613(a)(4)(A)

[19] *IDEA* 613(a)(4)(A)(i)

[20] U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Support Technology Integration (pg. 4)

Updated 6/26/2017

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies That May Be Funded
IDEA, Part B, Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)	**Context:** LEAs may use up to 15% of their IDEA, Part B funds to assist students in grades K-12 who are not currently identified as needing special education and related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support.[21] Such *IDEA*, Part B-CEIS funds can be used: • **To provide professional development**[22] • **In coordination with *ESEA* funds**, but must supplement not supplant *ESEA* funds for specific intervention activities[23] **Example:** The district has determined through a screening that 15 students in first grade require a small group, Tier 2 intervention in reading. The district may use its IDEA, Part B-CEIS funds to pay for the teacher and the materials for that intervention for those identified students. The students receiving this intervention would be part of the CEIS tracking mechanism.
Consolidated Use of Funds in a Title I, Schoolwide Program (blending *ESEA* and *IDEA* funds)[24]	

An LEA may use funds received under *IDEA*, Part B for any fiscal year to carry out an approved Title I schoolwide program.

- The amount of *IDEA,* Part B funds used in any school with an approved Title I schoolwide program may not exceed the number of children with disabilities in the school participating in the schoolwide program divided by the number of children with disabilities in the jurisdiction of that agency. In other words, the percentage of *IDEA,* Part B funds the district uses in the school with an approved schoolwide program must be consistent with the percentage of students with disabilities in that school relative to the number of students with disabilities in the district as a whole.

Example: Five students with disabilities participate in a Tier 2 general education reading intervention (occurs three times per week, in addition to the literacy block) in one school that has a Title I schoolwide program. The district may use *IDEA*, Part B funds alone or in combination with other federal, state or local funds to support the program, as long as such use complies with the formula above.

---

[21] *IDEA* Section 613(f)
[22] *IDEA* Section 613(f)(2)(A)
[23] *IDEA* Section 613(f)(5)
[24] *IDEA* Section 613(a)(2)(D)

Updated 6/26/2017

Using Federal Funds to Focus on Grade-Level Literacy Rates

Focusing on Grade-Level Literacy Rates

Why Invest in this Initiative?
Literacy is one of the most important indicators of a child's success, not only as a student, but as a communicator, a citizen, and a professional.[25] Beyond just reading fluency and comprehension, being literate means being an effective communicator, a discerning and critical consumer of information, and a capable problem solver. There is overwhelming evidence that a child's early literacy education is critical to his or her academic success.[26]

Recent assessment results demonstrate that only about half of all New Jersey students, and about a third of economically disadvantaged students, in grades 3-8 met or exceeded grade-level expectations on 2015-16 statewide English language arts assessments.[27]

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Grade-Level Literacy Rates
Below are some strategies and activities a school or district could support with federal funds to focus on grade-level literacy rates. These do not represent all the strategies and activities that may be paid for with federal funds for this purpose. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[28] or contact the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	• **Aligned assessment:** Hiring a curriculum coordinator to create formative literacy assessments (short quizzes, exit tickets) strongly aligned to the NJ Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) • **Additional instructional time:** Creating before school or afterschool programming with a focus on targeted reading practice • **Specialists**[29]**:** Investing in library media and other literacy specialists to support literacy instruction and engagement • **Professional development:** Hiring coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development in instructional best practices related to literacy • **Parent and family engagement**[30]**:** Engaging families in afterschool family literacy programs • **Student screening and evaluation:** Conducting universal screenings to identify students' academic abilities to provide targeted instruction and early intervention • **Early interventions:** Providing differentiated, data-driven, small-group instruction for reading intervention • **Early learning:** Supporting best practices in preschool literacy curricula • **Data-driven instruction:** Using a data dashboard or data management system, such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g. EdConnect NJ) to track and analyze data for targeted interventions and/or hiring a data expert to build teacher capacity in tracking and drawing actionable conclusions from student data

---

[25] Dickinson, David K., and Susan B. Neuman, eds. *Handbook of early literacy research*. Vol. 2. Guilford Press, 2007.

[26] "Early Literacy." Family and Community Engagement Research Compendium. Scholastic.

[27] See 2015-2016 PARCC Assessment Results

[28] The *Every Student Succeeds Act*. Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.

[29] Lance, Keith Curry. "The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement." (1992).

[30] Henderson, Anne T., and Karen L. Mapp. "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. Annual Synthesis 2002." *National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools* (2002).

