

Webinar
3-Title IV Part A
February 9, 2017

Greta Colombi: This Webinar is the last of three focused on the SSAE grant's non-regulatory guidance. The previous webinars provided an overview of the program and walked through important details including the role of state agencies, build the application requirements and steps to effectively implement SSAE program activities. Both of those events have been archived. Simply click the links on the slide to access the recordings and slides. The Q&A documents from both will be posted shortly.

Finally, to help our speakers best serve you and for your information, before I hand off the webinar to our speakers, I would like to ask you a quick polling question: How would you describe your role or roles? You can see we included a broad range of stakeholders here as options. Since we know many of you wear many hats and many of you are participating in today's webinar with a team, please check all that apply. We're just going to wait a moment to give you an opportunity to respond. So far, it looks like most of our folks are from state educational agencies, either a director through staff people. We also have, about 20% of folks responding, are district administrators, but what's really wonderful is you can see there are a variety of folks visiting and participating in today's webinar. So thank you very much for letting us know who is joining today. [Pause]

Okay. We are all set now. So, without further ado, we are going to get started. I would like to now introduce you to Norris Dickard.

Norris Dickard: Thank you very much, Greta, and hello everyone. Thanks for joining us on today's webinar. I greet you on behalf of my other colleagues from the US Department of Education who will be presenting today.

In this introduction, I want to first begin by going over the agenda. As you can see on the screen, this is an overview of the agenda and it lists all the speakers and the order they will be presenting. They will introduce themselves before they begin speaking. As you can see here on this agenda slide, we're going to be covering, in more detail, the three content areas in which LEAs may implement activities. What I'm going to cover in my introduction besides the agenda are some of the overarching requirements and other considerations related allowable call.

On this slide, you have some background on the new program that we've included in all of the webinars, but I want to just focus on bullet three, and stress that the flexibility is there. It's there and it's afforded to SEAs and LEAs to tailor their investments to really best meet the unique needs of their student populations. This term flexibility is one you're going to hear many times during this webinar.

We are including this slide again because it lists the purposes of the grants as outlined in the statute. Now, why is this important when it comes to allowable activity? Well, because SEAs will determine if an activity in an LEA application is allowable. Generally, they're going to begin by considering whether it is consistent with these purposes. There are other considerations of course, and I'm going to mention those in a minute.

I encourage you to review this slide very carefully as we've been covering it throughout the webinar series and we've been focusing on the non-regulatory guidance related to the programs. It's very important to note that the guidance is non-binding. It does not create or impose new legal requirements. Also, the Department of Education is not mandating or prescribing particular practices, models or other activities.

Related to the previous slide, you're going to see in the guidance, or read in the guidance, and in this presentation, list the many examples of allowable activities. The important takeaway is, this is not an exhaustive list but these are really only examples, so please keep this in mind.

All right, let me begin now to discuss some of the overarching considerations that SEAs and LEAs should be aware of as they contemplate allowable activities. You may have read the guidance and wondered what exactly a certain term mean. Well, fortunately, many of these terms are defined in the law. On this list are numerous definitions that apply to the SSAE program. I really encourage you to read the full definitions in ESEA if they're related to an allowable activity you're considering.

In the next two slides, I want to go over prohibitions that apply to allowable activity. I'm not going to read them in detail or discuss them in detail, but I really do encourage you to review this list carefully. This first slide is related to the

prohibitions that apply specifically to the SSAE program. Now, on this next slide are prohibitions that apply across the board to all programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Again, I encourage you to be familiar with these prohibitions.

Now, I want to briefly mention some other requirements that you should keep in mind as you're thinking about allowable activities and allowable calls. We've discussed some of these in more detail in the previous webinars, and some we're going to touch on throughout this webinar. First, remember, an LEA that receives at least \$30,000.00 in SSAE program funds must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. That includes, at a minimum, a focus on the three content areas of the program. Of course, it's important to keep in mind that LEAs that receive less than \$30,000.00 in an allocation are not required to do this. Based on this comprehensive needs assessment, the LEA or a consortium of LEAs must provide insurances in their application if they will use at least 20% of their funds on Well-Rounded activities, at least 20% on Safe and Healthy Student activities, and some portion on Educational Technology. The other bullets may be discussed later on the webinar, but if not, I really refer you back to the non-regulatory guidance that you can download, and these topics are covered in more detail.

