

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

You Don't Know What You Don't Know

July 15, 2026



Federal Programs



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TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS FOR THE NEXT SESSION,
SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW

Federal Programs Overview

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Office of Federal Programs



The Office of Federal Programs, within the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), is dedicated to supporting Arkansas school districts in maximizing federal resources to enhance student achievement. By consolidating critical funding streams—including Title I, II, III, IV, and V, the Migrant Education Program, and McKinney-Vento services—we partner with local educational agencies to streamline planning, reduce administrative compliance, and align resources. Our mission is to ensure every dollar is strategically invested to promote student growth and prepare all Arkansas students for a successful future.



<https://bit.ly/4eI8o2J>



AR-App

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The AR App – One Cohesive Strategic Plan



Consolidated Efficiency: Combines 17 previous systems—replacing 8 separate grants and 9 individual applications—into a single application to satisfy both state statutory mandates and federal ESSA requirements.



The Framework Ecosystem: Driven by four integrated tools: the *Planning Framework* (evidence-based priorities), the *Process Guide*, *The AR App* portal, and the *Digital Locker* (cloud repository for all mandatory budgets, assurances, and uploads).



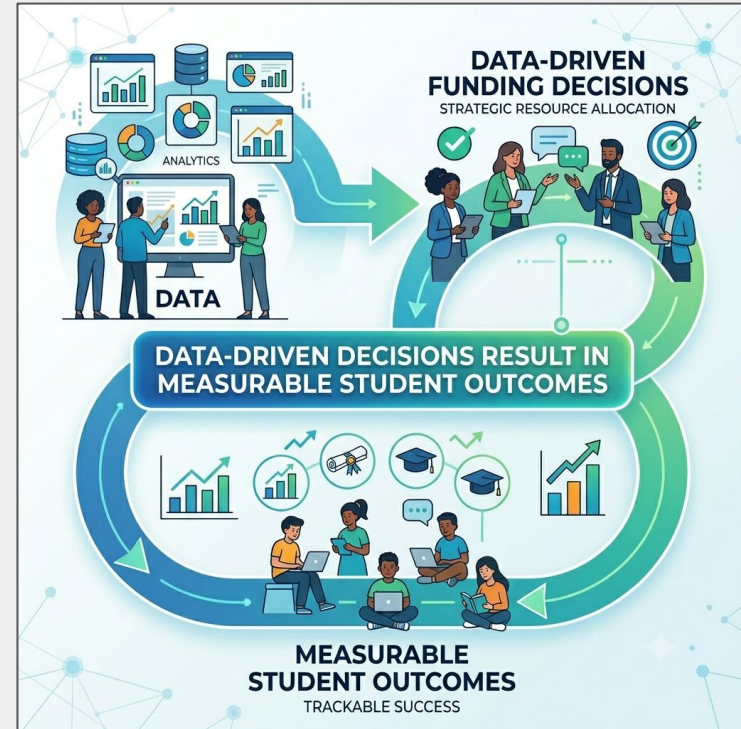
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Overview Perspective of AR App



Data-Driven Focus: Mandates comprehensive responses across all sections. Districts can set up to 4 strategic goals based on local needs assessments, with at least one goal strictly dedicated to literacy.

Pillar Alignment: The core application evaluates three central areas (*Academic Outcomes*, *Safe & Healthy Schools*, and *Quality Workforce*), alongside program-specific federal compliance tracking (Titles I, II, III, IV, and V).



Title I - Part A

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Framing: What is Title I, Part A?



The Foundational Definition: At its core, Title I, Part A is a federal grant program under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It provides supplemental financial assistance to school districts and campuses with high percentages of children from low-income families.

The Ultimate Goal: It isn't just a funding stream; its explicit purpose is to bridge opportunity gaps. It ensures that all children—regardless of socioeconomic background—have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and achieve proficiency on Arkansas's academic standards.

How the Money Arrives (The Formula): The funding is formula-driven, meaning the U.S. Department of Education allocates dollars to DESE based on annual census poverty data. DESE then acts as the flow-through entity, distributing these funds directly to Arkansas Local Educational Agencies (LEAs).

What the Money Buys: Title I funds are used for *supplemental* academic support. In Arkansas, this typically looks like hiring instructional facilitators, purchasing specialized educational technology, lowering class sizes in critical grades, or funding extended-day and summer learning programs.

