



TITLE V, PART B HANDBOOK

RURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE



OKLAHOMA
Education

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed for small and rural Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that meet the eligibility requirements to receive the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) grant directly from the United States Department of Education (USDE) or the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) allocation from the Office of Title Services. It is intended to serve as a resource guide to assist rural schools' administrators of LEAs that receive funds under these programs.

Title V, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, authorizes the Rural Education Initiative, which comprises of two formula grant programs:

Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) grant [ESEA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1] Direct Grant, ALN 84.358A, Project 588

Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) grant [ESEA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 2] State Administrated Grant, ALN 84.358B, Project 587

The purpose of these supplemental formula grant programs is to address the unique needs of rural school districts that frequently:

1. lack the personnel and resources needed to compete effectively for Federal competitive grants; and
2. receive formula grant allocations in amounts too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes. *[ESSA, Section 5202. [20 U.S.C. 7341a]*

CHAPTER 1: Eligibility – Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) Program

To be eligible to participate in the SRSA grant program and its component for flexibility, Alternative Fund Use Authority (AFUA), an LEA must-

1. have a total average daily attendance (ADA) of fewer than 600 students, or be in a county with a population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile; and
2. be comprised only of schools that have been assigned a school locale code of 41, 42, or 43 by the Department's National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES); or
3. be in an area of the state defined as rural by a governmental agency of the state.

In instances in which a state agency defines the area in which the LEA is located as rural, the SEA and the USDE must agree to the rural designation before the LEA may participate in either AFUA or the SRSA grant program.

In addition, a LEA that is a member of an educational service agency (ESA) is eligible to participate in SRSA, if the LEA meets the requirements described in (1) and (2) above.

¹Educational service agency, as defined in Title VIII, section 8101(18) of the ESEA, means a regional public multiservice agency authorized by State statute to develop, manage, and provide services or programs to local educational agencies.

CHAPTER 2: Eligibility – Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS)

A Local Educational Agency (LEA) shall be eligible to receive an RLIS allocation if:

- 20 percent or more of the children ages 5 through 17 years served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line as determined by the US Census Small Area Income Poverty Estimate (SAIPE) data; and
- all of the schools served by the LEA are designated with a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the US Department of Education’s Secretary.

CHAPTER 3: SAIPE Data Challenge

In accordance with Section 5221(b)(1) of ESEA, United States Department of Education is required to use the Small Area Income Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), US Census data to determine the percent of children from families below the poverty line for RLIS eligibility.

If an LEAs SAIPE poverty is below the poverty 20 percent required, it may request an informal inquiry or challenge its SAIPE data by contacting the U.S. Census Bureau’s Small Area Estimates Branch directly at 301-763-3193 or email sehds.saipe@census.gov.

A FAQ link regarding challenges can be found here: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about/faq.html>.

CHAPTER 4: RLIS Hold Harmless LEAs

An LEA that meets the criteria for the RLIS Hold Harmless in FY2026-2027 will be awarded 83.33% of the amount of RLIS funds it received in FY2019-2020.

CHAPTER 5: Dual Eligibility

Under the “Choice of Participation” provision in ESSA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, Section 5225, an LEA that met the eligibility requirement for both SRSA and RLIS is referred to as “dual-eligible”. Even though the LEA is eligible for funding under both SRSA and RLIS, it must choose one grant under which to receive funds in a given year. To receive an SRSA allocation from USDE, dual eligible LEAs choosing SRSA, and SRSA only eligible LEAs must submit an application through USDE. All dual-eligible

LEAs may exercise the Alternative Fund Use Authority (AFUA), regardless of which grant they choose. *[ESSA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, Section 5221(a) & (c)]*.

CHAPTER 6: Rural Definition

As part of the eligibility requirements for the SRSA and RLIS programs, all of the schools in the LEA must meet the eligible school locale code criteria, **or** the Secretary must determine, based on a demonstration by the LEA and with the concurrence of the SEA, that the LEA is located in an area defined as rural by a State governmental agency.

Oklahoma's definition of rural - A rural local education agency is one which is located within an incorporated or unincorporated place which has a district resident population of less than 2,500, or has a population center less than 1,000 persons, and is characterized by sparse, widespread populations.

CHAPTER 7: School Locale Codes Defined

School locale codes are assigned to LEAs by the United States Department's National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and describe where the LEA is located, ranging from a town that is distant or remote or a rural area that is on the fringe, distant or remote from an urbanized area.

