

# **Federal Programs Division**

# Title IV, Part A Handbook

**Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grant** 



#### **DISCLAIMER**

This handbook is provided as a resource for Georgia Local Education Agencies administering the Title IV, Part A Student Success and Academic Enrichment grant. It is intended to provide coordinators with uniform practices to govern planning for, monitoring, implementing, and evaluating effectiveness of needs-based, supplementary activities, and initiatives of this Federal program.

This handbook is not intended to replace the legislation, regulations, and U.S. Department of Education (ED) Non-Regulatory Guidance. Therefore, it is highly recommended that coordinators consult the appropriate resources available online for complete guidance and regulations. In addition, all LEAs and coordinators responsible for implementing this Federal program must abide by current laws, regulations, and administrative procedures, ED guidance, and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This handbook is considered a working draft and is reviewed and updated as policies and procedures change and, at a minimum, is reviewed yearly. For more information, contact a Title IV, Part A Education Program Manager/Specialist.

Ultimately, the GaDOE expects LEAs to use local autonomy granted under charter and strategic waiver law and SBOE rules to make the best decisions for their students, their staff and their community while taking into consideration related federal, state, and local requirements and local capacity (LEA human and fiscal resources). Given the flexibility granted to Georgia LEAs under approved charter and strategic waiver applications, guidance provided by the Department may vary from LEA to LEA.

## **Table of Contents**

General Information	4
LEA Eligibility and Calculations of Allocations	4
Technical Assistance and Programmatic Support	4
General Support	4
Customized Technical Assistance	4
Quick Links for LEA Coordinators	5
Program Planning	5
Comprehensive Needs Assessment	5
Prioritization of Funds	6
Evidence-Based Levels	7
Program Management	7
Assurances	7
Budgeting	8
Title IV, Part A Consolidated Application Portal Enhancements	9
Budget Amendments	12
Drawdown	12
Programmatic Monitoring, Consultations, and Measuring Effectiveness	12
Program Monitoring	12
Initial and Ongoing Consultation with Stakeholders and Community-Based Pa	artners 13
Measuring and Reporting Effectiveness	13
Completion Report Alignment	15
Carryover	15
Cross-Functional Monitoring	15
Other Program Details	16
Equitable Services	16
Consolidation of Funds	16
Transferability	16
Necessary and Reasonable	17
Supplement Not Supplant	17
Appendix 1—Allowability	18
Unallowable Activities	
Appendix 2—Title IV, Part A Supported Competitive Grants	19

Annendix 3 — Title IV	Part A Needs Assessment	Tool
The structure $         -$	1 all 4 inceus 4556551116111	1 001

#### **General Information**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. ESSA created the Student Support and Academic Enrichment program, commonly referred to as Title IV, Part A. The program provides flexibility for LEAs to tailor investments based on identified needs. LEAs create activities aligned to one of three focus areas.

	Well-Rounded Education  Supports activities related to core academic subjects, foreign language, fine arts, health and physical education, and career and technical education.
**·	Safe and Healthy Students  Supports activities related to creating safe and supportive learning environments for students. Popular strategies include PBIS, family and community engagement, and mental and physical health initiatives.
$\overline{\Psi}$	Effective Use of Technology  Supports activities related to staff development in STEM subjects, the creation of blended and remote learning programs, and the use

### **LEA Eligibility and Calculations of Allocations**

GaDOE calculates the Title IV, Part A allocations based on the Title I, Part A formula. To receive a Title IV, Part A allocation for a given fiscal year, LEAs must have accepted, received, and utilized the awarded Title I, Part A allocation during the previous fiscal year [ESEA Sec. 4105(a)(1)].

of student data to differentiate instruction.

### **Technical Assistance and Programmatic Support**

### **General Support**

<u>Tips and Tools Webinar Series</u> — The Title IV, Part A team holds webinars during the second Tuesday of each month from 1:45PM to 2:45PM. LEA coordinators will learn more about how to plan, implement, and evaluate their Title IV, Part A activities.

#### **Customized Technical Assistance**

<u>CLIP and Budget Consultations</u> — LEA coordinators may request a Microsoft Teams meeting with their area specialist to revise CLIPs and amend budgets. The area specialist tailors technical assistance to LEA needs. While most consultations address how to resolve technical issues, area specialists also provide support related to analyzing root causes and selecting evidence-based interventions.

<u>Program Reviews</u> — LEA coordinators also may request that area specialists provide feedback on program monitoring and effectiveness efforts. Area specialists prioritize three areas in their reviews: preparing LEAs for cross-functional monitoring, identifying and engaging community-based partners, and helping LEAs evaluate if current programming is effective.

#### **Quick Links for LEA Coordinators**

Program Statutes & Regulations	GaDOE Resources	Third-Party Resources
Title IV, Part A Statute	GaDOE Portal	T4PA Center
Non-Regulatory Guidance	Title IV, Part A Webpage	National Center on Safe
2 CFR 200 Regulations 34 CFR 300 Regulations	<u>Federal Programs</u> <u>Handbook</u>	Supportive Learning Environments
or or it odd regulations	Monitoring Webpage	
	Georgia Insights	
	STEM Georgia	

### **Program Planning**

#### **Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

ESEA § 4106(d) requires LEAs conduct comprehensive needs assessments at least once every three years if annual allocations exceed \$30,000. LEA teams analyze available evidence to identify and prioritize local needs. LEAs select evidence-based activities based on the LEA strengths and challenges surfaced during the CNA process.

The United States Department of Education created a <u>needs assessment tool</u> that LEAs may use to review data, prioritize needs, and assess readiness to implement evidence-based supports. Appendix 3 provides more information about this resource. The use of this tool specifically addresses the statute and may be considered supplemental to the CLIP annual review of data.

#### **Prioritization of Funds**

Each LEA establishes how it will prioritize the distribution of Title IV, Part A funds via the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan [ESEA Sec. 4106(e)(2)(A)].

The Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement process encourages district and charter leaders to implement Title IV, Part A supplementary activities that directly address strategies that are most likely to transform school and student outcomes. Prioritization is important because it is the thread weaving together four core aspects of program management:

- Developing district improvement goals and action steps through the CLIP
- Drafting a budget aligned to the strategic vision approved by GaDOE
- Monitoring how schools implement the district plan
- Evaluating program effectiveness, making changes after reviewing available evidence.

GaDOE provides two options to districts and charter LEAs to demonstrate prioritization. The **online CLIP** documents the results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and allows LEAs to draft improvement goals and action steps.

LEAs using the **Streamlined CLIP** assure that an ongoing strategic planning and needs assessment process occurs at the district level. Instead of prioritizing needs through action steps, the S-CLIP allows LEA teams to select potential activities aligned to the five major domains within Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement: coherent instruction, professional capacity, supportive learning environment, family & community engagement, and effective leadership. To demonstrate prioritization, LEAs with a S-CLIP identify needs through strategic plans, District Improvement Plans, individual Schoolwide Plans, intent and purpose statements and/or charter system contracts.

In both cases, program specialists may ask LEA coordinators for additional information during the CLIP review process to determine if activities are allowable uses of grant funds and allocable to one or more of the Title IV, Part A focus areas.

ESEA Sec. 4106(2)(A) describes five ways that LEAs may prioritize funds. Districts and charter LEAs may use multiple allocation methods.

### **Allocation Methods**

- 1. Provide funding to schools with the greatest needs
- 2. Target schools with the highest percentages or numbers of low-income children
- 3. Comprehensive Support and Improvement status
- 4. Targeted Support and Improvement status
- 5. Identification as persistently dangerous public elementary or secondary school

LEAs with allocations above \$30,000 must plan for and distribute funds to each of the three focus areas: well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and effective use of technology. LEAs with allocations below \$30,000 prioritize funding in at least one of the three focus areas.

#### **Prioritization Checklist**

As an optional tool, the chart below summarizes ways that LEAs prioritize Title IV, Part A funds.

Align identified needs, district improvement goals, and evidence-based activities
Fund school-based activities based on one or more of the five allocation methods
Plan activities that that address all goals and action steps in the CLIP
Execute planned activities as outlined in budget, amending the budget to ensure alignment
Evaluate the effectiveness of activities at the end of the year

#### **Evidence-Based Levels**

SELECT RELEVANT, EVIDENCE-BASED ACTIVITIES--The evidence-based activities must address identified needs and the district should have the capacity to implement the activity or intervention. Additional information can be found in the <u>Federal Programs Handbook</u>. Special Note\*- Schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement must develop a plan which includes evidence-based interventions. ESEA §§ 1111 (d)(1)(B)(ii) & 1111(d)(2)(B)(ii).

### **Program Management**

#### **Assurances**

The assurances have been updated in the Consolidated Application portal to reflect the following:

Pursuant to ESEA, Sec. 4106 (c), the LEA assures that it will-

- (1) shall develop its application through [initial] consultation with parents, teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, students, community-based organizations, local government representatives, charter school teachers, principals, and other school leaders, and others with relevant and demonstrated expertise in programs and activities designed to meet the purpose of the grant.
- (2) shall engage in continued consultation with the entities described in paragraph (1) in order to improve the local activities in order to meet the purpose of this grant and to coordinate such implementation with other related strategies, programs, and activities being conducted in the community.

Pursuant to ESEA, Sec. 4106 (d), the LEA assures that it will-

- (1) conduct a comprehensive needs assessment [at least every three years dependent upon allocation amount] in order to examine needs for improvement of—
- (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.

Pursuant to ESEA, Sec. 4106 (e), the LEA assures that it will—

(1) include in the consolidated improvement plan application a description of the activities and programming,

Georgia Department of Education Title IV, Part A Program Handbook Page 7 of 27

- (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, if applicable [(f) SPECIAL RULE.—Any local educational agency receiving an allocation under section 4105(a)(1) in an amount less than \$30,000 shall be required to provide only one of the assurances described in subparagraphs (B), (C), and D).]
- (B) describe how funds will be used for activities related to supporting well-rounded education
- (C) describe how funds will be used for activities related to supporting safe and healthy students
- (D) describe how funds will be used for activities related to supporting the effective use of technology Pursuant to ESEA, Sec. 4106 (e)(2), the LEA assures that it will—
- (A) prioritize the distribution of funds to schools served by the local educational agency, or consortium of such agencies, that—
- (i) are among the schools with the greatest needs, as determined by such local educational agency, or a consortium;
- (ii) have the highest percentages or numbers of children counted under Sec. 1124(c);
- (iii) are identified for comprehensive support and improvement under Sec. 1111(c)(4)(D)(i);
- (iv) are implementing targeted support and improvement plans as described in Sec. 1111(d)(2); or
- (v) are identified as a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school under Sec. 8532;
- (B) comply with Sec. 8501 (regarding equitable participation by private school children and teachers);
- (C) use not less than 20 percent of funds received under this subpart to support one or more of the activities authorized under Sec. 4107;
- (D) use not less than 20 percent of funds received under this subpart to support one or more activities authorized under Sec. 4108:
- (E) use a portion of funds received under this subpart to support one or more activities authorized under Sec. 4109(a), including an assurance that the local educational agency, or consortium of Local Educational Agencies, will comply with Sec. 4109(b); and
- (F) annually report to the State for inclusion in the report described in Sec. 4104(a)(2) how funds are being used under this subpart to meet the requirements of subparagraphs (C) through (E).
- SPECIAL RULE. For an LEA receiving an allocation under Sec. 4105(a)(1) in an amount less than \$30,000, these assurances are amended and only require such LEA to provide for one of the assurances described in subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E) of subsection (e)(2) above. In submitting these assurances, it is understood that such LEA is adhering to this special rule.