So, here's a question we've received, and I want to point out that, woven throughout the presentations in this webinar, are a number of questions we've received and we're going to provide answers. As was mentioned at the beginning, we're also going to cover questions that come up through the chat box. Those that we can't answer, we're going to cover as many of those at the end of this webinar. These are questions we've received before, so let me start with the first one. "Is an individual LEA receiving an allocation of less than \$30,000.00 in program funds required to use a certain percentage of funds for each of the three content areas?" Well, the answer is no. There's a special rule that states that LEAs receiving less than \$30,000.00 will only have to provide in its application, only one of the assurances related to funds. You may be wondering how this works out. Let me give you an example. Let's say there's a LEA receiving an allocation of \$10,000.00 and they decided to spend \$8,000.00, that would be 80%, on Well-Rounded Education activities and then the remainder, the other 20%, on Educational Technology. In this case, the LEA would provide only one assurance. That it will use at least 20% of its funds for Well-Rounded activities.

We've also received many questions about transferability and I noticed one of the first questions in the chat box was, "Are we going to cover this?" Well, the short answer is LEAs and SEAs may transfer funds to or from the SSAE program. Now, the details are very complicated and the requirements differ depending on whether we're talking about an SEA or an LEA. There's a detailed discussion on this in another department guidance document called, Fiscal Changes in Equitable Service Guidance. A link is provided on this slide.

Let me cover another question related to the guidance I just mentioned. It does cover transferability but also equitable services. The question we get is: Do the equitable service provisions apply to the program and how do you calculate the share? The short answer is yes, they do apply. LEAs are required to provide equitable services for private school students and teachers. Consistent with the requirements at ESEA, expenditures for equitable services can be equal to expenditures for public school programs taken into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served. As I mentioned, the guidance covers this in great detail and I encourage you to review it.

In conclusion, I just want to remind you when it comes to allowable activities and costs, that the uniform guidance cost principles apply as they do to other Department of Education programs. Listed on this slide are a couple of the core cost principles which many of you may know by memory. Also provided in this slide is a link to more detailed department presentations and resources on this topic.

That concludes my presentation of the overarching requirements and considerations you should take into account. At this stage, I'd like to now turn the presentation over to my colleague, Eve Birge and Ivonne Jaime who are going to present on the Well-Rounded Educational Opportunity aspects of the program.

Eve Birge: Thanks for setting the stage, Norris. I'm Eve Birge and I'm happy to be joined by my colleague, Ivonne Jaime.

The purpose of a Well-Rounded Education is to provide an educational experience that exposes all students to a variety of disciplines including music and the arts, social studies and civics, science and technology. We'll talk about these programs and activities today, including those that mix multiple academic disciplines. Why is this important? One survey found that elementary school students spend just 21

minutes a day on social studies, and just a little bit more on science. With the passage of ESSA, states, districts and schools can re-focus on the characteristics of a comprehensive, well-rounded education, and you can do so in ways that ensure aspects and equity. As you can see, a well-rounded education, as defined in statute, covers courses activities and programming in many areas. We received a question about whether health education and physical education fall under Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities and, as you can see here, the answer is yes. Health and PE can also fall under the Safe and Healthy Students program area, which Loretta and Bryan will cover in a few minutes.

A well-rounded education starts with early learning opportunities that make time for exploration and continues with K-12 education that helps students make connections between their studies, their curiosities, their passions, and the skills they need to become critical thinkers. I've included some research on this slide. Additionally, experience shows that students who have been exposed to the language and vocabulary of the natural world, the sciences and social studies are better readers. Research shows that students who have strong experiences in the arts often perform better in math.