Updated 6/26/2017

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Grade-Level Literacy Rates *continued*

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title II, Part A	• **Curriculum training**[31]**:** Training for teachers and school leaders around curriculum review, analysis and evaluation, and effectively integrating technology, including ensuring alignment of the literacy program to the NJSLS • **Integrating literacy:** Providing training on how to integrate literacy instruction into other subject areas such as mathematics, science, etc. • **Sharing best practices**[32]**:** Supporting professional learning communities (PLCs) for sharing best practices around literacy instruction, assessment, intervention, and data review • **Teacher review time**[33]**:** Providing teachers with additional time to review student literacy data to effectively create and respond to assessment results (e.g., stipends for teachers to conduct data reviews once a week as an activity above and beyond the normal review time that occurs during contracted hours) • **Data driven instruction**[34]**:** Training teachers, school leaders and administrators to effectively use technology to support student success in literacy (e.g., using available programs to utilize data tracking effectively), and/or training on effectively using a data management system to help improve instruction and decision-making • **School library programs**[35]**:** Investing in effective school library services to support literacy instruction
Title III, Part A	• **Family support and engagement**[36]**:** Providing family literacy services, parent and family outreach, and training activities to ELLs and their families to support the English language skills of ELLs and encourage parents and families to become active participants in the education of their children • **Technology to support literacy development for ELLs**[37]**:** Incorporating educational technology or instructional materials into curricula and programs to support literacy instruction for ELLs; this could include purchasing materials in the ELL's native language to facilitate literacy instruction
Title IV, Part A[38]	• **Utilizing technology:** Training teachers, school leaders and administrators to effectively use technology, including data management systems such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g., EdConnect NJ), to support student success in literacy • **Teacher collaboration around best practices:** Using technology to support teacher collaboration to effectively discover and share high-quality literacy resources • **Effective use of technology:** Investing in technology (e.g. hardware, software, or data management systems) to help improve literacy outcomes

---

[31] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E) and (M).
[32] U.S. Department of Education Title II, Part A Guidance at p. 15
[33] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(H).
[34] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(i) and (ii).
[35] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(K).
[36] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(6).
[37] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(7).
[38] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4109(a)(1).

Updated 6/26/2017

Using Federal Funds to Focus on Algebra I Outcomes

Focusing on Algebra I Outcomes

Why Invest in this Initiative?
"It is frequently called the gatekeeper subject. It is used by professionals ranging from electricians to architects to computer scientists. It is no less than a civil right." MacArthur Fellow Robert Moses is referring to algebra, the subject in which a student's success is considered an indicator for success in all future high school and college math courses. Proficiency in algebra increases the chance of completing a baccalaureate degree and earning more when entering the workforce. [39] Success in algebra is not only important for students who go on to college, but also for students who want to pursue high-paying careers that don't require a baccalaureate degree, such as electrical work, plumbing and upholstering.[40]

Success in algebra is vital to students' college and career readiness and, because of that, the New Jersey State Board of Education recently voted to, starting in 2021, require students to demonstrate proficiency in Algebra I prior to graduating high school.

However, recent assessment results demonstrate that only about 40% of tested New Jersey students met or exceeded expectations on the 2015-16 statewide Algebra I assessment.[41]

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Algebra I Outcomes
Below you will find some strategies and activities a school or district could support with federal funds to focus on algebra I curriculum, instruction, and outcomes. These do not represent all the strategies and activities that may be paid for with federal funds for this purpose. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[42] or contact the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	• **Aligned assessments:** Hiring a curriculum coordinator to create formative assessments (short quizzes, exit tickets) tightly aligned to the NJSLS for Algebra I • **Additional instruction:** Creating before school or afterschool programming with a focus on Algebra I practice, and/or embedding algebra practice in other subjects or extra-curricular activities • **Classroom engagement**[43]**:** Investing in supplementary materials for research-based improvement strategies, such as manipulatives and digital tools to engage students and allow them to access course content • **Student screening and evaluation:** Conducting universal screenings to identify students' academic abilities to provide targeted instruction and early intervention • **Data-driven instruction:** Using a data dashboard or using a data management system, such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g., EdConnect NJ), to track and analyze data for targeted interventions and/or hiring a data expert to build teacher capacity in tracking and drawing actionable conclusions from student data

---

[39] *Why Is Algebra So Important?* Great Schools, 2016.

[40] *Math Matters: The Links Between High School Curriculum, College Graduation, and Earnings.* 2016.

[41] See 2015-2016 PARCC Assessment Results

[42] The *Every Student Succeeds Act.* Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.

[43] Christopher R. Rakes, Jeffrey C. Valentine, Maggie B. McGatha, and Robert N. Ronau. Methods of Instructional Improvement in Algebra: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. Review of Educational Research September 2010 80: 372-400

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Algebra I Outcomes *continued*