All budget descriptions must provide detail that is clear and specific, so reviewers may verify program activities are properly identified by focus area as per ESEA Sec. 4107, 4108, and 4109, and to ensure items are necessary, reasonable, allocable, and consistent with CLIP, SIP, grant, and 2 CFR requirements.

### **Budgeting**

Budgets include evidence-based activities and interventions aligned to prioritized needs identified and addressed in the online or Streamlined CLIP. During the budget review, program specialists will verify alignment, allocability, and allowability. Revisions may be required prior to approval.

#### **Budgeting Checklist**

To submit a Title IV, Part A budget via the Consolidated Application portal, a variety of components unique to the program are required. The Title IV, Part A team uses a budget checklist to ensure the LEA has followed fiscal and program requirements. It is recommended that LEA coordinators use the checklist as a planning tool when building the budget. The checklist includes guiding questions and describes all elements needed to build a successful and viable budget. The Budget Checklist is available on the Title IV, Part A webpage.

The following illustrations highlight existing and updated enhancements to the Title IV, Part A budgeting template and applicable worksheets now made available in the portal.

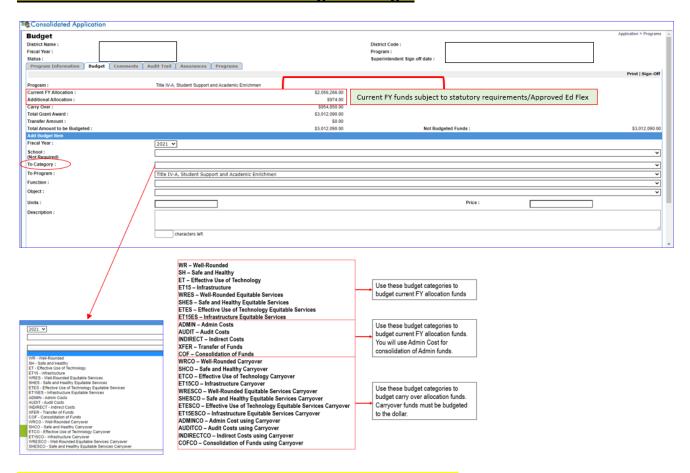
### **Capital Expenditures**

Specific allowable uses of federal grants may require prior approval from the awarding agency. See <a href="Expenditure Prior Approval Form"><u>Expenditure Prior Approval Form</u></a>.

#### <u>Title IV, Part A Consolidated Application Portal Enhancements</u>

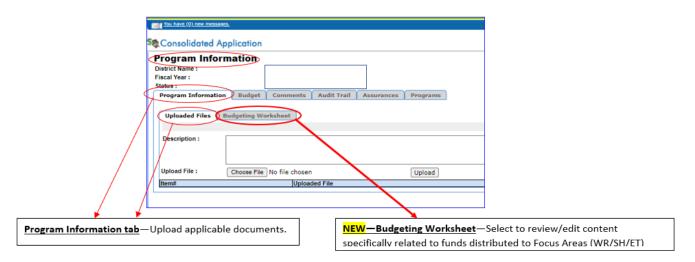
✓ Coordinators must select a CATEGORY that defines the parameters of the activity and enables program monitoring and effectiveness measuring throughout the grant's period of performance.

#### District Coordinator Role/View: Building the Budget



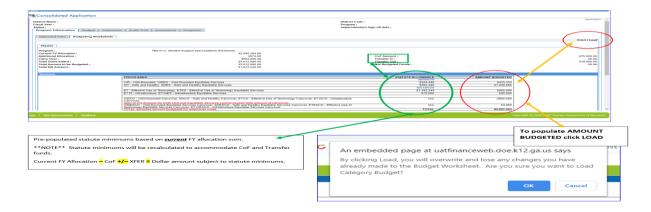
#### District Coordinator Role/View: Upload files as applicable

✓ PROGRAM INFORMATION tab has <u>two subtabs</u>. The UPLOADED FILES tab to facilitate document upload (i.e., job descriptions, field trip forms, etc.), and the BUDGETING WORKSHEET tab to calculate budgeted dollar amounts based on statutory minimums.

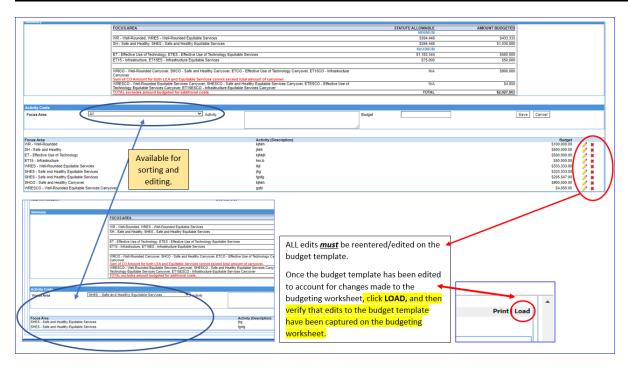


### **District Coordinator Role/View: Budgeting Worksheet**

- ✓ The budgeting worksheet annotates funds directed to Focus Areas and <u>does not</u> include administrative, audit, and indirect costs.
- ✓ The relative statute minimums are calculated as per the '20/20/Portion' rule
  (including 15% Special Rule) regardless of FY allocation. LEAs with FY
  allocations under the \$30,000 threshold should disregard the displayed MIN/MAX
  ALLOWABLE.
- ✓ Color Coding in AMOUNT BUDGETED:
  - a. BLACK minimums met
  - b. **RED** minimums not met
- Carryover funds directed towards any additional costs (including CoF) are not represented on this worksheet.