I'm now going to pass the mic to my colleague, Ivonne Jaime, who will review the list of stakeholders you'll want to connect with, allowable activities. She'll answer several questions we've received and we'll share resources about the Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities program area.

Ivonne Jaime: Thank you, Eve. My name is Ivonne Jaime and I want to begin this portion of the presentation by focusing on stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement cuts across the three content areas, Well-Rounded, Safe and Healthy, and Technology. LEAs, during the design and development of their application, must engage with stakeholders in the area served by the LEA. The stakeholders on this slide are those included in the statutes and represent parents, principal, [\[Unintelligible\]](#) leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, local government representatives, and community-based organization among others.

For the Well-Rounded Education content area, for example, an LEA considering supporting the creation of a STEM-focused specialty school might engage the engineering faculty from an institution of higher education due to their expertise in a STEM-related content area.

Now, let's turn to the allowable activities that may be included under Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities. They are: college and career guidance and counseling, math and the arts, foreign language instruction, environmental education, volunteerism and community involvement, and programs that integrate multiple disciplines.

I want to draw your attention now to the last bullet which states other programs that support Well-Rounded Education experiences. This bullet exemplifies the flexibilities allowed under SSAE. An LEA may, in its application, indicate any program or activity that supports student access to and success in a variety of well-rounded educational experience. For today's presentation, we selected two activities to focus on. They were selected because they have generated the highest number of questions to date. These two activities are not any more important than any of the others noted on the slide. The two activities are STEM and Accelerated Learning Programs. If you have any questions or want additional information, we encourage you to review the non-regulatory guidance. If you need additional information after reviewing the guidance, please feel free to send us a question at the email address noted at the beginning of the presentation.

Let's turn now to STEM. STEM includes programs and activities to improve instruction and student engagement in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, including computer science. Specific activities that you may support include increasing access for groups of underrepresented students to high-quality courses, supporting participation in non-profit competition, providing students with hands-on learning and exposure to STEM, as well as integrating other academic subjects including the arts into STEM subject program. In addition to the funding available under Well-Rounded to support STEM activities, there is an overlap and a potential to leverage resources with the technology content area. For example, crumbs from the technology bucket may be used to expand professional learning for STEM educators in rural, remote, or underserved areas through the use of a virtual coaching model. My colleagues, Madeline and Pete, will further expand on this on their portion of the presentation.

The next activity that we will focus on today is Accelerated Learning Programs. There are two primary types of accelerated learning programs, programs that include post-secondary level courses such as dual enrollment, and programs that

include post-secondary level instruction and examinations such as the International Baccalaureate Program. Depending on which program is selected to be implemented, you may use funds to reimburse low-income students to cover all or part of the cost of accelerated learning program examinations, or you may increase the availability of an enrollment in accelerated learning programs.

Before we address the question on your screen, I do want to point out that accelerated learning examinations, and I should say first that the next two questions will focus on questions that we have received regarding accelerated learning examinations. The two questions address different perspectives of, or I should say, the two questions relate to accelerated learning examinations, but I want to point out that accelerated learning examinations are covered under two sections of the statute; the section focusing on local education agencies' use of funds, as well as the section focusing on a state's use of funds.

Let's take a look at the question from the LEA perspective. May an LEA use funds to pay for accelerated learning examinations taken by low income students? And the answer is yes. LEAs may use funds to reimburse the cost of accelerated learning examinations for low income students. In addition, there is a special rule that allows LEAs to use fiscal year 2017 funds to cover the examinations in the 2016-2017 school year, and 2017-2018 school year.

Now, let's take a look at the same question from the perspective of an SEA. May an SEA use funds to pay for accelerated learning examinations taken by low income students? Yes. An SEA may reserve funds not reserved for LEA subgrants or state administrative costs to reimburse the cost of these examinations. In addition, there's also a special rule that allows states to reserve funds for the 2016-2017 school year, or the 2017-2018 school year for the two testing cycles basically.

