

Opportunities for Afterschool in ESSA

ESSA, the Every Student Succeeds Act, offers opportunities for coordinating afterschool and school day supports for student success. The attached document lists opportunities in ESSA for afterschool providers, partners and state networks. This cover page reviews important highlights of the law:

1. Planning:

- Reach out to administrators as soon as possible to **become a part of the Title I plans** that will determine the accountability measures and the types of supports schools will use to track and improve student outcomes - at the state level and at the local district level.

2. Title IV B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

- The re-writing of the law means state agencies will be revisiting their request for proposal process for 21st CCLC funds. Under ESSA's meaningful consultation provision afterschool allies can make the case that they should be included among those consulted. **Networks might offer input** on areas such as eligibility criteria, competitive priorities, quality, professional development, outcomes measurement etc. In addition, the percentage of funding that can be set aside by the SEA for training and technical assistance increased in ESSA, so there may be additional opportunities for networks and intermediaries to help support SEAs in the provision of training and technical assistance

3. Title I Interventions:

- Portions of this section such as "Targeted Assistance to Schools" **specifically mention after-school programs** as an instructional strategy to boost student achievement. Make sure you inform parents and administrators of this option and connect it with high quality programs in their area.

4. Title I Accountability

- ESSA allows for states to define an additional indicator of academic progress and an indicator of school quality/student success in the new statewide accountability systems. Networks may **advance indicators such as attendance or behavior** which research connects to improved student graduation rates and which afterschool programs have a long history of supporting. Student engagement is another area that may be considered.

5. Title IV A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

- Districts receiving these funds will have great discretion in how to allocate them. While the law authorized \$1.65 billion for distribution, actual appropriation levels are currently set around \$500 million, meaning many districts may not see substantial grants. Regardless, districts that do receive funds are expected to coordinate them in partnerships with non-profits and funds can be used to pay for **increasing collaborations between schools and STEM afterschool programs** and for funding resource counselors to establish community partnerships, as well as programs to support mentoring and student healthy lifestyles.

The Department of Education has been issuing guidance on ESSA on its webpage. <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html> It also has been soliciting questions at the email: essa.questions@ed.gov.

The Afterschool Alliance is also working to collect questions and provide clarifications specific to the afterschool field on our ESEA webpage

<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyESEALegOverview.cfm>

Opportunities for Expanded Learning Programs in ESSA:

The Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA, passed in December 2015 will get phased into effect starting this summer with applications for formula grants, with competitive grants, such as 21st CCLC RFPs, and accountability systems taking effect in the 2017-18 school year. The law was designed to maximize opportunities for local input and flexible decision-making based on the needs of states and communities. **Many areas in the law provide opportunities to boost student achievement by building and strengthening before, afterschool and summer learning opportunities.**

This document:

1. Explains how afterschool opportunities support the goals of ESSA
2. Identifies opportunities in ESSA which can be used for afterschool programs
3. Identifies how ESSA expects state networks, community groups, programs and parents to be included in the process to ensure that interested parties are at the decision making table

PART I: The benefits of focusing on before-and after-school

The goals of ESSA are to equal the educational playing field for low-income students. Research (Duncan and Murnane 2011) shows parents in the top quintile (20%) of income spend seven times more on enrichments for their children than those in the lowest quintile. Afterschool programs are research supported interventions with proven results in helping schools achieve their goals of graduating academically prepared students on time and ready for college and career. They are also fun.

Quality before school, afterschool and summer programs, among students with regular attendance:

- Increase school-day attendance
- Improve academic achievement
- Close learning gaps
- Reduce risky behaviors
- Promote student interest and engagement

The [Evaluations Backgrounder](#) summarizes these effects including studies which found:

- A “Promising Afterschool Programs Study” in 2007 finding up to two years of academic gains for students with regular attendance in high quality afterschool programs
- 93 percent of principals agree afterschool increases student’s motivation to learn
- 87 percent of high school teachers reported out of school time programs supported improved graduation rates
- A study by Mahoney and Lord (2005) showed students participating in an urban afterschool program had significantly lower rates of obesity than similar students who did not participate

Look for data in your state in the evaluations backgrounder tables, your state fact sheet, America After 3PM or other partners’ resources to showcase the benefits of afterschool at a local level.