### District Coordinator Role/View: Budgeting Worksheet (Sorting/Editing/Reloading)



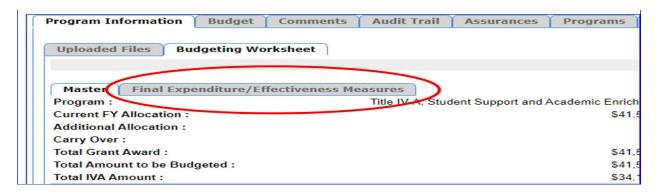
✓ Once the budget is fully prepared, the Coordinator and Superintendent will sign off as usual.

### **Upgrades to MASTER Tab**

- ✓ The functionality of the MASTER tab has not changed. However, all carryover
  activities have been combined onto a single line in the Focus Area Summary
  box.
  - ✓ Special note:
    - Carryover funds are not subject to statute expenditure minimums.
    - LEAs must budget carryover funds allocations to the exact dollar amount
    - LEAs monitor and evaluate activities budgeted with carryover funds for program effectiveness purposes.



✓ A new subtab—FINAL EXPENDITURE/EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES—has been added (May 2021) which will be further explained in the <u>Programmatic</u> <u>Monitoring</u>, <u>Consultations</u>, and <u>Measuring Effectiveness</u> section.



#### **Budget Amendments**

While budget amendments are accepted year-round, LEAs should reconcile budgets prior to **May 31** to ensure that activities identified as priorities in the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan can be fully implemented as planned. LEAs are encouraged to make the necessary amendments to the CLIP and/or budgets so that each reflects the LEA's current condition. After May 31, simple changes such as function/object codes and/or the balancing of funds allocated to an activity are readily accepted prior to LEAs submitting their Completion Reports.

#### Drawdown

Program specialists monitor drawdown rate monthly to facilitate funding impact and programming implementation.

# **Programmatic Monitoring, Consultations, and Measuring Effectiveness**

### **Program Monitoring**

LEAs are required to annually report to the GaDOE how Title IV, Part A funds were utilized and the degree to which progress was made towards meeting goals addressed in the consolidated application [ESEA Sec. 4107(2)(F)]. Using a systematic approach, LEAs will collect data during the stages of implementation for programs and initiatives funded by Title IV, Part A. The LEA will determine the best method for establishing whether the stages of implementation are moving toward the set goals to achieve program objectives.

Methods of monitoring may include, but are not limited to, direct observations, formal surveys, interviews, records, focus group discussions, or district response mapping. Once LEAs collect a reliable set of data points, they will use the data collection to assess the program's performance. The LEA will retain all data collection documents for inspection by GaDOE during cross-functional monitoring. The LEA will then complete the Title IV, Part A Program Monitoring Effectiveness Summary to fulfill statutory requirements. The program specialist and LEA Coordinator will use the summary to inform budget and programmatic decisions.

Georgia Department of Education Title IV, Part A Program Handbook Page 12 of 27

# <u>Initial and Ongoing Consultation with Stakeholders and Community-Based</u> Partners

ESSA § 4106(c) requires LEAs to continue meaningful consultation with stakeholders and community-based partners throughout the grant year. Consultations must extend beyond district staff and be systematic in approach as outlined in the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan.

### **Measuring and Reporting Effectiveness**

ESSA §§ 4106(e)(1) and 4106(e)(2)(F) require LEAs to annually report how they used Title IV, Part A funds, and the degree to which progress was made towards meeting goals addressed in the CLIP. To streamline this process and to reduce the administrative burden, GaDOE will systematically collect and publicly report required data from the Consolidated Application Portal FINAL EXPENDITURE/EFFECTIVENESS MEASUREMENT tab.

#### Final Expenditures/Effectiveness Measures Tab

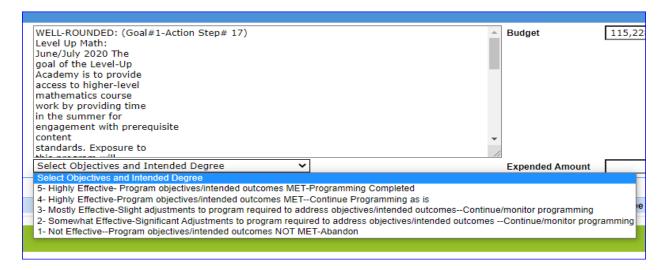
Performance data is due to the GaDOE not later than November 30. LEA Title IV, Part A coordinator must submit the performance data after the completion report has been submitted via Final Expenditures/Effectiveness Measures Tab.

The OBJECTIVE DEGREE is a 'snapshot' of the district's perceived effectiveness of an activity. Utilizing progress monitoring data findings, select one of the five degrees from the dropdown menu that best represents the overall effectiveness of the *whole* activity. Once the district has reported, Title IV, Part A program staff will review the data sets, compare the information to the submitted completion report, calculate a total effectiveness rating for each of the three focus areas (WR/SH/ET), and publicly report the findings <a href="https://example.com/here/beauto-state-s

The Title IV, Part A program staff will contact the district should anomalies and/or inconsistencies need further explanation. Should revisions be necessary, the completion report will be reopened so that the district can align all applicable reports/data sets (last approved budget, expenditure amounts/reports, objective degree, completion report).

#### **Please Note:**

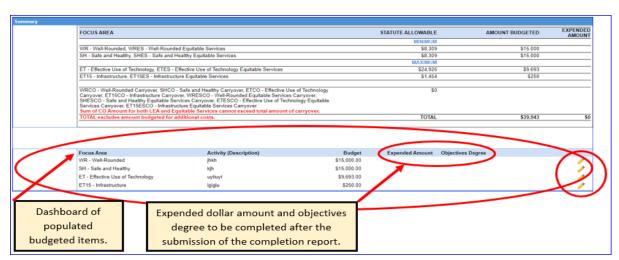
It is recommended that the district coordinator not edit the EXPENDED AMOUNT and OBJECTIVE DEGREE prior to submitting the completion report. While the functionality is available once the budget is fully approved, all subsequent budget amendments will require the reloading of new/edited line items rendering all previous data obsolete. Reloading budgeting worksheets will erase all previously entered EXPENDED AMOUNT and OBJECTIVE DEGREE data.