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A *cont.*	• **Professional development:** Hiring instructional coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development in instructional best practices • **Parent and family engagement**[44]**:** Developing a community plan to engage families and the community in afterschool mathematics programs[45] • **Improving access:** Developing and implementing programs to prepare students for Algebra I courses in middle school, including expanding course offerings and funding support programs to help improve student success in such courses
Title II, Part A	• **Curriculum training**[46]**:** Training for teachers and school leaders around curriculum review, analysis and evaluation, and effectively integrating technology, including ensuring the alignment of the Algebra 1 program to NJSLS Algebra 1 standards • **Sharing best practices**[47]**:** Supporting PLCs for sharing best practices around Algebra I instruction, assessment, intervention, and data review • **Teacher review time**[48]**:** Providing teachers with additional time to review student Algebra I data to effectively create and respond to assessment results (e.g., stipends for teachers to conduct data reviews once a week as an activity above and beyond the normal review time that occurs during contracted hours) • **Training on the use of technology**[49]: Training on how to use technology to improve instructional strategies and to collect and use data from a data management system[50] to inform instruction
Title III, Part A	• **Advancing Algebra I education for ELLs**[51]**:** Providing intensified instruction, which may include the purchase or development of materials in a student's home language, or the use interpreters and translators, to support Algebra I outcomes for ELLs
Title IV, Part A[52]	• **Data driven instruction:** Training teachers, school leaders and administrators to effectively use technology to support student success in Algebra I (e.g., using available programs to utilize data tracking effectively) • **Teacher collaboration around best practices:** Using technology to support teacher collaboration, in order to effectively discover and share high-quality Algebra I resources • **Effective use of technology:** Investing in technology, like hardware (e.g., tablets) or programs to help improve Algebra I outcomes; this may include training educators on effective use of technology to improve instruction

---

[44] Henderson, Anne T., and Karen L. Mapp. "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. Annual Synthesis 2002." *National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools* (2002).

[45] See examples of how to partner with families to improve student math skills.

[46] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E) and (M).

[47] ED's Title II, Part A Guidance at p. 15

[48] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(H).

[49] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(i)

[50] U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Support Technology Integration (pg. 3)

[51] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(3).

[52] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4109(a)(1).

Using Federal Funds to Support a Positive School Climate

Supporting a Positive School Climate

Why Invest in this Initiative?
An enduring safe and positive school climate is essential for fostering learning and positive youth development that results in productive and fulfilling lives. The establishment and maintenance of positive school climates and cultures, as is the case with other school improvement efforts, require reliable data from which to identify strengths and concerns and draw actionable conclusions. Schools can use climate data to promote meaningful staff, family and student engagement and to enhance conditions for learning.

Needs that a positive school climate can impact:
- Chronic absenteeism
- Discipline rates, including incidents of bullying and violence in schools
- Alcohol and drug use
- Academic outcomes
- Graduation rates

The NJDOE has been providing leadership to New Jersey schools in the implementation of high-quality programs and services towards developing and maintaining safe and positive learning environments for students and staff.[53] For instance, the NJDOE, in collaboration with the Bloustein Center for Survey Research at Rutgers University, developed, validated and disseminated the New Jersey School Climate Survey (NJSCS) and supportive materials. The NJDOE provides the NJSCS as a free resource on the Department's website to assist schools in assessing their conditions for learning through diverse school populations (i.e., students, staff and families). The NJSCS data supports schools in identifying areas of strength, as well as conditions for learning in need of improvement.

In addition, the NJDOE is currently collaborating with Rutgers University, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology, on the School Climate Transformation Project (SCTP) to assist selected schools in measuring school climate through the utilization of the NJSCS and other school-based data. Participating schools are provided with technical assistance and training to develop a school climate improvement process, which includes:
- Administering the NJSCS
- Interpreting survey results and other related data
- Developing a school climate improvement plan
- Evaluating and modifying the improvement plan

---

[53] Visit the NJDOE's Keeping Our Kids Safe, Healthy & In School webpage for more information.

Domains of School Climate[54]

Research emphasizes the importance of using data to inform planning, guide implementation, and evaluate school improvement efforts. A school's climate is the product of multiple dimensions, such as the physical environment, morale in the school community, student relationships and others. By analyzing the data specific to each dimension or domain, a school will be able to focus on key areas to improve the quality of its school climate. The following eight domains are found to have a significant influence on the quality of a school's climate and the conditions for learning:

- **Physical Environment:** Focuses on scheduling, use of the building, and attitudes towards the building
- **Teaching and Learning:** Focuses on the academic climate of the school and measures support for student development, levels of instructional challenge and relevance, and attitudes about "ownership" (i.e., a sense of personal responsibility for teaching and learning and personal pride in successfully achieving academic objectives) by students of learning and teachers of teaching; it also includes general attitudinal measures of satisfaction with the school's overall instructional quality
- **Morale in the School Community:** Addresses the ownership of and identification with the school's central character, as well as a call to all stakeholders for "belonging" to the school
- **Student Relationships:** Addresses the degree to which relationships between students are open, honest, respectful and promote positive outcomes above negative, preventable outcomes
- **Parental Support:** Addresses the degree to which parents and community members are incorporated in both the social and academic environments of the school
- **Safety:** Addresses attitudes toward the individual's sense of physical safety in and around the school
- **Emotional Environment:** Addresses attitudes toward the social environment, including how students should behave, how they actually do behave, as well as the general fairness of the school
- **Perception of Administration Support**: The school leadership's perceived ability to support and rally the school community to healthy and positive outcomes in quality of communications, level of integrity, ease of teamwork, as well as the promotion of professional and academic success

