Title II of *The Every Student Succeeds Act*: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, or Other School Leaders

The purpose of Title II of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) is to:

- Increase student achievement consistent with challenging state academic standards
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders
- Increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools
- Provide low-income and students of color greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders

States can reserve no more than 5% of Title II, Part A funds for state activities (with a limit of 1% for administration) and must provide 95% of Part A funds to districts. Title II requires districts to "meaningfully consult" with teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, charter school leaders, parents etc., when developing an application for the use of Title II funds for state approval.

There are four major changes to Title II under ESSA:

- Changes the formula funding to weigh poverty over population
- Removes the requirement for a teacher evaluation system
- Eliminates the requirement for teachers to be highly qualified
- Allows states to blend Title II, Part A funds with other ESSA funds

Appropriations Background

Current Funding Level: $2.2 billion in FY 2026

Congress intended for ESSA to provide states and school districts with new opportunities to improve all aspects of education. This included Title II, Part A, which provides formula funding to states for the purpose of preparing, training, recruiting, and retaining high-quality teachers, principals, and other school leaders. Failing to adequately fund these critical professional development programs would undermine the bipartisan congressional intent included in this important law. This funding is critical to supporting a well-rounded education for all students.

Title II funds are critical to the recruitment, professional learning, capacity-building, and other important needs of the school community. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended the education landscape and how schools deliver instruction, further increasing the need to boost Title II, Part A to better support educators' continued learning and professional development.

For health and physical educators, Title II funding can bring schools needed resources to ensure teachers are implementing standards-based curriculum, integrating social and emotional learning into instruction, using best practices, and supporting innovative programs. Professional development opportunities for health and physical education are often limited in schools because there may be

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only one, or very few, health or physical educator(s) employed for each school. Schools and students will only benefit if health and physical educators have access to funding to seek high-quality professional development opportunities in order to improve programs, integrate cutting edge technology, and appropriate instructional practices.

Funding under Title II can also be used to train teachers from other subject areas and all school employees about the benefits of integrating physical activity and health concepts throughout the school day. Research shows that students that are more physically active are better learners, have better classroom behavior, and are more likely to attend school. Title II gives schools the opportunity to train school faculty on how to create a healthy, physically active school environment.

For further information, or if any questions arise, please contact SHAPE America advocacy staff listed below.

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Source: National Association of Secondary School Principals, Every Student Succeeds Act Toolkit. https://www.nassp.org/advocacy/essa-toolkit

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