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Ms. Janice Marks
7661 E. Camino Amistoso
Tucson, AZ 85750

Dear Ms. Marks,

Thank you for your request for information regarding state and local education agency uses of ESSA Title I, Part A funds. More specifically, you asked if schools may only use Title I, Part A funds to purchase materials or programs that meet certain levels of evidence as specified in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

The U.S. Department encourages states, local education agencies, and schools to use Title I, Part A funds to support programs with evidence of effectiveness. Under Title I, Part A, states should use funds to support programs that meet any of the four tiers of evidence as specified below in the ESSA law:

WHAT IS AN "EVIDENCE-BASED" INTERVENTION?

(from section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA)

"...the term 'evidence-based,' when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that –

- (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on –
 - (I) strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
 - (II) moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or
 - (III) promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
- (ii) (I) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and
 - (II) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

The School Improvement Grant Program (Title I, Sec. 1003g) requires grantees to use interventions that meet one of the more rigorous three tiers (Tiers I-III). Grantees may fund programs that meet any of the four tiers of evidence under most other federal education programs in Title I-IV.

Schools may purchase programs, such as Page A Day Math Kits, supported with research outlined in the [National Math Panel Report](#), with Title I, Part A funds. Additionally, Education Support Specialist Raquel Alvara at the Arizona Department of Education shared that ADE encourages districts to use the funds on programs that align with tiers I-IV and their local needs assessment. She noted that they prioritize enforcement of the evidence of effectiveness rules for schools receiving funding to support School Improvement efforts under Title I, Sec. 1003.

Linked [here](#) is some guidance from ADE on the tiers of evidence. Additionally, I included clear guidance from the California State Department of Education below:

The screenshot shows the California Department of Education website. The header includes the state logo and navigation menus for Teaching & Learning, Testing & Accountability, Finance & Grants, Data & Statistics, Specialized Programs, Learning Support, and Professional Learning. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home / Resources / Every Student Succeeds Act / Evidence-Based Interventions Under the ESSA. The main heading is "Evidence-Based Interventions Under the ESSA" with a sub-heading "Information regarding evidence-based interventions as defined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)." The main content area contains a paragraph explaining the shift from "scientifically-based research" to "evidence-based interventions" under ESSA, followed by definitions for four tiers of evidence: Tier 1 (Strong Evidence), Tier 2 (Moderate Evidence), Tier 3 (Promising Evidence), and Tier 4 (Demonstrates a Rationale). A note at the bottom states that interventions under Title I, Section 1003 require strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1-3). On the right side, there are three sidebar boxes: "Share this Page" with social media icons, "Trending in Every Student Succeeds Act" featuring a link to the current page, and "Recently Posted in Every Student Succeeds Act" featuring a link to a "Title IV, Part A Waiver Comment Period" added on 22-Dec-2020.

Kind regards,

M. René Islas
CEO
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