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Support a Positive School Climate

Below you will find some strategies and activities a school or district could support with federal funds to support a positive school climate. These do not represent all the strategies and activities that may be paid for with federal funds for this purpose. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[55] or contact the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	- **Implement a tiered system of supports** (see NJTSS section on page 9)**:** Purchasing tools and training for educators on universal screening processes; and/or purchase of and training on data systems to monitor mental health, behavioral health, and academic progress

---

[54] See the NJDOE's School Climate Survey Administration Guide for more information.
[55] The *Every Student Succeeds Act.* Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Support a Positive School Climate *continued*

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded

Title I, Part A *cont.*	• **Mental and behavioral health services:** Hiring student support personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, etc.) and/or training on and implementation of trauma-informed practices
	• **Social and emotional learning (SEL):** Training school staff on how to implement systemic and evidence-based SEL programs and approaches, which may include:
	   • Purchase of training and program materials
	   • Stipends to school staff for training, including for teacher leaders to lead implementation of SEL programs
	• **Alternative discipline:** Select and train staff on implementing alternative discipline practices, such as restorative justice practices, which may include:
	   • Purchase of training and program materials
	   • Stipends for school staff for training
	• **School safety:** Hire consultants to implement and train staff on intervention practices and coaching related to school safety
	• **Professional development:** Hire instructional coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development in instructional best practices around teaching and learning

Title II, Part A	• **Implement a tiered system of supports** (see NJTSS section on page 9)[56]**:** Training for teachers, principals, and school leaders on effectively implementing a tiered system of academic, emotional and behavioral supports • **Mentoring**[57]**:** Hiring an instructional coach to provide ongoing mentoring and support for new and/or struggling teachers beyond the required 1-1 mentoring support required by New Jersey regulation • **Data driven instruction**[58]**:** Training on how to use data to improve student achievement while ensuring individual student privacy is protected • **Engaging stakeholders**[59]**:** Training on how to effectively engage parents, families, and community partners and coordinate services between school and community • **Linking students to appropriate interventions**[60]**:** Training on how to effectively utilize referral mechanisms that effectively link children to appropriate treatment and intervention services • **Identifying sexual abuse**[61]**:** Training for all school personnel regarding how to prevent and recognize child sexual abuse • **Feedback mechanisms**[62]**:** Developing feedback mechanisms for staff to give school personnel a voice regarding how to improve school climate and working conditions

---

[56] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(F)

[57] Any mentoring paid for with federal funds must be above and beyond New Jersey regulatory requirements (see N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5); *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(B)(iv)

[58] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(ii)

[59] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(iii)

[60] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(I)(ii)

[61] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(L)

[62] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(N)

Updated 6/26/2017

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded

Title III, Part A	• **Acclimating ELL and immigrant students:** Providing support services to acclimate ELL and immigrant students into a welcoming environment, which may include:
	  o **Hiring a community outreach coordinator** to design participation programs and events to engage families[63]
	  o **Purchasing materials to host a family, back to school, or welcome night** for initial and ongoing face-to-face engagement with ELL and immigrant families[64]
	  o **Developing materials in multiple languages** including flyers, letters, and progress reports[65]

Title IV, Part A	• **Leadership networks:** Supporting principals and other school leaders to improve the climate for learning in their schools by paying for principals and other school leaders to attend training and/or engage in PLCs with other school leaders to collaborate on best practices
	• **Reduce exclusionary discipline**[66]**:** Designing and implementing a plan to reduce exclusionary discipline practices in schools, which may include training school staff on school-based restorative justice practices, purchasing training or program materials, and providing stipends for staff trainings
	• **Mental and behavioral health services**[67]**:** Funding school-based mental health service providers or partnerships for individual or group counseling services for students in need
	• **Course offerings**[68]**:** Increasing the availability of, and enrollment in, Advanced Placement, music, arts, world languages, STEM and other elective courses to improve student engagement
	• **Conflict resolution through the humanities**[69]**:** Funding specialized programs in music, arts, and the humanities focused on problem solving and conflict resolution
	• **Incentives for students:** Providing incentives for students for activities that promote a positive climate, including incentives related to:
	  o Student attendance
	  o Parent and family attendance at school events
	  o Zero incidents of violence or suspension
	  o Homework/assignment completion

---

[63] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(c)(3)(A) and (d)(6).

[64] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(6).

[65] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(3)(B) and 3115(d)(9); Any translation paid for Title III, Part A funds must be strictly related to the Title III, Part A program or service. Title III, Part A funds cannot be used to meet civil rights obligations regarding translation.

[66] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(G).