Title I - Operations, Fiscal Rules, & Engagement



The Rules of the Money (Supplement, Not Supplant): Title I carries a strict fiscal guardrail. The funds must *add to* (supplement) and can never *replace* (supplant) the state and local dollars a school would normally receive. DESE regularly monitors districts to ensure Title I schools get their fair share of state/local funding first.

A Focus on the Whole Family: Title I explicitly recognizes that student success requires family support. By law, it requires districts and schools to build meaningful parent and family engagement strategies, map out parent-school compacts, and set aside a specific portion of the grant to fund these family-focused initiatives.

Extending Beyond Public School Walls: Title I is unique because the funding follows eligible children, not just public institutions. Arkansas LEAs must conduct timely, meaningful consultation with local private schools to provide equitable Title I services (like tutoring or teacher training) to eligible private school students living within public boundaries.



Title I - TA & SW

Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide Programs

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Targeted Assistance



Apply to be a **Targeted Assistance School**:

If there a **subpopulation** within a school within the district that needs to:

- ☐ Increase test scores
- ☐ Close the achievement gap
- ☐ **No** minimum qualifying threshold requirement.
- ☐ Funds used to improve the academic achievement of identified students *only*.

Schoolwide School



Apply to be a Schoolwide School:

If the **primary goal** is to ensure students, primarily those who are low achieving demonstrate proficiency on state academic standards apply to be a schoolwide school.

- ❑ *Unlike* a Targeted Assistance school, a Schoolwide school serves **ALL** students.
- ❑ The **minimum** qualifying **threshold requirement** is **40%**.
- ❑ If a school is **75% poverty** or above, that school **MUST** be served as Schoolwide.

What is *MY* school's poverty percentage?



To find out your school's current poverty percentage, contact:



The Child Nutrition Unit at (501) 324-9502

or

The District Federal Program Coordinator

Title I - N&D Neglected, Delinquent and At-Risk & Foster Care

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Arkansas Neglected and Delinquent Program



What is the N&D Program?

- The term “**neglected**,” when used with respect to a child, youth, or student, means an individual who has been committed to an institution (other than a foster home) or voluntarily placed under applicable State law due to abandonment, neglect, or death of his or her parents or guardians.
- The term “**delinquent**,” when used with respect to a child, youth, or student, means an individual who resides in a public or private residential facility other than a foster home that is operated for the care of children and youth who have been adjudicated delinquent or in need of supervision.

Subpart 1: Division of Youth Services and
Department of Corrections

Neglected Facilities: 20

Subpart 2: 11 Facilities



Foster Care Education



Students in Foster Care

Foster Care (out-of-home care): is a temporary service provided by State Child Welfare Agencies for children who cannot live with their direct guardians. However, children in foster care may live with relatives and unrelated foster/fictive parents.

- One of the most vulnerable subgroups
- More likely to struggle academically and fall behind
- Less likely to graduate from high school
- Experience much higher levels of residential and school instability

LEAs must ensure that a child in foster care is immediately enrolled in his or her new school **even if the student does not have the required documentation.**

Arkansas Neglected and Delinquent Program



2026-2027 Vision

- N&D Vision for 2026-2027
 - New timeline for CSPR data submission (October 1st)
 - Add updated monitoring tools and data collection forms to the website
 - On-site data collection technical assistance (August and September)
- Foster Care Vision for 2026-2027
 - Joint Foster Care Liaison Training in the Fall
 - Update Foster Care Documents

Title IX

McKinney-Vento/Homeless Education

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Homeless Education Program



Definition

Children who are experiencing homelessness are “individuals who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence”.

- **Fixed** – Stationary...permanent...not subject to change
- **Regular** – Used on a predictable, routine, consistent nightly basis
- **Adequate** – Meets physical and psychological needs
 - Sharing housing due to economic hardship or lack of housing
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
 - Living in emergency or transition shelters
 - Primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc...
- Migratory children can also qualify for both services if they are living in circumstances described above.

Homeless Education Program



Funding Options

- Competitive Funding - McKinney-Vento Act
- Title I, Part A Set-Asides
 - If your district has identified **6 students or less, you must set aside \$500.**
 - For **more than 6 students, $X(\$75)$** = Suggested Title-I Part-A allocation.
 - For example, 10 students would equal a \$750 allocation.
- Other local funds

Homeless Education Program



2026-2027 Vision

- 32 New Grantees
- New timeline for CSPR data submission (October 1st)
- New Fall Training for Liaisons
- Update Homeless Education Documents
- Potential Targeted Co-Ops (Eligibility Concerns)

Title I - Part C

Migrant Education

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What is the Title I Part C - Migrant Education Program?



Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Title I Part C - Migrant Education Program, is to ensure that migrant children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to all children and that the unmet education-related needs resulting from their migrant lifestyle are met.

What is the Federal Definition of a “Migratory Child”?



According to sections 1115(c)(1)(A) (incorporated into the MEP by sections 1304(c)(2), 1115(b), and 1309(3) of the ESEA, and 34 C.F.R. § 200.103(a)), a child is a “migratory child” if the following conditions are met:

1. The child is not older than 21 years of age; *and*
2. The child is entitled to a free public education (through grade 12) under State law, *or* the child is not yet at a grade level at which the LEA provides a free public education, *and*
3. The child made a qualifying move in the preceding 36 months as a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher, or did so with, or to join a parent/guardian or spouse who is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher; *and*
4. The child moved due to economic necessity from one residence to another residence, and from one school district to another.

Who is Served by the Title I Part C?



Eligible Participants:

- Students enrolled in grades K-12
- Preschool children ages 3-5
- Out-of-School Youth (OSY)
 - ➔ Broad category that includes children and youth not enrolled in school
 - ➔ Most OSY are ages 16-21, not enrolled in school, and are working in agriculture in our state
 - Unaccompanied or emancipated youth
 - H2A Worker Visa

Title II - Preparing/Recruiting High Quality Educators and School Leaders

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Title II, Part A — Supporting Effective Instruction



The Educator-Centric Mandate: Federal formula grant under ESSA designed to improve student achievement exclusively by elevating educator quality, capacity, and overall effectiveness.

Targeted School Leadership Support: Direct funding allocated to support the recruitment, development, and retention of teachers, principals, assistant principals, and district leaders.

The Strict "PD" Definition (ESSA § 8002): Funds must strictly support professional development that is sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused.



Title II, Part A — Supporting Effective Instruction



Recruitment & Retention Tools: Authorizes funding for teacher induction programs, high-quality mentoring, and personalized leadership growth pathways to reduce educator turnover.

The Evidence-Based Guardrail: Every funded strategy, course, or position must meet federal evidence-based standards (e.g., What Works Clearinghouse or local data tracking student growth).

Fiscal Mandates & Equitable Services: Operates under strict *Supplement, Not Supplant* guidelines. Mandates timely, meaningful consultation to provide equitable professional learning for local private school teachers.



Title III - EL and Immigrant Funds

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Title III (Sec. 3102)



Required Expenditures:

- LIEP (Language Instruction Education Program)
- Professional Development
- FCE

Optional Expenditures: AA (Authorized Activities)
ADMIN (Administration)

Title III Recent Immigrant Grant



Districts will be notified if they qualify and be asked to submit a budget

Criteria:

- Determined in November based on Cycle 2 Recent Immigrant count compared to prior 2 years
- 1. At least 15% Recent Immigrants
- 2. 35% increase over average of the prior 2 years
- 3. Generate >\$10,000 grant