Let's take a look at the distribution of funds. Just as a reminder, if states wish to cover the cost of accelerated learning examinations for low income students, they must use the funds under the state activities bucket which is the third bucket on your screen. The first bucket indicates that the state must reserve not less than 95% of their allotment for subgrants - subgrants to LEAs. The second, not more than 1% of their allotment for administrative cost, and we've already reviewed the third bucket which is really the bucket that can be used to support the examination fees for low income students.

I do want to point out that LEAs should engage their state educational agencies to determine if funds will be set aside to cover the fees associated with accelerated examinations. A state's decision may impact whether or not this activity is included in the LEA's application and possibly the amount of funds requested.

Lastly, let's take a look at some resources. Included in this page are a few resources that provide more information about accelerated learning programs and STEM, the two allowable activities that we focused our presentation on today. For resources, on the other activities, we encourage you to visit the non-regulatory guidance.

This ends the portion education of Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities. Now, I would like to turn it over to Bryan and Loretta from the Safe and Healthy Unit.

Bryan Williams: Thanks Ivonne. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Bryan Williams, and Loretta McDaniel and I will be discussing the second content area under the SSAE program of Safe and Healthy Students which addresses improving school conditions for learning.

As I am sure you are aware, one of the best things that schools can do to reduce violence, bullying and other problem behaviors, such as drug abuse or poor attendance, is to improve the school's climate and promote positive relationships between students and staff. When students are healthy and feel safe and supported in school, they are more likely to succeed. We are pleased to note that schools have made significant progress toward improving safety and by many measures, our nation's schools are safer than they have ever been. However, significant challenges remain.

Consistent with ESSA, program funds under Safe and Healthy Students may be used to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive activities and programs. That includes direct student services as well as professional development and training for school staff that's [\[Unintelligible\]](#) are coordinated with other schools and community-based services and programs, foster safe, healthy, supportive and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement, promote the involvement of parents and caregivers, and may be implemented in partnership

with DBOs with a demonstrated record of success in implementing similar activities.

You'll see in the screen there, there are three boxes. As we review this section, one thing you will immediately notice is that there is a very wide range of allowable activity. To help you wrap your brain around this, what we decided to group them into three separate topic areas. Please note that we are not requiring you to follow this framework but we thought that conceptually it would be helpful and more user-friendly to organize the activities under this section in this manner. So, the topic areas are safe and supportive schools which relates to school safety and conditions for learning, second one is student physical and mental health, and the last one you see is what we're calling cross-cutting initiatives, which we mean to say, basically, that these are strategies that are applicable to safe and supportive schools, as well a student physical and mental health.

With that, I am now going to turn it over to Loretta who will discuss each of the topic areas and the allowable activities under each one.

Loretta McDaniel: Thank you Bryan, good afternoon. My name is Loretta McDaniel and I will take us through each of the three topic areas under Safe and Healthy Students. Under the first topic area, safe and supportive schools, ESSA provides school districts with several options to ensure that schools are safe and supportive places for students to learn which, in turn, can promote student academic achievement. Some examples of allowable activities under this topic area are: implementation of systems and practices to prevent bullying and harassment, relationship building to help improve school safety through the recognition and prevention of coercion, violence or abuse, dropout prevention and reentry programs and transition services for justice involved youth. Some additional options include programs that establish or improve school readiness and academic success, child sexual abuse awareness and prevention, as well as programs that reduce the use of exclusionary discipline practices and suicide prevention.

The second topic area I'd like to cover is student physical and mental health. Student physical and mental health may also be used for a wide variety of programs and activities that directly support student health and wellness. Here are some examples of allowable activities under this area: drug and violence prevention, health and safety practices in school athletic programs, school-based mental health

services and counseling, programs that support a healthy, active lifestyle including nutritional and physical education, as well as trauma-informed classroom management and chronic disease management.

I just covered this question on the screen in the previous slide but because we've had several questions about it, I wanted to put a spotlight on it just as a reminder that some health services are covered under the program.