✓ Please Note: The data fields where final budgeting and effectiveness measures will eventually be filled by the coordinator will remain hidden until the submitted budget is fully approved by the program and financial offices. To reveal the data collection fields, click LOAD on the FINAL EXPENDITURE/EFFECTIVENESS MEASUREMENT tab.



✓ Once the field has been loaded and populated with the contents of the approved budget, the EXPENDITURE/EFFECTIVENESS MEASUREMENT dashboard will be visible. To enter data, click on the editing pencil for each line item.



#### **Completion Report Alignment**

ESSA Sec. 4106(e)(2)(F) requires LEAs to report Title IV, Part A expenditures by focus area. To streamline the process and reduce administrative burden, the Title IV, Part A team will use the completion report to calculate program expenditures and publicly report on behalf of LEAs. When the completion report is populated with line item information from the last approved budget, the CATEGORY field will be included.

When preparing the completion report, it is imperative that reported expenditures correspond with each specifically described budget activity in the function, object, <u>and</u> category fields. If these three options are matched more than once, report an expenditure to match the exact activity serviced. GaDOE will calculate the expenditure totals, compare budgeted and expended amounts, and publicly report required data outcomes.

**Please Note:** The program specialists work closely with LEA coordinators to ensure full alignment, which could result in reopening the budget and/or completion report before grant closeout.

#### Carryover

LEAs may obligate Title IV, Part A funds during the federal fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated and during the succeeding federal fiscal year for a total period of 27 months of availability. However, LEAs are required to meet Title IV, Part A statute minimums during the fiscal year of allocation [ESEA Secs. 4103(b)(2) and 4104(a)].

LEAs that received an allocation of less than \$30,000 must have expended funds in at least one focus area. LEAs that received more than \$30,000 must have expended funds in all three focus areas. If an LEA did not meet the required expenditure minimums in one or more focus areas for the fiscal year, the dollar amount that was not spent as required is added to the statute minimum for the subsequent grant year.

### **Cross-Functional Monitoring**

The Georgia Department of Education conducts LEA monitoring at least once every four years. Exceptions are addressed in the <u>Federal Programs Handbook</u>.

The GaDOE Team Lead will reach out four weeks before the onsite or desktop monitoring event. LEA Federal Programs staff upload required documentation to the SLDS Portal at least two weeks before monitoring occurs.

Complete information about cross-functional monitoring is available in the <u>Federal Programs Handbook</u> and/or <u>Cross Functional Monitoring webpage</u>. For specific information regarding the Title IV, Part A indicators reviewed during monitoring, please reach out to your program staff.

### Other Program Details

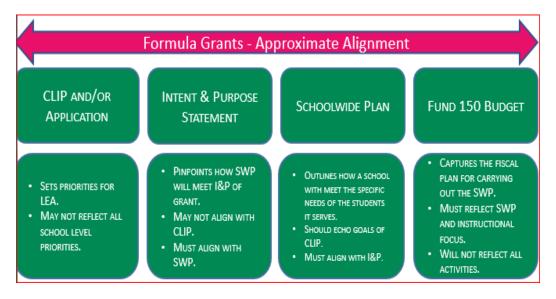
#### **Equitable Services**

Title IV, Part A equitable services are provided to private schools when the entity has established non-profit status (<u>annual verification</u>), is located within the LEA's physical boundaries has notified the LEA of the intent to participate within the established timeframe and has participated in initial and ongoing consultations as required. Visit the <u>State Ombudsman</u> webpage for further information.

#### **Consolidation of Funds**

LEAs may elect to consolidate some or all of the fiscal year's Title IV, Part A allocation. The LEA must meet the intent and purpose of the grant, and activities must be allocable to each of the defined focus areas as dependent upon the dollar amount of funds consolidated. As with formula funds, if an LEA consolidates \$30,000 or more, all three focus areas must be addressed in the plan(s). The consolidation of less than \$30,000 reduces this requirement to only one of the focus areas.

Intent and purpose statement narrative descriptions and associated supporting documentation should represent allocability and allowability to Title IV, Part A, and clearly align to the LEAs plans for consolidating funds.



For further information contact Federal Programs Senior Manager of Consolidation of Funds, Carly Ambler at <a href="mailto:consolidation@doe.k12.ga.us">consolidation@doe.k12.ga.us</a>.

### **Transferability**

Under the ESEA, SEAs and LEAs may transfer funds they receive by formula under certain programs to other programs to better address State and local needs. The ESSA amended the transferability authority by changing the programs from and to which a

SEA or LEA may transfer funds and removing limits on the amount of funds that may be transferred.

As per <u>Guidance on the Transferability Authority</u>, <u>U.S. Department of Education</u>, <u>June 8, 2004</u>, funds cannot be transferred across fiscal years.

#### **Necessary and Reasonable**

When submitting their budgets, LEA coordinators assure that the planned activities are necessary to carry out the intents and purposes of the Title IV, Part A program. LEAs also assure that the budget represents a reasonable estimate of what goods and services might cost. Program specialists might ask LEAs to describe why activities are necessary and reasonable if the intent and purpose is unclear or the planned costs appear higher than is reasonable. See <a href="CFR §200.404 Reasonable costs">CFR §200.404 Reasonable costs</a>.

### **Supplement Not Supplant**

LEAs may not use Title IV funds for the cost of activities in the three content areas – well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and technology – if the cost of those activities would have otherwise been paid with State or local funds in the absence of SSAE program funds. LEAs may overcome a presumption of supplanting if it has written documentation (e.g., State or local legislative action, budget information, or other materials) that it does not have the funds necessary to implement the activity and that the activity would not be carried out in the absence of the SSAE program funds.