PART II: Opportunities for Supporting and Strengthening Afterschool Programs in ESSA

Title I: Opportunities for Afterschool
1. Part A: Sec 1003 School Improvement
<p>This section, which provides the largest pool of authorized support funding in the law - \$15 billion in FY 17 rising gradually to \$16 billion in FY 20 - allows state education agencies to provide grants to local education agencies (LEAs) which have developed comprehensive improvement and support plans. The funding may be given to the LEA or the SEA“(B) may, with the approval of the local educational agency, directly provide for these activities or arrange for their provision through other entities such as school support teams, educational service agencies, or nonprofit or for-profit external providers with expertise in using evidence-based strategies to improve student achievement, instruction, and schools.</p>
<p><i>Opportunities: Afterschool programs can work at both the state and local level if they have the evidence based practices and strategies proven to advance student achievement to inform administrators that they are an option for this funding source. On the SEA level make sure the state makes it clear it knows afterschool is an allowable use. Also if the state develops plans for intervention in struggling schools, make sure afterschool is a prominent use of funds. On the LEA level State Networks can reach out by emailing and calling LEAs, Superintendents, School Boards, PTAs, etc a reminder that afterschool is an allowable Title I use. Collecting examples such as YMCAs who use Title I funds to offer programs can help make the option more viable. Getting a seat at the planning table as LEAs develop their plans might be the easiest and most effective way to make the case.</i></p>
2. Part A: Sec 1004. Direct Student Services
<p>States can reserve up to 3% of Title I funding for services targeted to LEAs identified for comprehensive supports (which receive first priority for funds) or targeted supports (which receive second priority) and individual low-income students (if funding remains) and improvements to pay costs that help students engage in classes not offered by the school in advanced or career coursework or which offer a personalized learning approach including “high-quality academic tutoring” which requires the state to compile and maintain a list of these providers which have demonstrated records of success in increasing student academic achievement.</p>
<p><i>Opportunities: Afterschool programs specializing in personalized learning and/or academic tutoring may look to ask their state to participate in direct services and aim to get their organization on the list of eligible organizations.</i></p>
3. Sec 1008. School-Wide Programs
<p>Schools implementing school wide-programs (eligible schools have 40% or more low-</p>

income children) must have a comprehensive plan developed with parent involvement based on a need assessment that includes identifying at-risk students and targeting interventions including “specialized instructional support services, mentoring services and other strategies to improve students’ skills outside the academic subject areas” (2)(7)(A)(iii)(I). Delivery of services “may be delivered by nonprofit or for profit external providers with expertise in using evidence-based or other effective strategies to improve student achievement.” (3)(D).

Opportunities: State Networks should be able to identify all Title I eligible schools in order to target where to seek out specific targeted communities to provide input at the LEA level for grant applications and comprehensive plans. It might be helpful to look at provider maps to identify areas where these afterschool services are particular lacking. Since school-wide programs allow all students to participate, afterschool providers will be able to offer services supported with these funds to all of a community’s students and families. Make sure parents, teachers and administrators in these communities are aware that the Title I funds granted to their school can be used for afterschool programs before plans are finalized. .

4. Sec. 1009 Targeted Assistance to Schools

Stated program goal: using resources under this part to help eligible children meet the challenging State academic standards, which may include programs, activities, and academic courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education by “(B) using methods and instructional strategies to strengthen the academic program of the school through activities, which may include—“(i) **expanded learning time, before- and afterschool programs, and summer programs and opportunities;** (2) (b)(B)(i)

Opportunities: Language in this section of the law explicitly highlights the use of afterschool (as well as before school and summer) programs to support children eligible for targeted funds. Highlight this point to LEAs and parents. Be prepared to identify programs in these areas which can provide these supports or consider working with these communities receiving targeted funds to develop high quality programs.

5. Sec 1010 Parent and Family Engagement

This section requires meaningful parent and family engagement in the Local Education Agency Plans. Funding is low, a minimum of 1% of an LEAs funds if they receive \$5000 or more. However funds can be used “to support programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school” and for community based organizations with records of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement.

Opportunities: Contact your LEA to find how they plan to engage parents. Provide information to parents through currently operating afterschool programs letting them know how, where and why to engage. Remind parents that quality afterschool programs is an allowed use of Title I funds. If programs in your community work with parents, ask

the LEA to be part of and funded for some of their efforts in parent and community outreach.

6. SEC 1111 State Plans:

Statewide accountability systems must include measurement of all students and subgroups of students on academic achievement and high school graduation rates. States may also choose to measure student growth or “another valid and reliable statewide academic indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance”. Besides academic performance, **all public schools must choose one or more indicators of school quality and student success on measures such as student engagement, educator engagement, access to and completion of advanced coursework, postsecondary readiness, school climate and safety.**

These indicators will be used by states to define (on at least a three year cycle) which schools are identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement (the lowest 5% of schools or schools with graduation rates below 67%) or targeted support (for schools with chronically underperforming subgroups)

Opportunities: Afterschool networks and programs can provide input into which they think is appropriate for their state. As states determine which indicator of school quality they want to choose, the afterschool community can look to see how it can support student growth in that area. For example, if a state selects student engagement, afterschool programs may bring evidence to their LEA of the effects of afterschool programs on student engagement to show how they can be part of student success in this measure.