Now, the last topic area under Safe and Healthy Students is cross-cutting initiatives. SSAE supports programs for professional development and training activities that may be crosscutting in nature and that may positively impact safe and supportive learning environments, as well as students' physical and mental health. This is an opportunity for schools to promote activity that are inclusive of all students. For instance, LEAs may use funds to reduce bullying and harassment or to implement schoolwide PBIS which can incorporate a wide range of evidence-based programs that can work to prevent risk factors associated with substance abuse, bullying and violence, as well as promotion of mental health and wellness. Funds may also be used for Pay for Success initiatives. As Norris mentioned earlier, this term is specifically defined in the guidance so I encourage you to review it if you wish to learn more about what may be possible under Pay for Success.

So, I'll wrap up with a list of resources. Please note that there are a number of resources and tools that you may find helpful with respect to implementing activities under Safe and Healthy Students. These are all provided in the guidance. However, on the screen are just a few that you may find particularly useful.

With that, I thank you for your attention and now I'm going to turn it over to my colleagues, Pete Eldridge and Madeline Sullivan, who will discuss the last topic area of today's webinar, the effective use of technology.

Madeline Sullivan: Thank you, Loretta. I'm Madeline Sullivan with the Ed Tech Unit. Joining me today is colleague, Pete Eldridge. We're looking forward to discussing this very important feature of teaching and learning.

As discussed in the introduction, one of the three purposes of the SSAE program is to improve the use of technology as another means to achieve academic

achievement. Specifically, by promoting digital literacy of all students and providing professional development to the educators that teach and support them.

A well-designed and high quality digital learning and technology program in schools can not only help enhance student learning, but also student engagement. In addition, schools and educators can collaborate with a variety of professionals in a virtual form. Through the use of technology, schools can enhance learning opportunities inside the classroom and out while also increasing professional development opportunities. This can be true for those historically disadvantaged schools and students as well as the educators who support them. Furthermore, Ed Tech in the classrooms prepares students for their future and sets them up for this increasing digital economy.

The guidance provides many examples of how the funds can be used to promote a more effective use of technology. Among other allowable options, funds can be used by teachers and others to provide personalized learning, adapt and share high-quality resources, use blended learning strategies as well as implement school and districtwide approaches and to support future collaboration. For example, as mentioned, funds can be used to create opportunities for educators to discover, share, and adapt educational resources including openly licensed resources. Openly licensed resources are available as part of the open initiative. You may have seen this on the guidance. The US Department of Education Office of Educational Technology recently issued the district launch packet. It's full of all digital and free resources for educators to use and to modify as needed as well as share.

I've noted in the guidance, for Ed Tech to be truly transformative, educators need to have both the knowledge and the skills to take full advantage of technology rich learning environment through professional development. These SSAE funds can be used to help teachers learn to better support students such as English language learners as well as professional developed initiatives in areas such as STEM and computer science. Technology can contribute to the design and implementation of specialized or rigorous academic courses that utilize technology including assistive technology. In order to support students with disabilities and special needs, LEAs must take into consideration additional federal legislations such as IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act. In brief, this means schools must make assistive technology available to students with disabilities if it is needed to help ensure access to the general

education curriculum. When schools provide technology to school for students without disabilities, the same benefits of the technology must also be made available to students with disabilities. This is to be done in an equally accessible and integrated manner.

Our question on Ed Technology relates to all three of the content areas. We've received inquiries regarding whether or not it's allowable to [\[Unintelligible\]](#) or integrate program funds. For example, whether or not it would be allowable to use Ed Tech funds to support students learning English and their families? Yes. Programs may be designed to support English learners and their families. However, as a reminder, you should comply with all cost principles as Norris described earlier. To elaborate, districts and schools should consider leveraging and coordinating resources for multiple programs.

Now, I would like to introduce you to my colleague, Pete Eldridge. Pete will be describing additional aspects of leveraging and coordinating resources as well as more aspects of using funds to support Ed Technology.