### Appendix 1—Allowability

### **Unallowable Activities**

- School security activities. Generally, activities geared toward policing, security, disaster planning, or deterrence do not meet the intent and purpose of Title IV, Part A statute. ESEA Section 4108(2) clarifies that programming foster safe, healthy, and supportive and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement. While security is critically important, Title IV, Part A focuses on evidence-based initiatives that have demonstrated a positive impact on climate and culture and can be attributable to student achievement.
- Capital outlays. Funds may not be used for construction, renovation, or repair of any school facility. Examples of capital outlay include creating outdoor classrooms and greenhouses with permanent or semi-permanent fixtures. Pouring concrete or affixing articles to walls or ceilings is also unallowable.
- Use of federal funds to provide celebrations, rallies, incentives, or rewards.
- Advanced Placement Fees and/or cancellation fees of tests not taken.
- Promotional items—Banners, Stickers, Wristbands
- Renewal of software and/or subscriptions considered allowable but previously funded by state or local funds
- Generic Equipment—Laminating machine/supplies
- Reimbursement of certification tests and/or coursework required for licensure
- Purchase of playground equipment, furniture, or picnic tables—structures considered to be capital outlay/improvements
- Purchase of live specimens, such as animals and plant, seedlings
- Clothing and food. However, to remain consistent with other federal programs, light snacks can be budgeted when in conjunction with a parent engagement activity that is based on an identified need and addressed in the CLIP under the safe and healthy students (SH) focus area.
- Funding field trips to amusement parks or entertainment venues
- Purchase of tee-shirts, badges and/or lanyards (any clothing) for students for 'safety purposes' during field trips or any other event or activity.
- Most furniture purchases. However, if the item is deemed to be specialized equipment and the needs has been addressed in the District Improvement Plan, it may be allowable.
- An LEA that does not receive E-Rate funds may not purchase computers to access the Internet, or to pay direct costs associated with accessing the Internet.

### Appendix 2—Title IV, Part A Supported Competitive Grants

Title IV, Part A supports various needs-based initiatives in accordance with the Superintendent's Strategic Plan and available funding via competitive grants. LEA participation can be limited depending on the need being addressed. These competitively awarded funds are fiscally supported by Title IV, Part A state activities portion of the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant allocated to Georgia. These are not part of the formula allocation funds distributed to LEAs. As federal funds, all statutory requirements apply.

All competitive grants will have a uniform Request for Application (RFA) and will be managed by the Federal Programs, Title IV, Part A program manager in conjunction with the internal GaDOE department representing the grant terms and conditions as grant organizers.

#### **Grant Organizers**

The grant organizers will develop the RFA with input from the appropriate director, program manager, program specialists, staff attorney, and advisory council members, if applicable. A thorough review by the program office of all applicable federal statutes, regulations, and guidance is required when developing a new RFA. If the current grant cycle is the initial grant cycle for the program, the RFA may be submitted to Policy Committee, Cabinet or designated GaDOE department for review before it is released to the public.

### Grant organizers will:

- establish overall goal and objective of grant supported by identified needs;
- define the intent and purpose of the grant program in accordance with the applicable federal guidelines and developing the Request for Application (RFA);
- define programmatic parameters, needs assessments and implementation criteria to include previous grants participation, intended outcomes, institutionalizing criteria, monitoring criteria, data collection tools, effectiveness measures and final reporting criteria;
- define, format, and collect programmatic reporting documents such as lesson plans, artifact designations, expenditure (and supporting documentation), federal inventory forms, responsibility affidavits, and midterm/final reporting tools;
- conduct initial, midterm, pre-closeout, and final interviews with awardees to discuss goals and objectives, implementation procedures and progress, and programmatic success and effectiveness;
- submit Grant Implementation and Effectiveness Summary to the Title IV, Part A program manager reporting how funds were utilized and progress towards meeting goals and objectives to meet established needs;

Once the RFA has been made public, school districts will have access to the application directions and submission portal for a designated period of time (depending on funding availability). The application directions will contain all of the following:

- Program description
- Eligibility criteria and disqualifiers
- A timeline of the grant application process
- An estimate of funds available, range and size of awards to be issued, the funding period, and the number of expected grantees
- Application and submission instructions
- Scoring parameters and rubric
- Programmatic requirements and reporting schedule

#### **Public Announcements**

The grant competition requires that clear and transparent eligibility criteria be established and disseminated publicly. Dissemination is through formal solicitation of grant applications. The GaDOE will publish the RFA in order to satisfy the requirement for public notice as well as to provide a mechanism for advertising the competitive grant.

For each grant cycle, a public announcement will be prepared by the GaDOE to solicit proposals once the criteria for the award and the estimated number and size of the awards have been determined. The public notice must comply with the Fair and Open Grants Act (FOGA).

Note: Grant cycles for all Title IV, Part A supported competitive grants can run concurrently and/or overlap fiscal and/or school years.

### **Eligibility**

All LEAs identified in the RFA directions packet are eligible to apply for Title IV, Part A supported competitive grants.

Should an LEA be a previous Title IV, Part A supported competitive grant awardee, it must meet and complete all requirements in the fiscal year of allocation to remain eligible for the next fiscal year's competition. Awardees are responsible for adhering to planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting requirements as outlined in the RFA. The grant organizer will communicate with awardees via scheduled meetings (virtual or in person) to ensure all awardees are aware of the requirements and to address initial questions and concerns. LEAs receiving an award are responsible to participate and respond to all communication exchanges. Furthermore, awardees must notify the grant organizer and Title IV, Part A program manager immediately should personnel/contact information change from the approved RFA and/or questions or concerns arise.

Awardees failing to meet all requirements will be ineligible to receive an award for the next fiscal year.