[67] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(B).

[68] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4107(a)(3)(B) (C), (E), (F) and (J).

[69] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4107(a)(3)(B).

Updated 6/26/2017

Using Federal Funds to Focus on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism

Focusing on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism

Why Invest in this Initiative?

Every year, some New Jersey students are at risk of not achieving their highest potentials due to chronic absenteeism. In the 2014-15 school year, about 10% of New Jersey students in grades K-12 were considered chronically absent, with the highest rates typically among students in early grades and high school. Chronic absenteeism is linked with a host of negative outcomes for students including, but not

> **Definition of Chronic Absenteeism**
> For purposes of NJDOE reporting, a student is identified as chronically absent when a district reports that he or she has not been present for 10 percent or more of the days that he or she was enrolled at a school (see NJDOE Guidance for Reporting Student Absences and Calculating Chronic Absenteeism).

limited to, lower proficiency rates in reading and math in elementary and middle school, and higher dropout rates in high school. [70]

There are many factors affecting a student's attendance, including, but not limited to:

- Neighborhood safety concerns (lack of safe routes to school with no available transportation)
- Poverty:
  - o High school students working to contribute income to household
  - o Homelessness/housing instability
  - o Lack of access to food, health care, and/or clothing for inclement weather
- Family responsibilities (e.g. students pulled out of school to translate for family members who need them for daily tasks)
- Suspensions
- Chronic physical or mental health conditions
- Extended family trips
- Poor and/or unsafe school climate (including bullying)
- Disengagement due to academic struggles or not being challenged

Of course, some of these factors are within a school's locus of control, and some are not. Suggested programs and activities to address rates of chronic absenteeism focus on factors within the control of the school district, school, and administrators.

---

[70] Rice, Cynthia. "Showing up Matters: The State of Chronic Absenteeism in New Jersey." (2015), p. 1.

Features of Successful Interventions to Address Chronic Absenteeism[71]

The NJDOE recommends specific, targeted interventions to address the causes of chronic absenteeism in each school or district that has identified chronic absenteeism as an issue. For this reason, the programs, activities and intervention strategies may look different from school to school or district to district. However, there are several best practices that successful interventions have in common, some of which appear below:

1. **Identifying the root cause and implementing targeted solutions:** Causes of chronic absenteeism vary greatly. Be sure to choose solutions that meet specific, identified needs of students within the school/district.

2. **Engaging families early and often:** Families can play a significant role in identifying and confirming root causes for chronic absenteeism and the most effective solutions. Communicate student progress to families regularly in an easy-to-understand format.

3. **Utilizing collaborative problem-solving teams and differentiate supports and interventions:** Implement a tiered system of supports framework tailored to each student's circumstances.

4. **Establishing partnerships**: Strong family and community partnerships contribute to the nurturing of the whole child and his or her attendance. Partners to consider include families, service providers, Family Crisis Intervention Units, Mobile Response and Stabilization Services, housing authorities, the medical community, and faith-based organizations.

5. **Creating ongoing accountability and support structures**: Put structures in place to monitor students' attendance data at least once daily and track progress of chronically absent students to provide early and ongoing support. This could include providing mentors, coaches, and case managers to enhance relationship building and accountability for students. This could also include ongoing positive messaging on the importance of coming to school and/or establishing an early warning system that will indicate when a student is in danger of becoming chronically absent, and the most appropriate intervention to reinforce the student's attendance.

6. **Improving school climate:** Foster a warm and supportive school climate that emphasizes positive, proactive, and preventive practices aligned to a student's sense of physical and emotional safety. Students should experience joy in being present in school.

7. **Considering the needs of the school's community of learners:** Develop programming and structures that reflect the school community's specific needs. This could include offering early morning child care, after school child care, meal programs and other programs established to support the school community. This may also include creating opportunities for family counseling, hosting parent workshops encouraging student attendance, and establishing a team to conduct home visits and/or other more involved interventions for students with excessive absences.

---

[71] "Making the Case for Tracking Chronic Absence ." www.attendanceworks.org. Attendance Works , Feb. 2014. Web. Dec. 2016; See NJDOE's webpage of Truancy and Absenteeism for more information.

Updated 6/26/2017

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism

Below you will find some strategies and activities a school or district could support with federal funds to focus on rates of chronic absenteeism. These do not represent all the strategies and activities that may be paid for with federal funds for this purpose. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[72] or contact the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	• **Mental health services**[73]**:** Implementing schoolwide mental health programs, which could include hiring full- or part-time school counselors or other health professionals • **Mentors for students:** Hiring mentors for students to monitor and support student attendance • **Incentives and rewards**[74]**:** Providing financial incentives and rewards for teachers with improved class attendance in schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support • **Two-generational services**[75]**:** Designing two generational services, which support both students and parents with health, safety, and educational outcomes • **Universal screening**[76]**:** Partnering with outside organizations or consultants to conduct universal screenings to identify students' academic abilities and provide targeted instruction and early interventions

Title II, Part A	• **Professional development:** Provide professional development:
	   ○ **Focused on how to promote success and attendance** in early grades[77]
	   ○ **Focused on how to effectively engage parents, families, and community partners** and how to coordinate services between school and community[78]
	   ○ **Focused on addressing issues related to school conditions** for student learning, such as safety, peer interaction, drug and alcohol abuse, and chronic absenteeism[79]
	   ○ **Designed to help all school personnel identify reasons for absenteeism such as how to recognize child sexual abuse**[80]

---

[72] The *Every Student Succeeds Act.* Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.

