

# DATA POINTS

## 81% OF DISTRICTS USE TITLE IIA FUNDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Title IIA of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides funding for the preparation, recruitment, and training of educators. A report from the U.S. Department of Education examined how states and districts spent Title IIA funds in 2019-20, based on surveys of district and state leaders.

Almost 60% of the funding was spent on professional learning, with 81% of districts allocating funding to that purpose, compared to 34% of districts that applied the funding to teacher recruitment and 21% to class size reduction, among other uses.

Although 93% of districts used funding for “short-term training,” 77% also applied it to “longer term training and education” and just over half (52%) used it to support job-embedded professional learning.

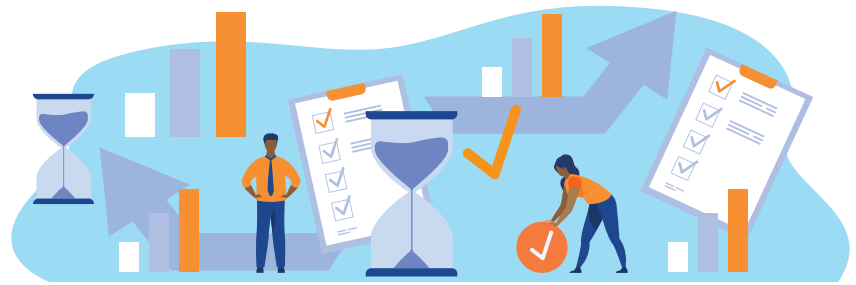
About half of states and a quarter of districts took advantage of increased flexibility in allowable uses of the funds, which was introduced in 2015. For example, 23 states reserved some funding for principal and other leadership support, and 25% of districts transferred funding to other programs, resulting in a 67% decrease in Title IIA funds in those districts.

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## 80% OF TEACHERS WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SEL

In a RAND survey, 80% of teachers responding said they want more opportunities to learn about SEL, especially in integrating SEL with academic instruction, adapting SEL to different cultures and learning needs, and using SEL data.

The spring 2019 survey from the American Teacher Panel also showed that an overwhelming majority believed promoting SEL



would help their students learn and felt confident in their ability to support SEL even for the most difficult to reach students. Yet nearly two-thirds said their schools lacked a clear vision for SEL, and even more said their school lacked clear SEL practices.

About three-quarters reported engaging in some SEL professional learning in the previous year, with more elementary than secondary teachers participating.

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## 96% OF STUDENTS FELT SUPPORTED IN 2020

To examine the impact of COVID-19 on schooling, the Tennessee Education Research Alliance analyzed data from fall 2020 in six Tennessee districts and, when possible, compared it to data from previous years.

Among the good news: Nearly all students felt supported by their teachers, with 96% saying their teachers cared about them and 97% saying their teachers were able to help when they had questions.

Nonetheless, more than half of students (and more than two-thirds of high schoolers) said worries, stress, and lack of motivation prevented them from doing their best in school. Indeed, two-thirds of teachers said they needed strategies and support to keep students engaged and motivated.

The second most common need was how to catch students up to

grade level, with fewer but still notable percentages of teachers reporting the need for more high-quality materials for instruction and social and emotional support. Large proportions of teachers had “major concerns” about their increased workload (66%) and burnout (55%).

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## 360 VIDEO HELPS TEACHERS NOTICE MORE

A recent study examined the use of 360 video, a classroom observation technique in which the viewer can see all angles of the classroom either by wearing a virtual reality headset or navigating around the room with a mouse on a flat screen.

The study measured 33 preservice teachers’ noticing patterns in mathematics classes, using quantitative measures such as where the teachers looked and for how long, and qualitative measures such as teachers’ written reflections on pivotal moments in the lesson.

When comparing teachers who watched through a virtual reality headset, a 360 video on a flat screen, or standard video, researchers found that those with the headset attended visually to more areas in the room and reflected on more student actions in their written notes. Though preliminary, the study suggests intriguing directions for professional learning.

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