Georgia Department of Education Title IV, Part A Program Handbook Page 20 of 27

### **Notifications of Ineligibility**

It is very important to note that due to the application submission cycle of the various competitive grants supported by Title IV, Part A, previous grant award recipients must remain aware of overlapping grant requirements so as not to lose eligibility during concurrent grant application submission windows.

Should an awardee not fulfill its obligations by the date annotated in the RFA (or programmatic milestone), the grant organizer will notify an awardee (designated contact) and the Title IV, Part A program manager within ten business days after ineligibility occurs (expiration date annotated on GAN) via email.

### **Eligibility and Application Submissions**

Upon receipt of the applications, the GaDOE will review/prescreen applications to ensure they meet the basic eligibility criteria. Basic eligibility includes:

- Applicant's LEA is in good standing by meeting all previously awarded grant requirements
- Proposed RFA budget annotates allowable items as outlined in RFA directions
- Application follows application directions
  - Used correct format
  - Contains required signatures/dates

Only those applications that comply will be forwarded and made available to the readers for scoring.

### **Provisions for Providing Equitable Services**

#### During the application submission window

It is incumbent upon all eligible public school LEAs to communicate all **Title IV**, **Part A Competitive Grant opportunities** to all geographically eligible non-public schools regardless of the public school LEA's participation. The non-public school's decision to participate in any competitive grant opportunity is not dependent upon its participation in any other federally funded equitable provisions.

To apply, the non-public school must adhere to all published application processes; however, the application must be submitted by the designated public school official to be known as the Co-applicant. The non-public school designated official must provide to the LEA Co-applicant an application package that will be submitted by the LEA into the application portal on behalf of the non-public school(s). The LEA Co-applicant is not responsible for the development or review of the private school's application.

Non-public school applicants must coordinate with the Co-applicant and establish an internal process to submit the application into the portal as required within the

designated timeframe. Applications not submitted to GaDOE via the application portal will not be accepted.

The co-applicant will be responsible to notify the non-public school entity of published SBOE resulting awards.

Subsequent reviews and scoring of non-public school applications will be executed as published in the RFA.

#### Non-public school receives a grant award allocation

Awarded non-public schools will receive 100% of the grant funds specifically awarded to the non-public school. At this point, the LEA will be known as the LEA Fiscal Agent for the non-public school Awardee. To ensure clarity and continuity of support services, the non-public school Awardee must formally acknowledge receipt of, agree to the stated terms, and accept the award <u>in collaboration with the Fiscal Agent</u> via email. Please include the following information in the email:

- Name, position, and contact information of individual(s) (to be recognized by GaDOE as the official Designated Contact)--
  - Non-Public School Awardee Official—responsible for:
    - receiving/sending communication from/to GaDOE regarding the competitive grant throughout the period of performance.
       GaDOE/Grant Organizers will communicate directly with the Non-Public School Awardee Official. The LEA Fiscal Agent will be copied on all correspondence.
    - ensuring the SBOE approved application is fully implemented.
    - ensuring all evidentiary documentation will be submitted/emailed/uploaded as per terms of the RFA.
  - LEA Fiscal Agent Representative—responsible for:
    - ensuring requirements requiring access to the Consolidated Application Portal (budgets, expenditures, Completion Report) will be submitting/uploading as per terms of the RFA.
    - executing processes applicable to federal fiscal and physical rules and regulations (as per the LEAs internal procedures and the Federal Programs Handbook).
    - ensuring all fiscal documentation not accessible to the Non-Public School Awardee will be submitted/emailed/uploaded as per terms of the RFA.

Grant Award Notices (GANs) will be uploaded into the LEA Fiscal Agent's Consolidated Application portal by the program office summarizing the program, the amount and length of the award, and any other relevant information. The Non-Public School Awardee Official will also receive a copy.

Non-Public School Awardee Responsibilities

As an awardee, the Non-Public School Awardee Official is responsible to meet all grant components, requirements, and criteria. Grant Organizers will systematically communicate, collaborate, and monitor programmatic implementation and progress. The Non-Public School official will coordinate with the LEA fiscal agent during budget development.

The Non-Public School Awardee Official will participate in all required meetings outlined in the RFA, independently implement all approved activities, and fulfill all programmatic reporting/monitoring/effectiveness requirements. In the event that the Non-Public School Awardee is unable to meet the outlined requirements and/or implementation criteria, all grant award funds will be returned to GaDOE.

#### **Contacting State Ombudsman**

As required by law, the GaDOE has a designated <u>state ombudsman</u> appointed to monitor and enforce the equitable services requirements. The ombudsman also will serve as the primary point of contact for responding to and resolving any complaints regarding equitable services that the SEA receives under its ESEA complaint procedures. Further information can be found in the <u>GaDOE Equitable Services</u> Consultation Guide and Handbook.

#### **Reading and Scoring**

The grant organizer shall select and train readers on the scoring rubric, collect score sets rating comments, and provide results to the Title IV, Part A program manager. If using external readers, the readers will sign a conflict of interest document.

During the review process, each application will be reviewed and scored by a minimum of five GaDOE approved and trained readers. Federal program departmental staff or the grant organizer may not be selected as readers/scorers.

The readers will individually assign points (1-100) and record ratings using the scoring rubric. Readers may raise certain questions for clarification or issues of concerns to the grant organizer. Questions regarding allocability and/or allowability will be referred to the Title IV, Part A program manager. Readers will include comments that support the ratings given to the applicant. Based on the ratings, a list of applicants within the competitive range will emerge and a provisional selection will be made.

Each application will receive five scores from five different readers. The highest and lowest scores will be dropped, the remaining three scores will be averaged, and a final score will be rendered.

The Title IV, Part A program manager will assemble all of the applications receiving a score of 70 or more points\*, order them by rank, and draft the Board item recommending the successful applicants to the State Board of Education for approval. A list of the recommended grantees and their individual and aggregate scores must be included with the Board item. All applicants will be notified via email after the State

Board has rendered approvals. All applicants may review the final score presented to the State Board. To obtain a copy of the anecdotal notes of readers, the LEA superintendent may make the request in writing to the identified grant organizer.