[73] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 1114(b)(7)(iii)(I); *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 1115(b).

[74] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 1113(c)(4).

[75] U.S. Department of Education, Supporting School Reform by Leveraging Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program, pp. 4-5 (2016).

[76] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Sections 1114(b)(7)(A)(iii)(III) and 1115(b)(2)(B)(ii).

[77] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(G)(i).

[78] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(iii).

[79] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(I)(iv).

[80] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(L).

Updated 6/26/2017

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Focus on Rates of Chronic Absenteeism *continued*

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded

Title III, Part A	• **Acclimating ELL and immigrant students:** Providing support services to acclimate ELL and immigrant students into a welcoming environment, which may include:
	  ○ **Hiring a community outreach coordinator** to design participation programs and events to engage families[81]
	  ○ **Purchasing materials to host a family, back to school, or welcome night** for initial and ongoing face-to-face engagement with ELL and immigrant families[82]
	  ○ **Developing materials in multiple languages** including flyers, letters, and progress reports[83]

Title IV, Part A	• **Attendance officers[84]:** Hiring attendance officers to monitor student attendance • **Data management[85]:** Purchasing and training staff on data management systems to properly manage and analyze student attendance data • **Reduce exclusionary discipline[86]:** Designing and implementing a plan to reduce exclusionary discipline practices in schools, which may include training school staff on school-based restorative justice practices, purchasing training or program materials, and providing stipends for staff trainings • **Drug and violence prevention[87]:** Partnering with nonprofits to create drug and violence prevention programs as well as programs to prevent bullying and harassment • **Supporting an active lifestyle[88]:** Hiring additional school nurses or health educators to support a healthy, active lifestyle (may include nutritional education programs) • **Parent liaisons[89]:** Recruiting parent liaisons to help build and maintain positive relationships with families • **Trauma-informed care[90]:** Hiring school counselors and other specialized personnel to provide trauma services for students in need • **Course offerings[91]:** funding arts, music, world language, hands-on STEM and other elective programs to encourage student engagement and attendance **Note:** many of these activities may also be supported with Title I, Part A funds

---

[81] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(c)(3)(A) and (d)(6).

[82] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(6).

[83] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 3115(d)(3)(B) and 3115(d)(9); Any translation paid for Title III, Part A funds must be strictly related to the Title III, Part A program or service. Title III, Part A funds cannot be used to meet civil rights obligations regarding translation.

[84] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(C)(v).

[85] U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Support Technology Integration (pg. 3).

[86] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(G).

[87] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(A)(i-ii); Any program paid for with federal funds must be above and beyond New Jersey regulatory requirements (see N.J.A.C. 6A:16-3.1 and 7).

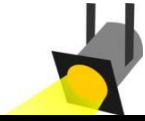[88] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(C)(ii).

[89] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(3).

[90] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4108(5)(B)(i) and (ii).

[91] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4107(a)(3)(B), (C), (F) and (J).

Spotlight on a New Jersey School District

Paterson Middle School Addresses Chronic Absenteeism

In just one year, a Paterson middle school was able to decrease the number of students who were chronically absent from 152 students in the 2012-13 school year, to just 36 students in 2013-14, **a *76% decrease*.**[92]

How did they do it?

1. **Identified root-causes:** By **engaging families**, the school was able to identify neighborhood safety concerns as a leading cause of chronic absenteeism for students.
2. **Implemented targeted solutions:** The school:
   a. Organized a **community walk to school program** to ensure students arrive safely from home to school, and back again
   b. Established "success mentors" to provide ongoing support for students
   c. Provided consistent **communication on student progress to parents**

Through a targeted, systemic approach, the school was able to promote **physical and emotional safety** for students not just outside the school, but inside the walls of the school as well. Not only did students have safe routes to and from school, but upon arrival they could look forward to a welcome from their mentors and receive a variety of rewards for their improved attendance.

While it is unclear how this initiative was funded, the school could have used Title I, Part A funds on events to engage parents in the root cause analysis and to hire or provide stipends to the success mentors (particularly effective if the school operated a schoolwide program). In addition, the school district could, in subsequent years, use Title IV, Part A funds on an early warning data tracking system to identify students at-risk of becoming chronically absent. These are just some examples of how this type of initiative can be supported with federal funds received under *ESSA*.