Peter Eldridge: Thank you Madeline. Good afternoon everybody, I'm Pete Eldridge with the Ed Tech Unit. Yes, in order to maximize program funds, LEAs, SEAs and schools should think about partnerships, and these partnerships are, really, a number of them. They can be libraries, they can be schools, they can be an institution of higher education, community and faith-based organizations; all of these can help with the delivery of programming and programming services. Schools may also look at other program funds for complementary services. For example, 21st century funds can be used for computer equipment purchases in an out of school time program, but participants should always remember that there are endless possibilities for coordination within ESEA.

Another federal program folks may wish to consider is the E-Rate Program for discounted telecommunication services. You may wish to consider whether your school or district receives E-Rate funds and services and how they can be leveraged with program funds. Additionally, AmeriCorps is another federal program you may wish to consider, and if applicable, by partnering with grantees that provide similar program services for low-income services and communities.

Now, I'm just going to pause for a minute and let you read the section on the 15% purchasing technology infrastructure we call the special rule, and just glance over that. In saying that, I would also encourage you to review the guidance because we provide concrete examples within it on the applicability of the special rule. [Pause]

One question we have gotten on numerous occasions is, is the 15% special rule based on the entire allocation or do we need to take into consideration the 20% set-aside for Well-Rounded and Safe and Healthy Students? The answer is the 15% only applies not to the entire subgrant, but to the portion of funding set aside to support the effective use of technology. Let me give you an example, 20% is set-aside by an LEA for technology. If we apply the 15% set aside, then \$3,000.00 would be available for hardware and software acquisition and procurement.

Internet safety is we'd turn our attention to next. We have talked about the special rule but also for your consideration, again, providing safety guidance for the administration of internet usage through written policies and procedures, and also too, measures to filter or block internet access to pictures or images that might be considered obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors. I'd also like to mention it this time that privacy laws and regulations are applicable to specific programs for each funding source.

Lastly is resources. Of course, the National Education Technology plan updated in 2017. This is an invaluable resource for technology educators. The principles and examples provided in this document can inform the LEAs how to plan and implement effective technology activities in SSAE programs. The report is available on the department's Office of Educational Technology website which is listed on the slide. There are also a number of other resources available there too, including a webpage around privacy concerns. The guidance, as it pointed out, offers a number of other resources, and finally, the department maintains the number of technical assistance centers that provide resources and grantees across all three buckets being utilized.

Now, I'm going to turn the presentation over to David Esquith who will conclude this webinar.

David Esquith: Thank you Pete and thank you, everyone, for being on the webinar. My name is David Esquith. I'm the Director of the Office of Safe and Healthy Students. What

we're going to do now is move into trying to answer some of the questions that you submitted during the webinar. I'm here with some colleagues from the Department of Education. We're going to try to get to as many questions as we can. We may not get to all the ones that are up there, and we also may not be able to answer, during this time, some of the questions that you have asked. If you have asked a question and we don't give you an answer today, look on the NCSSLE website. I think Greta is going to go over that when we wrap up, so that if you've submitted a question or you submit a question before we finish today, we will definitely try to get you an answer as soon as we can. Right now, we're going to go through some of the questions that you submitted that we believe we can answer and then we'll wrap up with a summary of the entire webinar and next steps for you all.

So, I'm going to turn to my colleague, Rachel [\[Peterman\]](#) who is with our Office of General Counsel. Rachel, our first question is, can these activities during out of school time? I believe this was in conjunction with stakeholder engagement, and the assumption. This is something I would point out. Some of the questions, there could be multiple interpretations of what's being asked. So, this was a question that was submitted during our Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities section, so perhaps whether this is about stakeholder engagement or whether it's about the activities, what are your thoughts on information we can provide to people?

Rachel Peternith: So, to the point of whether activities can take place out of school time, the answer is yes. There is nothing in the program statutes that would prohibit that. However, again, this will all be looked at in consideration with the overall package of activities in response to the needs assessment for those LEAs that receive more than \$30,000.00, that the SEA will be evaluating and deciding whether to approve.

