Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality (Consolidated application) Uses of Funds

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Sources: No Child Left Behind Act, Section 2123, Title II-A USDOE Non-Regulatory Guidance
Key Words: Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality
Summary: Title II-A must supplement and not supplant local activities, target certain priorities, and be used for one or more required activities of recruiting, hiring, retaining, professionally developing, or advancing teachers.

Supplement: Funds received under Title II-A must be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under this title.

Priorities: The local educational agency must target Title II-A funds to schools within the jurisdiction of the local educational agency that –

- Have the lowest proportion of highly qualified teachers;
- Have the largest average class size; or
- Are identified for School Improvement under Title I section 1116(b) of Title I, Part A.

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Needs Assessment: The local educational agency shall conduct an assessment of local needs for professional development and hiring, as identified by the local educational agency and school staff. The needs assessment shall be conducted with the involvement of teachers, including teachers participating in programs under part A of title I, and shall take into account the activities that need to be conducted in order to give teachers the means, including subject matter knowledge and teaching skills, and to give principals the instructional leadership skills to help teachers provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging state and local student academic achievement standards.

Local Use of Funds

Required Activities: A local educational agency must use Title II-A funds to carry out one or more of the following activities:

(1) Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist schools in effectively recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, including specialists in core academic subjects, principals and pupil services personnel, except that funds made available under this paragraph may be used for pupil services personnel only –
  (A) If the local educational agency is making progress toward meeting the state's annual measurable objectives; and
  (B) In a manner consistent with mechanisms to assist schools in effectively recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and principals.

(2) Developing and implementing initiatives to assist in recruiting highly qualified teachers (particularly initiatives that have proven effective in retaining highly qualified teachers) and

hiring highly qualified teachers who will be assigned teaching positions within their fields, including –

(A) Providing scholarships, signing bonuses, or other financial incentives, such as differential pay, for teachers to teach –
- In academic subjects in which there exists a shortage of highly qualified teachers within a school or within the local educational agency
- In schools in which there exists a shortage of highly qualified teachers

(B) Recruiting and hiring highly qualified teachers to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades; and

(C) Establishing programs that —
- Train and hire regular and special education teachers (which may include hiring special education teachers to team-teach in classrooms that contain both children with disabilities and nondisabled children);
- Train and hire highly qualified teachers of special-needs children, as well as teaching specialists in core academic subjects who will provide increased individualized instruction to students;
- Recruit qualified professionals from other fields, including highly qualified paraprofessionals, and provide such professionals with alternative routes to teacher certification, including developing and implementing hiring policies that ensure comprehensive recruitment efforts as a way to expand the applicant pool, such as through identifying teachers certified through alternative routes, and using a system of intensive screening designed to hire the most qualified applicants; and
- Provide increased opportunities for minorities, individuals with disabilities, and other individuals underrepresented in the teaching profession.

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(3) Providing professional development activities –

(A) That improve the knowledge of teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, concerning –
- One or more of the core academic subjects that the teachers teach; and
- Effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills, and use of challenging state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, and state assessments, to improve teaching practices and student academic achievement

(B) That improves the knowledge of teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, concerning effective instructional practices and that –
- Involve collaborative groups of teachers and administrators;
- Provide training in how to teach and address the needs of students with different learning styles, particularly students with disabilities, students with special learning needs (including students who are gifted and talented), and students with limited English proficiency;
- Provide training in methods of –
    - improving student behavior in the classroom; and

- identifying early and appropriate interventions to help students with different learning styles;

- Provide training to enable teachers and principals to involve parents in their child's education, especially parents of limited English proficient and immigrant children; and
- Provide training on how to understand and use data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning.

(4) Developing and implementing initiatives to promote retention of highly qualified teachers and principals, particularly within elementary schools and secondary schools with a high percentage of low-achieving students, including programs that provide –
(A) teacher mentoring from exemplary teachers, principals, or superintendents;
(B) Induction and support for teachers and principals during their first three years of employment as teachers or principals, respectively;
(C) Incentives, including financial incentives, to retain teachers who have a record of success in helping low-achieving students improve their academic achievement; or
(D) Incentives, including financial incentives, to principals who have a record of improving the academic achievement of all students, but particularly students from economically disadvantaged families, students from racial and ethnic minority groups, and students with disabilities.

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(5) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of the teacher force, such as –
(A) Innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships including institutions of higher education), including programs that train teachers and principals to integrate technology into curricula and instruction to improve teaching, learning, and technology literacy; are consistent with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act's* definition of high-quality professional development in *Section 9101 (34)*, and are coordinated with activities carried out under part D;
(B) Development and use of proven, cost-effective strategies for the implementation of professional development activities, such as through the use of technology and distance learning;
(C) Tenure reform;
(D) Merit pay programs;
(E) Testing of elementary school and secondary school teachers in the academic subjects that the teachers teach.

(6) Carrying out professional development activities designed to improve the quality of principals and superintendents, including the development and support of academies to help talented aspiring or current principals and superintendents become outstanding managers and educational leaders.

(7) Hiring highly qualified teachers, including teachers who become highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification, and special education teachers, in order to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades. (Note: ODE's Office of Federal Programs does not approve IIA grant funds being used for intervention models.)

(8) Carrying out teacher advancement initiatives that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (such as paths to becoming a career teacher, mentor teacher, or exemplary teacher) and pay differentiation.

(9) Carrying out programs and activities related to exemplary teachers.

NCLB web site: http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/legislation.html#guidance

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