---

[92] Rice, Cynthia. "Showing up Matters: The State of Chronic Absenteeism in New Jersey." (2015), p.8.

Updated 6/26/2017

Using Federal Funds to Increase the Availability of Job-Embedded Professional Development

<u>Increasing Availability of Job-Embedded Professional Development</u>[93]

Why Invest in this Initiative?

According to *ESSA*, professional development funded with *ESSA* funds must be an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing educators…with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards.[94] In addition, professional development funded with *ESSA* funds must include activities that are sustained (not stand-alone, one-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused. In brief, this definition entails that professional development supported by federal funds should be tightly linked to the educational needs of students and should be accomplished through ongoing, collective efforts by the educators responsible for those students.

By supporting ongoing job-embedded professional learning and development activities, school districts can improve the impact of their professional development investments. Job-embedded professional development is grounded in the everyday practice of educators, is primarily school- or classroom-based, is aligned with student performance standards and goals, and includes ongoing assessments of student progress to guide improvements to classroom instruction. Through job-embedded activities, teachers and leaders seek solutions to authentic and immediate problems of practice as part of a cycle of continuous improvement. [95]

Professional learning communities (PLCs), classroom walk-throughs, peer-to-peer observations, study groups, teacher portfolios, instructional coaching, new teacher mentoring and support systems, data teams, and critical friends groups are all examples of job-embedded professional learning. Many of these depend on teacher collaboration and teamwork and allow teachers to actively benefit from the professional knowledge and experience held by colleagues while learning together to improve their practice. In addition, important job-embedded learning takes place through the implementation of teacher evaluation systems that support both focused conversations about practice and attention to student growth over time.

Job-embedded professional development can flourish within a school community that prioritizes a focus on student results, dedicates structured time for teachers to collaborate around common goals, and provides a safe space for colleagues to share successes and challenges. In sum, the most powerful professional learning takes place "in the workplace, not in a workshop."[96]

Needs That Can Be Addressed Through Job-Embedded Professional Development

Job-embedded professional learning is foundational to impactful educator development and growth because it is a mechanism for transferring knowledge and training into deep learning that changes practice. Rather than being considered as a separate initiative, it should be considered as an operative model for educators' professional practice. General and special educators of all grade-levels and content areas, educational services personnel such as counselors and librarians, and district and school leaders benefit from being actively engaged in continuous learning in support of student success.

---

[93] See the NJDOE's Professional Development webpage for information on professional development in New Jersey

[94] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 8101(42)

[95] Croft, A. et al. (2010). Job-Embedded Professional Development: What It Is, Who Is Responsible, and How to Get It Done Well. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ), *Issue Brief*, April 2010.

[96] Dufour, R. (2004). The best staff development is in the workplace, not in a workshop. *Journal of Staff Development*, v.25, no. 2, Spring 2004.

Updated 6/26/2017

For over 15 years New Jersey has been developing and refining a policy and guidance framework to support high quality professional learning, including the adoption of a set of standards for professional learning and professional development components that prioritize job-embedded and collaborative work structures.

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Implement Job-Embedded Professional Learning

Because job-embedded professional learning is a way of "doing business," and not a stand-alone initiative, many different funding streams can potentially be used to support this type of professional engagement as appropriate to each fund's priorities. For more information on whether a specific activity or program may be funded with a specific federal funding source, consult the law[97] or email the appropriate program office (see list of contacts in Appendix A).

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded
Title I, Part A	• **Professional learning communities (PLCs):** Funding any of the activities outlined in the NJDOE's guidance regarding uses of funds to support PLCs • **Collaborative planning time:** Providing collaborative time before, during, or after school for teachers (may include time for PLCs, student data analysis, development of common assessments, etc.) • **Coaching supports:** Providing coaches and other supports to help teachers improve instructional practices (e.g., salary for a coach, and stipends to educators to attend trainings after school, in summer etc.) • **Use of data:** Training for teachers and school leaders on how to review and use data to inform curriculum and instruction and set goals for student growth (can include stipends for data teams) • **Mentoring and peer supports**[98]**:** Extending mentoring and peer supports for new and/or struggling teachers that goes beyond the required 1-1 mentoring support required by New Jersey regulation (consider how technology can support this initiative) **Note:** many of these activities may also be supported with Title IV, Part A funds
Title II, Part A	• **Evaluation, feedback, and support**[99]**:** Providing supplemental training to improve building principals' and other school leaders' abilities to evaluate and provide feedback and support to teachers and leaders (e.g. New Jersey Achievement Coaches project) • **School leader observation calibration:** Providing opportunities for principals and other school leaders to calibrate observation and scoring protocols for teacher evaluations • **Teacher leaders:** Providing opportunities for teacher leaders to engage in informal observations and peer coaching • **Peer-to-peer support**[100]**:** Creating networks of support for new teachers, to extend support beyond the 1-1 mentoring requirement required by New Jersey regulation (consider how technology can support this initiative)

---

[97] The *Every Student Succeeds Act.* Ed.gov, 2015. December 7 2016.