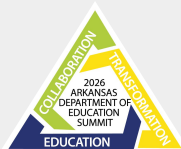
Title IV - Part A

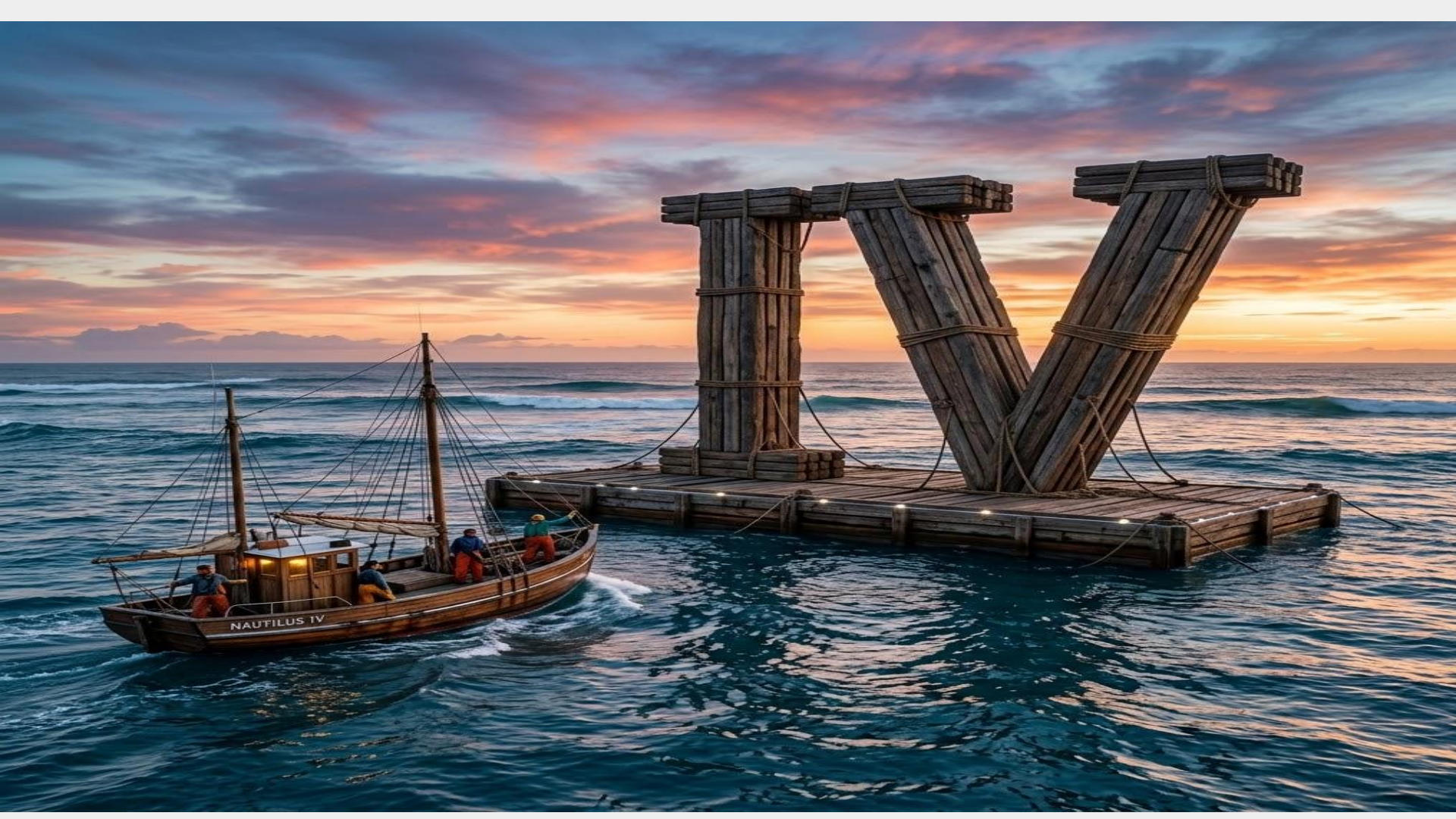
Student Support and Academic Enrichment

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Title IV - Part A



The Three Amigos

Title IV Focuses on three key areas:

1. Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities
2. Safe and Healthy Students
3. Effective Use of Technology

Title IV - Part A



Well Rounded (PC-167)

Allowable Examples:

1. STEM
2. Arts-music, dance, media arts, theater
3. Foreign language instruction
4. College and Career counseling
5. Accelerated learning programs-dual or concurrent enrollment
6. Programs that promote volunteerism or community involvement
7. Educational field trips (Has to align)
8. Civics, economics, geography
9. AP exams for low-income students

Title IV - Part A



Title IV Safe and Healthy (PC-168)

Allowable Examples:

1. School Based Mental Health Services
2. Drug and Violence Prevention
3. Nutritional Education
4. Preventing the use of alcohol, tobacco, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes
5. PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)
6. Dropout Prevention
7. SRO, School Counselor, School Nurse, Technology Coach

Title IV - Part A



Title IV Effective Use of Technology (PC-169)

Allowable Examples:

1. Hotspot Devices
2. Using evidence based strategies for the delivery of academic content using technology
3. Providing students in rural areas with resources to benefit from digital learning opportunities
4. Building technology capacity and infrastructure This includes activities like acquiring and maintaining quality digital content, purchasing devices, equipment, and software, and implementing professional development for educators to better utilize technology in the classroom.