\*In the event of a tied score and reaching maximum allowable grant awards, the tie will be decided by which application has the earlier time stamp in the application portal.

#### **Notifications and Formally Accepting Award**

All applying LEA superintendents will be notified via email from the grant organizers of the State Board results. **Districts whose application(s) has been approved for funding will be required to formally accept the award via email**. Emails must be sent to the grant organizer and Title IV, Part A program manager.

Please include the following information in the email:

- Name, position, and contact information of individual(s) to be recognized by GaDOE as the official Designated Contact-
  - o responsible for:
    - receiving/sending communication from/to GaDOE regarding the competitive grant throughout the period of performance.
    - ensuring the SBOE approved application is fully implemented.
    - ensuring all evidentiary documentation will be submitted/emailed/uploaded as per terms of the RFA.

Upon receipt of the formal acceptance, the grant award notification (GAN) will be uploaded into the LEAs Consolidated Application portal by the program office summarizing the program, the amount and length of the award, and any other relevant information.

#### **General Information**

Fast Facts applicable to competitive grants:

- Title IV, Part A competitive grant funds can be supplementary to Title IV, Part A formula grant funds, but they are not in co-mingled accounts. Please be cognizant of drawing funds from the correct accounts.
- The competitive grant period is for 12 calendar months unless otherwise specified in the GAN and is not connected to annual federal programs reporting periods—read the GAN for details.
- Competitive grant funds expire and are not subject to transfer or carryover.
- Competitive grant funds can be consolidated, and all programmatic requirements remain applicable
- Competitive grants do not allow for administrative, indirect or audit costs.

#### **Grant Amendment Process**

Awardees will have very limited ability to change the program operating plan and scope of services as originally outlined in their approved grant application. Any changes subsequent to receiving the award will be required to go through a formal program or budget amendment and approval process.

Awardees must obtain the prior approval of GaDOE via an amendment whenever any of the following actions are anticipated:

- 1. Revisions of the scope or objectives of the project (regardless of whether there is an associated budget revision).
  - a. Note: Revisions are very limited in scope due to the award being approved by the State Board of Education. Amendments will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 2. A request for prior approval of any budget revision resulting in a 5% variance of a given function and/or object code.
  - a. Unbudgeted expenses, items, change in salary rate, number of personnel, change in nature of expense, responsibility and other significant situations will also require a budget amendment.
- 3. A downloadable Competitive Grant RFA/Budget Amendment form can be found <u>HERE</u>. See sample below.

	Competitive Grant Amendment Form			
Today's Date				
FY/Title/Amount	of			
Competitive Gran				
Date of Approved				
Original Budget				
Awardee District				
Full Name of Scho	ool			
School Principal				
Name/Email/Phor	ne			
Awardee Program	1			
Contact				
Name/Email/Phor	ne			
Awardee LEA Title	e IV,			
Part A Coordinato	or			
Name/Email/Phor	ne			
Amendment				
Requested				
Rationale for				
Amendment				
Current Gran	t Langua	age in		Describe changes in
SBOE Approve			Amended Language	Implementation and/or
Budget		,		budgeting
Duager				
Required	Signat	ure	Signature	Date
Superintendent				
Program/Project I	Manager			
School Principal				
Title IV, Part A Dis	trict Coo	rdinator		
			GaDOE Actions	
Grant Organizer	APPVD/N	IOT APPVD		
D/A D	APPVD/N	IOT APPVD		
IVA Program Manager				

### **Declination of awarded competitive grant funds**

Once the Georgia State Board of Education has approved the RFA and awarded funds to the awardee, the total amount of the award can be returned. Once funds are declined, they cannot be reallocated during the fiscal year of the declined grant.

Districts may apply for future grants the following fiscal year provided the grant is being offered and the district maintains all eligibility requirements.

Awardees are not required to expend 100% of the awarded funds; however, awardees are required to fully implement the SBOE approved RFA as written. If full implementation can be attained without expending 100% of the awarded funds, no action on the part of the district is required. Unused funds will be collected by GaDOE when the grant is closed. Expending less than 100% of awarded funds to fully implement the RFA will not negatively impact the district's eligibility to participate in future competitive grants sponsored by Title IV, Part A.

Competitive grant funds may be declined if the district does not intend to fully implement the grant as approved. In the event that expenditures have been charged to the grant prior to declining funds, the district will be required to initiate a return of all funds to the grant account.

The district's superintendent must submit a letter (on district letterhead) formally declining the funds to GaDOE, Title IV, Part A program manager. Once the letter has been received, the program manager will initiate the collection of 100% of the grant award via GAORS.

### Appendix 3 — Title IV, Part A Needs Assessment Tool

Federal law requires LEAs receiving annual awards above \$30,000 to complete needs assessments at least once every three years. The United States Department of Education created a <u>needs assessment tool</u> that could help LEAs improve program execution and effectiveness. The optional tool encourages LEAs to identify desired outcomes and work backwards to implement programs that prioritize these outcomes.

Within the tool, the LEA team enters enrollment and achievement data, creates outcomes-focused indicators, and assesses the capacity to implement the planned activities.

#### Contents of the Title IV, Part A Local Educational Agency (LEA) Needs Assessment Tool

Contents
About the Tool
<u>Tool Instructions</u>
FAQs and Definitions
1a. Get Ready: Plan
1b. Get Ready: Select Indicators
2a: Enter General LEA Data
2b: Enter WRE Data
2c: Enter SHS Data
2d: Enter EUT Data
3a. Identify WRE Needs
3b. Identify SHS Needs
3c. Identify EUT Needs
4a. Analyze WRE Needs
4b. Analyze SHS Needs
4c. Analyze EUT Needs
5. Address Prioritized Needs