[98] Any mentoring paid for with federal funds must be above and beyond New Jersey regulatory requirements (see N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5).

[99] Any evaluator training paid for with federal funds must be above and beyond New Jersey regulatory requirements (see N.J.A.C. 6A:10-2.2); *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(A).

[100] Any mentoring paid for with federal funds must be above and beyond New Jersey regulatory requirements (see N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5); *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(B)(iv).

How Federal Funds May Be Used to Implement Job-Embedded Professional Learning *continued*

Source	Sample Activities/Strategies that May Be Funded

Title II, Part A *cont.*	• **Professional development**[101]**:** Providing professional development activities across a range of grade and content areas that are aligned to district and school goals; this could include:
	    o Training and coaching on implementing PLC[102]
	    o Training and coaching on effectively using data management systems, such as an Instructional Improvement System (e.g., EdConnect NJ), to improve instruction
	    o Training and coaching on how to integrate career and technical education and workforce skills into curriculum and instruction
	    o Creating dedicated collaborative time for teams of teacher leaders to develop and deliver professional development
	    o Creating opportunities for teachers to develop portfolios of work for purposes of self-reflection and to provide evidence of effective instruction
	• **Assessments**[103]**:** Training, technical assistance, and capacity-building around assessments to assist teachers, principals, or other school leaders with selecting and implementing formative assessments, designing classroom-based assessments, and using data from such assessments to improve instruction and student academic achievement

Title III, Part A	• **Mentoring:** Hiring bilingual coach to provide additional mentoring to first-year and/or struggling bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) teachers beyond what is minimally required by New Jersey regulation • **Supporting ELLs:** Training on *FABRIC - A Learning Paradigm for ELLs* to equip all teachers of ELLs with the knowledge and skills necessary to increase ELLs' access to classroom content as they acclimate to an English learning environment • **Common planning time:** Creating dedicated collaborative time for bilingual and ESL teachers to collectively plan, review data, and infuse rigor into the bilingual and/or ESL curriculum
Title IV, Part A	• **Technology to improve collaboration and professional learning**[104]**:** Increasing opportunities for collaboration by improving access to digital professional learning resources and creating online communities of practice within and/or outside of the district • **Blended learning**[105]**:** Improving/creating opportunities for teachers to learn about blended learning model instruction and receive personalized support for implementation • **Curriculum development**[106]**:** Creating curriculum development opportunities to strengthen STEM, accelerated learning, civics, music, arts, and world languages programs
IDEA, Part B	• **Improving instruction for students with disabilities:** Coaching and professional development to assist teachers in delivering improved instruction for students with disabilities (can include special education teachers and general education teachers that serve students with disabilities)

---

[101] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(E).
[102] Visit this NJDOE Professional Development webpage for more information.
[103] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 2103(b)(3)(H).
[104] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4109(a).
[105] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4109(a)(4)
[106] *ESEA* as amended by *ESSA* Section 4107(a)(3)(B) (C), (E), (F) and (J).

Updated 6/26/2017

Appendix A: New Jersey Department of Education Contacts

Below is a list of funding sources and topics about which you may have questions or encounter issues. If you have any questions, concerns, or issues with any of the topics listed below, please visit the appropriate linked website. If you cannot find the information you need or resolve your issue, feel free to reach out to the appropriate office. Additionally, your county office may be able to answer questions related to budgets, funding, and reporting requirements. Find your county office's contact information here.

Funding Source/Topic	Division/Office	Email Address	Website (if any)
ESEA/ESSA (General)	Public Affairs	essa@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/ESSA/
Title I, Part A	Supplemental Educational Programs	titleone@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/
Title II, Part A	Teaching and Learning	sandy.oneil@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/ESSA/
Title III, Part A	Supplemental Educational Programs	ell@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/bilingual/title3/spending.htm
Title IV, Part A	Teaching and Learning	titleIVA@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/ESSA/
Non-public Schools	Nonpublic Ombudsman	nonpublic.ombudsman@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/nonpublic/federal/
Grant Applications (EWEG)	Grants Management	eweghelp@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/grants/
Education of Homeless Children	Supplemental Educational Programs	homeless@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/homeless/sites.htm
Educational Stability of Students In Foster Care	Supplemental Educational Programs	edstability@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/edservices/stability/
21st Century Community Learning Centers	Student Support Services	NJOST@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/21cclc/
Regional Achievement Centers (RACs)/School Improvement	Comprehensive Support	RAC@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.state.nj.us/education/rac/
School Climate	Student Support Services	SchoolClimate@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/sandp/climate/
IDEA, Part B	Special Education Programs	patricia.gray@doe.state.nj.us	http://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/fund/

Updated 6/26/2017