

ESSA: A New Era for Education and Afterschool in Oregon

What is ESSA? The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the new K-12 federal education law, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces No Child Left Behind.

ESSA was signed into law in 2015 and will be phased in over the next few years. The law aims to increase local input and flexible decision making based on what communities and states need. Ensuring all students have access to a quality education—inside and outside the classroom—is one of ESSA’s key goals. **This new law provides tremendous opportunities to secure resources for afterschool programs across Oregon.**

We need your help!

The Oregon Department of Education is currently drafting a state plan, which will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in 2017. The time to engage is now!

Here’s what you can do:

- **Reach out to decision-makers.** As states write their new plans, they are required to consult with stakeholders – that includes afterschool providers! This is an opportunity to let your voice be heard and to impact real policy in our state.
- **Weigh in on 21st CCLC.** As the Oregon Department of Education works to update the RFP process, OregonASK will be sharing input and suggestions from the afterschool community. Please let us know what changes you’d like to see in a new RFP process so that we can advocate on your behalf. ESSA requires meaningful consultation with stakeholders in the development of the new RFP and your ideas will be critical to the future of 21st CCLC.

Key ESSA provisions that can Advance Afterschool

Title I: **Accountability measures** and the types of supports schools will use to track and improve student outcomes.

Title II: Expands the allowable use of funds for **professional development**.

Title IV, Part A: **Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants**

Title IV Part B: **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)**

Some ideas to help you communicate effectively:

Tell Your Story. The most important thing you can do is share your story to give an example of how your work is improving the lives of children and their families. Show the Department of Education that their investment in afterschool is a smart one!

Share the Facts. Explain how afterschool benefits the students, families, and schools in your community. Share materials at meetings (or via email), like factsheets showing how afterschool supports [academic success](#), helps to [close the achievement gap](#), and helps students [graduate](#).

Explain Funding Opportunities. Because afterschool is such an integral part of educational improvement, the Oregon Department of Education can combine different funding streams to provide afterschool programming to kids:

- Use Title I school improvement funds for afterschool and summer programs
- Use Title II Part B to provide grants for literacy instruction in partnership with afterschool programs
- Use Title IV Part A funds to support **STEM and college and career readiness opportunities in afterschool and summer programs**

Title I: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans:

- Afterschool and summer programs are an allowable use of Title I funding.
- Title I explicitly lists afterschool as an intervention for schools identified for targeted support, because many students need additional time, alternative settings, and safe, supportive spaces to interact with adults.

Title II: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans:

- Provide opportunities for school staff and afterschool staff to attend joint training and professional development.
- Provide teachers with real-world training and experience in diverse settings, including afterschool and summer programs, as part of the process for earning their hours of practice and observation.

Title IV, Part A: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans:

- Explicitly state that the Department of Education recognizes afterschool and summer programs as evidence-based supports that help provide a well-rounded supportive education for students--and that districts can choose afterschool and summer programs as such supports.
- Encourage local districts to build on **STEM learning** during the regular school day by using Title IV, Part A funds to provide afterschool STEM programs that offer hands on engagement and help students develop their interests, confidence, and experience in career building pathways.

Title IV, Part B: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans:

- Ensure that afterschool networks, programs, parents, and students are meaningfully consulted in the development of RFPs and are included in state-level advisory groups for 21st CCLC.
- Clarify that both schools and community based organizations are eligible to apply for 21st CCLC grants.

If you have questions, need additional support, or want to share feedback from a meeting you've participated in, please contact Beth Unverzagt, beth.unverzagt@oregonask.org