

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) & OPEN

What is ESSA?

Simply put, ESSA is the federal legislation that has replaced No Child Left Behind. It's the federal law that funds education.

Why is ESSA important to Physical Educators?

For the first time, Physical Education has received designation as a part of a student's "well-rounded education" and is given equal status with all other major academic subject areas (e.g., language arts and math). This allows school health and physical education significant access to funding.

Subjects included in the definition of a well-rounded education are eligible uses of Title I and Title II funds by states and districts. For the first time Physical Education is an eligible use of those funds – at the discretion of state and local leaders.

2016 will be the final Federal PEP Grant competition. Within ESSA, PEP Grant funds have been consolidated into block grants that will be distributed to the states. School Health and Physical Education will have access to significant funding under Title IV of ESSA.

The process for access funds from Titles I, II, and IV are still being developed by the Department of Education. SHAPE America continues to advocate in Washington, DC on behalf of the greater Physical Education Community.

This funding will begin to flow to states on July 1, 2016. What can you do to be ready?

- Educate your colleagues, administrators, and board members. Let them know Physical Education is a part of a "well-rounded education." Being part of the definition of a well-rounded education puts school health and physical education on a level playing field with other academic subjects.
- Complete an assessment of needs under safe and healthy students program.
- Consider serving on the committee in your school district that develops school funding plans.
- Find allies in your building and district that support physical education. Ask them if they're willing to support you publically if/when funding PE through Titles I, II, & IV come in to question.
- Stay tuned to the OPEN Coach's Corner and to SHAPE America's Advocacy Center ([HERE](#)).

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- ESSA contains specific language that allows states and local education agencies to channel block grant money focused on technology toward open-source educational resources.
- Open Education Resources (OER) are defined as resources released under a license that allows free use, modification, and sharing. OPENPhysEd.org meets the requirements of this definition.
- Arne Duncan, then-Secretary of Education said the Federal DOE was, "encouraging districts and states to move away from traditional textbooks and toward freely accessible, openly licensed materials."
- Open resources were named specifically as a part of block grants through Title IV of ESSA, assisting with student support and academic enrichment.