In terms of consulting stakeholders and stakeholder engagements, certainly that can take place out of school hours.

David Esquith: Related to stakeholder engagement, there was a question that was, "Must the stakeholder engagement include all noted on the slide?"

Rachel Peternith: The answer is yes, and I believe it was slide 23. There was a chart with a list of specific entities. Those entities that appear in that list are actually listed in the statutes and they must be consulted. Of course, if there are other relevant

stakeholders in your region, absolutely you should also be reaching out and consulting with them as well.

David Esquith: Okay. Thank you, Rachel. The next question is, “Can you please take a moment to clarify and distinguish contracted services from stakeholder? For example, if an institution of higher education is a stakeholder partner but provides a fee-for-service professional development, does the relationship become a contracted services relationship?”

Rachel Peternith: This is a very specific question and it’s a little difficult to answer without additional information, but just on what we have here, we would say if you’re procuring services using the SSAE program fund from an organization or an entity, like the IAG mentioned in this question, that entity happens to be a stakeholder, you would follow the federal cost principles for procuring those services which I believe turns you to your state and local procurement rule and of the related rules to procurement. That’s what’s going to govern the relationship between SEA or the LEA and the provider.

David Esquith: Thank you, Rachel. Our next question has to do with the needs assessment. The question is, “The statutory language indicates that the needs assessment must be completed prior to an LEA receiving a grant. However, only LEAs receiving \$30,000.00 or more have to conduct a needs assessment. How will an LEA know if it needs to do the needs assessment? Will the SEA tell LEAs how much funding they can expect to receive, so the LEA will know whether to do the needs assessment or not?” Lots of questions there.

Rachel Peternith: I’m going to answer, perhaps, the more general question. This is very specific and has a lot of parts. We received a number of questions in the chest about the timing of when SEAs and LEAs will know what their allocations are, et cetera. The truth is, we don’t know when Congress will pass a final budget for this year. So there’s no way for us to promise that SEAs will be informed by a certain date about their allocation, and then when they, in turn, will turn around and inform their LEAs, what their allocation might be. In general, in years past, we typically know by July 1st, which is the earliest we can award these funds to SEAs, but I know that that really doesn’t provide that much guidance but that’s all we can say.

David Esquith: Thanks. Next question about the IB program: “Can an individual school with an IB program apply directly for funding through this brand if it remains the same or similar next year?”

Rachel Peternith: No. The answer is no.

David Esquith: All right. Next question: “On slide 27 and 28, it states that it can be used for - and I think we’re referring to the accelerated learning fee program on 27 and 28 - can be used for the 2016-2017 school year. How is that possible when there are no 2016-2017 funds? Title IV-A doesn’t start until 2017-2018.” Good question.

Racheal Peternith: It’s a great question and the answer is I’m going to blame Congress. [Laughter] In the ESEA as amended by ESSA, the 2016-2017 school year date appears in the actual statute, but after ESSA passed, Congress then passed the budget for last year, for 2016 - the 2016 Appropriations Act. In that bill, they delayed implementation of formula grants, like Title IV, until 2017-2018. So, what that means is that where ’16-’17 appeared in these formula grant program, it moved forward to ’17-’18 based on this actions by Congress. I hope that answers the question.

David Esquith: Very good. Thanks, Rachel. Next question is about training. “Is training for safety and security staff allowed?”

Rachel Peternith: Yes. We’ve received a number of questions with very specific activities like this one listed. The answer is always going to be yes, it could, with multiple caveats. Yes, it could, if it’s indicated by the needs assessments, the LEA is required to complete a needs assessments, and all of the other considerations related to allowability, like for example, whether it would be the planting funds that were used for that purpose in a prior year. Again, the determination will be up to the SEA and looking at what the LEA has put forward in its local application in making these determinations, but yes. The answer is yes, it could be allowable.

David Esquith: A similar question that we have on the use of Title IV funds. “Can Title IV funds be used for coordinator salaries for programs like PBIS, and use mental health first-aid and mental health programming?”