Title IV - Part A



Title IV Effective Use of Technology (PC-169)

Allowable Examples:

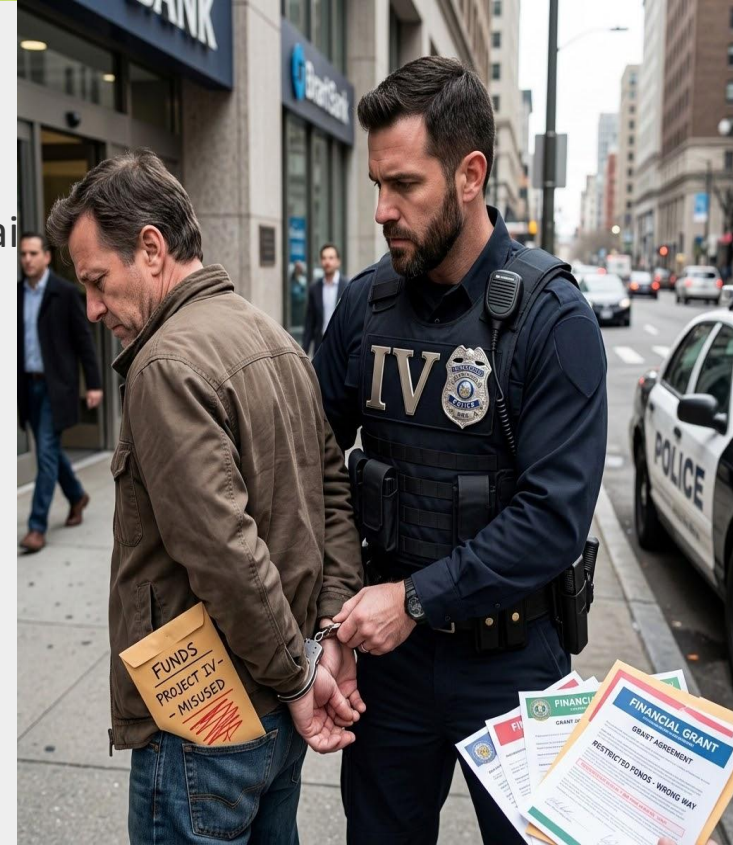
1. AI-based instructional materials
2. Tutoring Systems
3. Professional Development for educators on how to use AI responsibly
4. Integrating AI literacy into teaching practices to improve student outcomes;
5. Using AI to personalize learning and support differentiated instruction, improving outcomes for students at all levels
6. Platforms that leverage AI to help students identify career interests, explore pathways, and make informed choices.
7. Virtual advising systems that guide students through course planning, financial aid, and transitions to postsecondary education or careers.

Title IV Part A



Unallowable uses of Title IV

- Textbooks (Must exhaust all other means of funding prior to utilizing Federal grant funds)
- Construction - major building construction, structural alterations to buildings, building maintenance, or repair
- Advertising and public relations
- Awards and Award Ceremonies
- Incentives and prizes
- Gift Cards
- Fundraising
- Food (permissible if reasonable/necessary to meet intent/purpose of program)
- Non-educational games, devices, and field trips
- Social Events
- Alcoholic Beverages



Title IV - Part B

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers

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SCAN ME



Overview



The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) is the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to supporting local after school, before-school, and summer learning programs.

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) distributes federal funds to 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) in high-need areas each year to provide academic activities, enrichment activities, and family engagement services in support of student success.

[21CCLC Website](#)



Eligible Candidates



- Local Education Agencies (LEA's)
- Community Based Organizations (CBO's)
- Faith Based Organizations (FBO's)
- Indian tribe or tribal organization
- Public, private entity or consortium of 2 or more agencies, organizations, or entities