7. Sec 1112 Local Plans

These plans have the following goals: to ensure that all children receive a high-quality education, and to close the achievement gap between children meeting the challenging State academic standards and those children who are not meeting such standards. Local plans also should, if applicable discuss how the local educational agency will support, coordinate, and integrate services provided under this part with early childhood education programs at the local educational agency or individual school level, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs

Opportunities: Being at the table is ideal since oftentimes school-day administrators, parents and educators required to be at the table are sometimes unfamiliar with the benefits afterschool offers toward closing achievement gaps and providing well-rounded and academic support. If your local area does coordinate with early childhood, some afterschool networks have been successful in informing families transitioning from early child care into the school system about afterschool programs so working families don't experience gaps in full day quality care.

Title I: Getting Involved

STATE LEVEL

Provide Input on the State Plan – State plans are not required to be developed with community-based organizations, but there is no reason not to ask.

- Seek out your state SEA and ask if you/ your network/a provider can be formally included in the development of the process
- Some states are doing listening tours to get community feedback – call your state SEA office and ask what they have planned
- Parents will be included in the planning process, work with parents to become advocates for quality afterschool programs, the same can be said for principals, superintendents etc, ensure they know that afterschool programs are an option for Title I funds
- Once drafted states are required by law to make their State plan public for at least 30 days for comment and must show the US Secretary of Education that public comments were taken into account before the plan will be approved.

LEA LEVEL Plans

Like state plans, local community providers are not explicitly included. Parents are.

Local (LEA) plans are expected to include provisions to engage students in experiential learning, to reduce attendance and discipline problems and to support students targeted for assistance meeting academic achievement levels - all areas where afterschool programs provide strong supports and can help the state reach its goals.

Once created, local plans are only revised “as necessary” so getting your input into the plan now about the opportunities for STEM, physical activity and other elements of quality afterschool programming is an important step.

Title II:

Sec. 2224 Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation- Subgrants to eligible entities in support of kindergarten through grade 12 literacy

The goals of this program are to help states plan for comprehensive literacy instruction from early education through grade 12 and “for States to provide targeted subgrants to early childhood education programs and local educational agencies and their public or private partners to implement evidence-based programs that ensure high-quality comprehensive literacy instruction for students most in need.80% of grant funds are designated for school-age children. Local uses of funds for students in grades K-5 include: “(1) Developing and implementing a comprehensive literacy instruction plan across content areas for such children that—“(A) serves the needs of all children, including children with disabilities and English learners, especially children who are reading or writing below grade level;“(B) provides intensive, supplemental, accelerated, and explicit intervention and support in reading and writing for children whose literacy skills are below grade level; and“(C) supports activities that are provided primarily during the regular school day but that may be augmented by after-school and out-of-school time instruction”. An allowed use of funding for entities receiving subgrants includes “connecting out of school learning opportunities to in school learning in order to support children’s literacy achievement.”

Opportunities: While the small funding and selective nature of this program does not provide broad opportunities, be aware of whether your state has applied for these grants and which local areas may be interested in receiving funding. Programs can then offer to support these efforts with afterschool instruction.

Sec 2226. Innovative Approaches to Literacy

“The Secretary may award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities for the purposes of promoting literacy programs that support the development of literacy skills in low-income communities, including—“(2) **ELIGIBLE NATIONAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘eligible national nonprofit organization’ means an organization of national scope that—“(A) is supported by staff, which may include volunteers, or affiliates at the State and local levels; and “(B) demonstrates effectiveness or high-quality plans for addressing childhood literacy activities for the population targeted by the grant.**

Opportunities: Ensure afterschool providers offering these high quality types of literacy services are aware of this funding stream

Title IV:

Sec. 4104 State Uses of Funds

States must use at least 95% of these funds for allotments to LEA, only 1% for administration, and the remaining percent can be sent on various support, training and TA including coordinating programs, funding streams at the state level to make it easier for LEAs to coordinate with other agencies, community based providers and programs

1. Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

This section provides funding to local school districts for schools with the greatest identified needs. Minimum allocation is \$10,000. Funds in excess of \$30,000 in allocations are to be spent based a needs assessment conducted by LEAs every 3 years. Funds must “coordinated with other schools and community based services and programs” and may be conducted in partnerships including with non-profit organizations with demonstrated records of success. Funds are to be spent on:

- Well-Rounded Education Sec. 4107 (at least 20% of funds) including the arts, computer science, advanced coursework, career counseling. The section has a large focus on STEM including –supporting students in STEM competitions, promoting hands-on STEM learning and specific language that **** funds may be used “facilitating collaboration among school, afterschool program, and informal program personnel to improve the integration of programming and instruction in the identified subjects (Sec 4107 (a)(3)(C) (v))**
- Safe and Healthy Students Sec. 4108 (at least 20% of funds) for support of programs fostering safe, healthy, supportive drug free environments and promoting

parent involvement including support for mental health counselors; trauma informed practices; programs which educate students against tobacco, alcohol and drug use; programs which integrate health and safety programs into school or athletic programs; programs supporting active, healthy lifestyles; preventing bullying; supporting relationship building skills; providing mentoring and counseling; and promoting integrated systems of student and family support

****funds in this section may be used to designate a site resource counselor at the school or LEA who can establish partnerships in the community (Sec 4108 (5)(H))**

- Supporting Effective Use of Technology Sec 4109 – while this section is less relevant to out of school time, OST providers may work to ensure that technology used during the school day can be accessed by supportive OST providers. A maximum of 15% of this section may be used to purchase technology infrastructure.

Opportunities: Afterschool programs can recommend that LEAs focus on connecting STEM learning outside the school day with school day activities in order to improve student engagement and prepare for career opportunities. Programs can also advocate for connections the ability of out-of-school time programs to promote student well-being including physical activity, safety, reduction of risky activities etc.

2. Part B – 21st Century Community Learning Centers

This section (Sec. 4201) represents the only federal funding stream specifically dedicated to before school, afterschool and summer programs. The new law updates components of the state competitive grant program. Changes will go into effect in the 2017-18 school year. A [summary of the law’s updates](http://bit.ly/1OruBu9) can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1OruBu9>

Opportunities: The re-writing of the law means state agencies will be revisiting their request for proposal process for 21st CCLC funds. This could provide an opportunity for networks to offer input on areas such as eligibility criteria, competitive priorities, quality, professional development, outcomes measurement etc. In fact, ESSA meaningful consultation and afterschool allies can make the case that they should be included among those consulted.

In addition, the percentage of funding that can be set aside by the SEA for training and technical assistance increased in ESSA, so there may be additional opportunities for networks and intermediaries to help support SEAs in the provision of training and technical assistance.

Part F Sec. 4621 National Activities, Subpart 2- Community Support for School Success

This section is designed to allow the U.S. Secretary of Education to grant a minimum of \$75,000 to 10 applicants for community schools to “(2) provide support for the planning, implementation, and operation of full-service community schools that improve the

coordination and integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for children and families, particularly for children attending high-poverty schools, including high-poverty rural schools.” Eligible entities for these grants include one or more non profit entities working in formal partnerships with high need local education agencies. These full-service community schools must undertake community based efforts to coordinate services and “provide access to such services in schools to students families and the community, such as access during the school year (including before- and after school house and weekends, as well as during the summer” to a variety of pipeline services. The list of pipeline (ie support from birth through career) services is mandated to include “high quality school and out of school time programs and strategies.”

Opportunities: Afterschool programs aware of organizations and or LEAs applying for (under Sec 4625) or receiving these funds should look to partner. Success of these programs may lead to future expansion.

Title IV PART A: Getting Involved

Background: Applications for Title IV part A funds require an application developed in consultation with “with parents, teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, students, community- based organizations, local government representatives (which may include a local law enforcement agency, local juvenile court, local child welfare agency, or local public housing agency), Indian tribes or tribal organizations that may be located in the region served by the local educational agency (where applicable), charter school teachers, principals, and other school leaders (if such agency or consortium of such agencies supports charter schools), and others with relevant and demonstrated expertise in programs and activities designed to meet the purpose of this subpart.

Additionally all LEAs receiving more than \$30,000 must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment including: “(A) access to, and opportunities for, a well-rounded education for all students; “(B) school conditions for student learning in order to create a healthy and safe school environment; and “(C) access to personalized learning experiences supported by technology and professional development for the effective use of data and technology.

All local applications must list “(A) any partnership with an institution of higher education, business, nonprofit organization, community-based organization, or other public or private entity with a demonstrated record of success in implementing activities”

As with Title I work to make sure parents are meaningfully involved in the consultation process.

- Ask the state what meaningful involvement looks like, or offer a definition of your own.
- Work on the LEA level to help get turnout from community based organizations and parents to provide input.
- If an LEA must conduct a needs assessment, work to ensure that access to safe,

supportive programs from 3-6 PM is part of the assessment for a well rounded education with access to opportunities.

- Consider creating quick fact sheets of how afterschool supports both well-rounded education and safe and healthy schools so that those at the table for consultation can make the most informed decisions.