Rachel Peternith: Right. So, it's a similar response, all of the same caveats. Again, for these last two questions, they both will be under the Safe and Healthy Activities content areas. So, an LEA in developing its application that would want to do these activities, they would sort of put it in that category and go through the rest of the considerations of whether it rises to a significant need by the needs assessments as well as all of the other considerations I previously mentioned.

David Esquith: Thank you, Rachel. A question about mingling funds, "Can we mingle these funds with state and local funds?"

Rachel Peternith: If I'm understanding the question correctly, may you co-mingle funds? I don't think you'll be surprised that the answer is no. You may not co-mingle your federal funds with other state and federal and other local funds. You need to follow the cash management rule that apply to all of education funds that you receive at the state and local level.

David Esquith: Our final questions, "Can these funds be consolidated with other allowable federal programs such as Title I and Title II-A, and state or local funds in fund 100?" I'm not sure what that's referring to.

Rachel Peternith: So, we think this question is about transferability. We have received a number of questions about transferability. As previously mentioned during the presentation, there is authority for SEAs and LEAs to transfer funds both out of Title IV Part A, and into other authorized programs, or from other authorized programs, specifically Title II Part A into Title IV. That's just one example. I would encourage everyone to look specifically at the guidance that was included - there was a link to it on the slide where we covered transferability. There's a section at the end of that document that only covers transferability and, very clearly, states which funds can move where, and that's up to 100% of the funds that can move. Then, if you still have questions, reach out to us.

David Esquith: Great. Thank you, Rachel. Those are the questions that we have time for today. AS I said, we will be posting the questions and answers that we didn't get to today and others that might have been submitted in the meantime.

We're getting near the end of our third webinar on the SSAE program. I think one of the takeaways that all of us in the Office of Safe and Healthy Students, and the

rest of the Department of Ed have noticed in your questions, is that a lot of the questions are really kind of dependent upon the money that will be appropriated for the program, and then certain steps that will need to be taken once Congress does appropriate the funds. We are hoping, as are all of you, that once we do have the appropriation, a lot of the questions that have been asked, the answer will be clearer. We will be available to answer any kind of follow-up questions.

A couple of big takeaways about this program, and you heard from my colleagues today, that one of the big benefits of this program is its flexibility. There are many, many allowable activities and uses of these funds. At the same time, the large number of programs and allowable activities presents a challenge in a positive way. That challenge is how to prioritize and decide where the investment is going to be with these funds. A couple of things that I would reinforce that you heard today and on the other webinars, is that in order to make decisions on prioritizing, it is important to engage stakeholders. To be thoughtful about completing a comprehensive needs assessment if you're required to do so, and then to make sure that your investments in programs and activities are effective and evidence-based to the maximum extent possible and that you are evaluating those programs and activities. So that, over time, if you see that the investment is not paying off in a way that you had hoped for, you can consider prioritizing and engaging in other activities.

The final point that I want to make is that we, here at the Department of Education and the Office of Safe and Healthy Students, are looking forward to working with all of you, and to working with our partners at the state level and local level. We will continue to have a large portfolio of resources that we hope you will utilize. Over time, as this program gets off the ground and becomes established, we look forward to working with you on making it as impactful as possible to improve student outcomes in all of the areas that you may utilize the funds.

So, having said all that, I want to thank you for your participation at three webinars, and I'll turn it over to Greta to wrap up. Greta?

Greta Colombi: Thank you so much, David. As a reminder, the previous two webinars from this series are archived on the NCSSE website. You can see the links here and access them. The link and recording from today's session will be also included on the

NCSSLE website at this specific link. We will also email the slides and the archived webinar links to those two registers. If you have any questions about access today's materials or future webinars, or just generally about NCSSLE, please feel free to contact the National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments at ncssle@air.org. Again, in addition to including any additional questions in your chat box before you sign off on Adobe today, you are more than welcome to send any additional questions to the email listed on your screen.

- End of Recording -