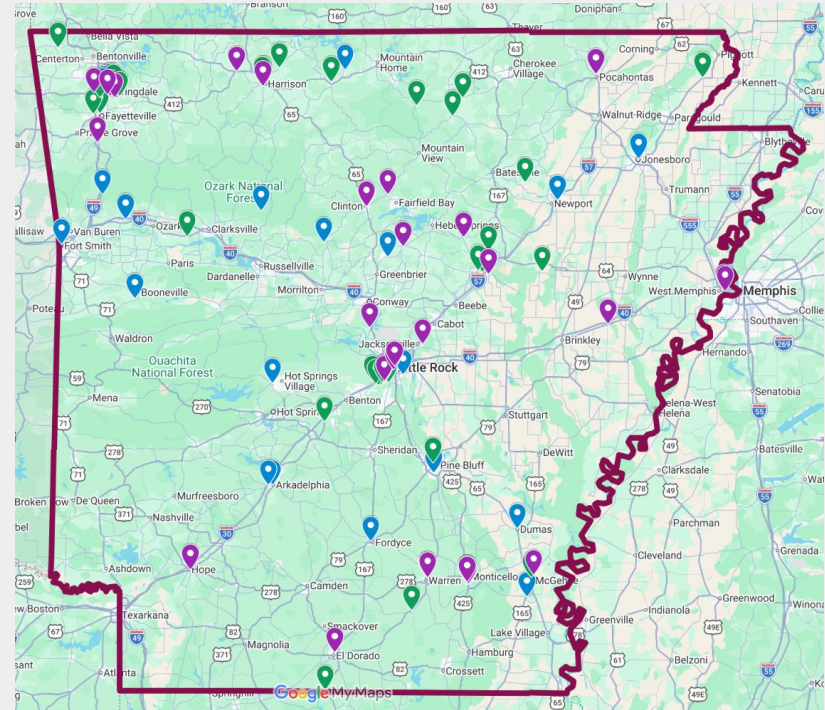
Program Locations



Current Grantee Information

- 55 Grantees
- 87 Sites

21st CCLC Site Map



Title V - Part B

Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)

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Title V, Part B — Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)



The Rural Equity Mission: Focuses on small, resource-constrained districts that lack central office staff to compete for traditional federal grants.

Two Funding Pathways:

- *SRSA (Small, Rural School Achievement):* Awarded directly from the U.S. Department of Education to the district (generally under 600 students).
- *RLIS (Rural and Low-Income Schools):* Maintained and allocated as a pass-through subgrant by DESE to rural districts with high poverty rates.

The Dual-Eligibility Crossroads: Occurs when a district meets both the size criteria for SRSA and the poverty thresholds for RLIS.

The "Choice of Participation" Rule: Districts can only accept funding from *one* subpart per fiscal year and must actively choose the optimal funding source based on estimated allocations

Equitable Services and Paraprofessionals

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Equitable Services



Overview

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, requires a participating Local Educational Agency (LEA) to provide eligible children attending private elementary and secondary schools, their teachers and their families with services or other benefits that are equitable to those provided to eligible public school children, their teachers, and their families.

These services are considered supplemental assistance to address the specific needs of eligible students attending private schools, their families, and their teachers rather than the general needs of a private school.

The Federal Programs office ensures eligible private school children receive equitable services through the designation of an ombudsman in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) sections 20 U.S.C. §6320(a)(3)(B) and §7881(a)(3)(B).



Equitable Services



Ombudsman

The Federal Program Ombudsman provides:

- A primary point of contact for addressing questions and concerns from private school officials and LEA's.
- Technical assistance and enforcement of a private school's proportionate share of equitable services.
- Consultation agreement opportunities between the LEA and appropriate private school officials on how to provide equitable and effective programs for eligible private school children.

Title I Paraprofessionals



Overview

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, requires that Local Education Agencies (LEA's) ensure that paraprofessionals hired with Title I funds or working in a Title I Schoolwide Program meet Highly Qualified guidelines.

Please note: A paraprofessional is an employee of an LEA who provides instructional support in a Title I-funded program and works under the direct supervision of a teacher. Individuals who work in food services, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, non-instructional computer assistance, and similar positions are not required to meet Highly Qualified guidelines under Title I, Part A.

Title I Paraprofessionals



Highly Qualified Requirements

- Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education. *In Arkansas, 60 semester credit hours at a regionally accredited institution of higher education are required. -or-*
- Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree -or-
- Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics. *In Arkansas, there are two Praxis Assessments currently accepted:*
 - *Parapro Praxis (1755), applicants must obtain a **passing score of 457** (EXPIRES 8/31/2026)*
 - *Parapathways Praxis Bundle (5757) -*
 - *Reading and Writing (5758), applicants must obtain a **passing score of 324***
 - *Mathematics (5759), applicants must obtain a **passing score of 325***

Federal Grants Management

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Federal Grants Management



Overview

Federal Grants Management(FGM) was established in 2018 to ensure compliance with federal funding requirements. Its responsibilities include overseeing required set-asides, ensuring accurate and equitable calculations for services provided to eligible participants, and adherence to Title I rank-and-serve procedures. Through these efforts, Federal Grants Management supports accountability and ensures alignment with federal laws and regulations

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Thank you for attending.

July 15, 2026

