

Indiana's Application for the Educational Flexibility Program (Ed-Flex)

What is flex

- IDOE has requested five requirement waivers from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to carry out federal programs in a more flexible manner
- USED had the option to approve all, some, or none of these requests
- On May 6, 2020, USED approved all five requirement waiver requests
- The CARES Act offered three of these waivers for these funds. IDOE requested approval for all five through the 2023-2024 school year
- LEAs had the opportunity to provide feedback on these waivers

Public input orfiled

- Indiana Federal Programs Advisory Board met in August 2019
- Each of the waiver requests were reviewed and approved by the board
- Requests without enough board support were removed from IDOE's application
- The group's feedback went into IDOE's formal request sent to USED on December 3, 2019

Waiver request #1

- LEAs may carry over up to 25% of their Title I, Part A funds to the following fiscal year. This will increase the maximum carry over of 15% of the Title I, Part A funds.
 - Allows LEAs to utilize funding more meaningfully by providing additional time to account for extenuating circumstances
 - Most LEAs' Title I funding is allocated for staffing. With teacher shortages, staffing is sometimes difficult to fill quickly when staff resigns
 - Instead of the LEA purchasing large amounts of supplies and equipment with the unused funds near the end of the project period, replacement staff can be hired instead

Waiver request #2

- LEAs may utilize the more flexible state defined paraprofessional requirements for highly-qualified rather than the current federal requirements.
 - ESSA allows Indiana to set its own licensure and quality requirements for certified staff but maintains federal requirements for paraprofessionals.
 - Federal rules do not allow for additional options that can demonstrate paraprofessionals' quality
 - The waiver will ease the paraprofessional shortage while not reducing quality
 - Some schools eligible for Title I schoolwide status avoid transitioning to schoolwide due to this rule alone

Public input offered

- On May 7, 2020, IDOE requested public input on what the more flexible state defined paraprofessional requirements should be
- The input was requested both through the Federal Program Advisory Board as well as through the CARES Act 4 Part Webinar Series

Waiver request #3

- Indiana Department of Corrections may utilize up to 65% of its Title I, Part D funds (Delinquent) on transitions services (between IDOC and local school districts) rather than the current limitation of 30%
- The IDOE (state agency for delinquent) has local funds that cover the basic educational program for these students
- Title I, D funds are most effectively used in supporting the transition of students in the juvenile facilities back to their LEAs when they have fulfilled court requirements
- The current 30% maximum limits the ability for the state agency (IDOC) to collaborate at a high-level with LEAs for re-entry of students

Waiver request #4

- LEAs who receive more than \$30,000 in Title IV, A funds do not have to spend 20% on well-rounded education and social emotional learning
 - LEAs should use a data-driven needs assessment to dictate how Title IV, A funds are used rather than a specific percentage
 - LEAs may already be implementing a well-rounded education program with state/local funds and would like to dedicate all Title IV funding to social-emotional needs or technology integration needs
 - Based upon feedback received, IDOE will maintain the 15% equipment and device limitation

Waiver request #5

- LEAs may ask IDOE for a Tydings waiver to extend the length of time for the project period for a respective grant
 - This will provide more time in extenuating circumstances (e.g., lack of use by a previous LEA administration and new team needs more time to use the funding at the highest level)
 - IDOE will place safeguards upon the Tydings waiver requests, such as only approving waivers that are requested prior to the liquidation deadline of the respective grants



Thank you!