

Title V, Part B – Rural Education Initiative

FY23 LEA Handbook



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Title V, Part B – Rural Education Initiative

Purpose

The Rural Education Initiative (REI) is designed to assist rural school districts in using federal resources more effectively to improve the quality of instruction and student academic achievement. REI (*also referred to as REAP - Rural Education and Achievement Program*) consists of two separate programs: the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program and the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program.

Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA)

The SRSA program provides local educational agencies (LEAs) with greater flexibility in using the formula grant funds that they receive under certain state-administered federal programs. The United States Department of Education (ED) calculates the SRSA grant allocations for an eligible LEA on the basis of a statutory formula and makes the SRSA grant allocations directly to the eligible LEAs. SRSA funds do not flow through the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). It also authorizes formula grant awards directly to these LEAs for a wide range of local activities that support student achievement. The SRSA program provides flexibility to eligible, rural LEAs to use specific federal formula funds to support local activities under Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, Title III, Title IV, Part A and /or Title IV, Part B to assist them in addressing local academic needs more effectively. To be eligible to participate in the SRSA grant, an LEA must:

- Have a total average daily attendance (ADA) of fewer than 600 students or serve only schools that are located in counties that have a population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile.
- Serve all of the schools served by the local educational agency are designated with a locale code of 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary of Education.

Rural and Low-Income Schools Program (RLIS)

The RLIS program is an initiative that provides grant funds to rural LEAs that serve concentrations of children from low-income families. An LEA is eligible to receive funds under the RLIS program if:

- 20-percent or more of the children age 5 to 17 served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line.
- All schools served by the LEA have a school locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary of Education.

Eligible systems apply for the RLIS funds through the consolidated application.

Use of Funds

An eligible LEA may use RLIS funds for:

- Activities authorized under Title I, Part A.
- Activities authorized under Title II, Part A.
- Activities authorized under Title III.
- Activities authorized under Title IV, Part A.
- Parental involvement activities.

Carryover Funds

Eligible LEAs may obligate Title V, Part B funds during the federal fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated and during the succeeding federal fiscal year. The funding period gives the eligible LEAs 27 months to obligate their funds 2 C.F.R. Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards under (Education Department General Administrative Regulations [EDGAR] at 34 C.F.R. 76.709 [b]), (Rural Education Achievement Program [REAP] Guidance, 6/13/03, III C-8). It is the expectation of ED that Title V, Part A, REI funding be expended during the year in which it is allocated. There are no carryover limitations placed on Title V, Part B funds.

Choice of Participation

If an LEA is eligible for funding under both RLIS and SRSA, such LEA may receive funds under either RLIS or SRSA for a fiscal year, but may not receive funds under both RLIS and SRSA. An LEA eligible for funding under both this subpart and subpart 1 shall notify the Secretary and the SEA under which of such subparts the local educational agency intends to receive funds for a fiscal year by a date that is established by the Secretary for the notification.

Accountability

Each year an LEA receives a grant under the SRSA program or receives a grant under the RLIS program, the LEA must administer an assessment that is consistent with the assessment requirements in Section 1111 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). GaDOE encourages LEAs to use these RLIS and SRSA funds for needs identified under Georgia's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA).

Supplement Not Supplant

Title V, Part B funds must supplement and not supplant all local, state, and other federal funds. In general, when considering whether a proposed RLIS activity is supplemental, an LEA should determine whether it would have funded this activity with other Federal, State, or local funds if no REAP funds were available. If the result of this determination is that no other Federal, State, or local funds are available to fund the proposed activity, then the LEA may be able to use REAP funds for those activities, provided they are an allowable use of RLIS funds.

There are three situations when it will be presumed that supplanting has occurred:

- if the activity is one that would ordinarily be covered with other Federal, State, or local funds (for example, in most cases, standard textbook purchases would ordinarily be covered with State or local funds),
- if the LEA previously funded the activity with other Federal, State, or local funds, or
- if the activity is State-mandated or required by Federal law (e.g., provision of certain services to English learners required by Federal civil rights laws).