



ESSA AND ARTS EDUCATION

7 BASICS TO KNOW

1. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), **local and state advocacy** for the arts is even more important than before. Changes in ESSA from No Child Left Behind put a lot more decision making power in the hands of the states and reduces the role of the federal government in education reform.
2. The previously listed **Core Academic Subjects**, which included the arts, have been replaced by a newly defined list of subjects that are elements of a **Well-Rounded Education**, which still includes the arts and now also includes music.

“WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION.—THE TERM ‘WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION’ MEANS COURSES, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRAMMING IN SUBJECTS SUCH AS ENGLISH, READING OR LANGUAGE ARTS, WRITING, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS, FOREIGN LANGUAGES, CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT, ECONOMICS, **ARTS**, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, COMPUTER SCIENCE, **MUSIC**, CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND ANY OTHER SUBJECT, AS DETERMINED BY THE STATE OR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY, WITH THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING ALL STUDENTS ACCESS TO AN ENRICHED CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.”

3. **Title I** funds may be used for **all subjects** included as part of the definition of a well-rounded education, and therefore can be used for **arts** and **music**. States now have increased discretion on how to use Title I funds.
4. Grant programs that were previously supported by the **Arts in Education** fund are retained under the newly named **Assistance for Arts Education** fund. Programs that provide arts education for disadvantaged students and students with disabilities are eligible for this funding. It can be used towards: professional development, development and dissemination of instructional materials, and community and national outreach activities. (SEC. 4641-4642)
5. New **Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants** specify the arts and music education as eligible uses for funds. Local education agencies apply for these funds. (SEC. 4107)
6. New authority in ESSA provides support for **integration of the arts** into STEM classes, as a way of increasing student participation in STEM classes, improving retention of skills related to STEM subjects and promoting well-rounded education. (SEC. 4107)
7. **Accountability requirements** are much more **flexible** and have potential to be tied to the arts. Tests in reading and math are still required, but states are now given the ability to define and include additional measures, such as student achievement, school climate/culture and student engagement. The arts can play a role in achieving these. For more information see our document on how the arts can help achieve multiple measures of success: <http://bit.ly/29rVoRW>

