



Department of Public Instruction
Rural and Low-Income Schools Program (RLIS)
Guidance

Introduction

The Rural and Low-Income Schools Program (RLIS), under the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is designed to address the needs of rural, low-income schools. These funds are intended to supplement the funds applied for using the Consolidated Application for Federal Title Funding.

Deadline to Apply

The deadline to apply for RLIS funding is October 1, 2020.

Allocations

A final RLIS allocation chart for the 2020-2021 school year can be accessed on the NDDPI REAP [website](#). The NDDPI has chosen to use a formula method for allocations rather than a competitive one to ensure that all eligible districts receive funding. The formula is based on enrollment data.

Grant Period

The grant period for obligating and spending federal RLIS funding is July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

Carryover

The RLIS carryover provision has been changed. Any funds not spent at the end of the grant period can be carried over for an additional period of twelve months.

Authorized Representative

The school board needs to name an authorized representative for the RLIS who has signature authority. The name provided will be coded into the application and only this individual can sign within WebGrants.

School Board Approval

The RLIS funding must be approved during a school board meeting prior to submission within WebGrants.

Supplement, not Supplant

- Federal funds shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for authorized activities.

- In general, federal funds must enhance, add to and supplement services and programs that are offered with state and local funds.
- Federal funds may not be used to replace any services and programs that were offered using state and local funds.

Application Process – North Dakota WebGrants

For the 2020-2021 school year, North Dakota school districts will complete an application and apply for RLIS funding in the department’s WebGrants system.

All WebGrants users must register and have their own user accounts. Those who have participated in prior applications or other programs currently within the grant system are already registered. Additional users from each district may want or need to register as well. The school board authorized representative needs to be registered to sign the grant award, referred to as a “contract” in WebGrants, electronically.

Grant recipients can determine which district users should be included for specific grant awards in the system. Not all district users will see all grants awarded to their district in the WebGrants system.

Since these are federal funds, all funds must be issued on a reimbursement basis. LEAs will seek reimbursement through the North Dakota WebGrants System. Registration and general information can be found in the WebGrants User Guide.

Allowable Uses of Funds

Funds under the RLIS program may be used for one or more of the following authorized activities:

ID Number

ID Number	Activity
1.	Activities authorized under Title I, Part A Improving Basic Programs
2.	Activities authorized under Title II, Part A Teacher/Principal Training
3.	Activities authorized under Title III LEP and Immigrant Students
4.	Activities authorized under Title IV, Part A Student Support & Academic Enrichment
5.	Activities authorized under Title IV, Part E Family Engagement

Program: ESSA – Title I, Part A

Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs

The purpose of Title I, Part A is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps. The Title I, Part A is an ESEA program intended to:

- Ensure all children the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments,
- Provide funding to supplement educational opportunities for students in higher poverty schools,
- Provide professional learning for school staff, and
- Implement other strategies for raising student academic achievement.

[Title I, Part A Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

Program: ESSA – Title II, Part A

Supporting Effective Instruction

Title II, Part A is intended to increase student academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality. This includes increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms, improving the skills of principals and assistant principals in schools, and increasing the effectiveness of teachers and principals.

Title II activities:

- Recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly qualified teachers and principals.
- Programs and activities designed to improve the quality of the teaching force.
- Teacher advancement initiatives that emphasize multiple career paths and pay differentiation.
- Professional development activities that improve the knowledge of teachers, principals and superintendents.

[Title II, Part A Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

Program: ESSA – Title III, Part A

English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

Title III, Part A was established to help ensure English learners (ELs), including immigrant children and youth (ICY) attain English proficiency, high levels of academic achievement in English, and meet the same challenging State academic standards that all children are expected to meet. Title III, Part A is also intended to assist teachers (including preschool teachers, principals and other school leaders, LEAs, and schools) in establishing, implementing, and sustaining effective language instruction educational programs (LIEPs), in developing and enhancing their capacity to provide effective instructional programs, and to promote parental, family, and community participation in LIEPs for the parents, families, and communities of ELs. (ESSA Sec 3101)

Title III, Part A activities:

- Provide effective LIEPs to increase the English language proficiency and academic achievement of ELs.
- Provide effective professional development.
- Provide and implement effective parent, family, and community engagement activities.

[Title III, Part A Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

Program: ESSA – Title IV, Part A

Student Support & Academic Enrichment

The purpose of Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, districts, schools, and local communities to provide all students with access to well-rounded education, improve school conditions for student learning, and improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. (ESSA Sec 4101)

[Title IV, Part A Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

[Title IV, Part B Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

Program: ESSA – Title IV, Part E

Family Engagement

The purposes of family engagement in education programs are the following:

- To provide financial support to organizations to provide technical assistance and training for districts in the implementation and enhancement of systemic and effective family engagement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement.
- To assist districts, schools, educators, and community-based organizations in strengthening partnerships among parents, teachers, school leaders, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the educational needs of children and fostering greater parental engagement.
- To support districts, schools, educators, and parents in developing and strengthening the relationship between parents and their children's school in order to further the developmental progress of children.

- To assist the districts in the coordination and integration of federal, state, and local services, programs, and initiatives to engage families in education.

[Title IV, Part E Program Information and Allowable Activities](#)

Coding and Tracking Funds

LEAs must track these funds separately to report use of funds and expenses in the future. The following codes have been established and align with the [NDSDFARM](#). In addition, the NDDPI has created [coding guidance](#) to provide assistance.

- Project Expense Coding: 089 – RLIS Funding

As federal funds, ESSER funds are subject to both Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG).

RLIS Monitoring Process

Listed below are the methods the NDDPI will utilize to monitor the RLIS funding:

- Use the NDDPI grants management system, WebGrants, for collecting reimbursement and oversight purposes.
- Have LEAs submit their ledger of expenditures with every reimbursement claim to verify allowability.
- Potential desk reviews for randomly selected districts.

Accountability

School districts that receive funds from the RLIS program must administer assessments consistent with ESSA.

Reporting

School districts that receive funds from the RLIS program must submit a final report which will be due July 15, 2021.

Questions

Questions relating to the RLIS program/application can be directed to the following NDDPI staff:

Laurie Matzke
Assistant Superintendent
Email: lmatzke@nd.gov
Phone: (701) 328-2284

Lisa Johnson
Program Manager
Email: lisaajohnson@nd.gov
Phone: (701) 328-2824