Town locales:

32 - Distant Town (RLIS eligible)

33 - Remote Town (RLIS eligible)

Rural locales:

41 - Fringe Rural (SRSA and RLIS eligible)

42 - Distant Rural (SRSA and RLIS eligible)

43 - Remote Rural (SRSA and RLIS eligible)

CHAPTER 8: SRSA Allowable Program Activities

Grant funds awarded to local educational agencies under this subpart shall be used for any of the following:

1. Title I, Part A (Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs)
2. Title II, Part A (Supporting Effective Instruction)
3. Title III (Language Instruction English Learners and Immigrant Students)
4. Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants)
5. Title IV, Part B (21st-Century Community Learning Centers)

CHAPTER 9: SRSA Examples of Allowable Program Activities

Title I, Part A (Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs)

- High-quality preschool or full-day kindergarten to facilitate the transition from early learning to elementary education programs.

Title II, Part A (Supporting Effective Instruction)

- Teacher professional development courses to enable an LEA to offer pre-calculus or organic chemistry classes.

Title III (Language Instruction English Learners and Immigrant Students)

- Providing specialized training to English learners and their families.

Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants)

- Purchase of computers, monitors, related hardware/software, smartboards, laptops, etc. for in-classroom use.

Title IV, Part B (21st-Century Community Learning Centers)

- Offering assistance to students that have been truant, suspended, or expelled to improve their academic achievement.

CHAPTER 10: Alternative Fund Use Authority (AFUA)

Allows SRSA-eligible LEAs greater flexibility in spending the funds they receive under Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A, to best address the LEAs particular needs.

- LEAs may use Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A, funds to pay for activities under any of the allowable programs for SRSA grant funds.
- A dual-eligible LEA may exercise this authority even if it chooses to participate in RLIS, instead of SRSA.
- Eligible LEAs do not need to apply for SRSA funds to exercise the “alternative use of funds authority. [ESSA, Section 5211(a)]

CHAPTER 11: SRSA Monitoring

The US Department engages in monitoring activities to ensure SRSA grantees are implementing activities authorized in the SRSA statute, achieving the program’s performance objectives, and complying with other federal statutory and regulatory requirements. EDGAR Part 75 and 2 C.F.R. Part 200

CHAPTER 12: RLIS Allowable Program Activities

Grant funds awarded to local educational agencies under this subpart shall be used for any of the following:

1. Activities authorized under Part A of Title I.
2. Activities authorized under Part A of Title II.
3. Activities authorized under Title III.
4. Activities authorized under Part A of Title IV.
5. Family and parent engagement activities.
[ESSA, Section 5222 [20 U.S.C. 7351a]]

CHAPTER 13: RLIS Examples of Allowable Program Activities

Title I, Part A (Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs)

- Example: High-quality preschool or full-day kindergarten to facilitate the transition from early learning to elementary education programs.

Title II, Part A (Supporting Effective Instruction)

- Example: Teacher professional development courses to enable an LEA to offer pre-calculus or organic chemistry classes.

Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students)

- Example: An LEA offers an afterschool enrichment program for English learners.

Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment)

- Example: An LEA purchases bully prevention materials for all schools.

Parental Involvement Activities

- Example: Creation of a parental review committee to provide input on the LEA's curriculum development.

CHAPTER 14: RLIS Monitoring

The US Department engages in monitoring activities to ensure RLIS grantees are implementing activities authorized in the RLIS statute, achieving the program's performance objectives, and complying with other statutory and regulatory requirements (e.g., EDGAR Part 76 and 2 C.F.R. Part 200).

In addition, one of the responsibilities of the Office of Title Services is to monitor the use of federal funds to ensure 1) compliance with applicable federal requirements; 2) objective and goals are being achieved and 3) ensure fiscal compliance with federal requirements.

CHAPTER 15: REAP Grant Performance Periods and Liquidation Deadlines & REAP USDE Timeline

Below are the performance periods and liquidation deadlines that apply to both the SRSA and RLIS grants.

These awards are available for twenty-seven (27) months. A LEA may use grant funds only for obligations it makes during the grant performance period.

Grant Cycle:	Performance Period Start Date:	Performance Period End Date:	Deadline for Liquidation:
FY 2027	July 1, 2026	September 30, 2028	January 30, 2029
FY 2028	July 1, 2027	September 30, 2029	January 30, 2030
FY 2029	July 1, 2028	September 30, 2030	January 30, 2031

REAP USDE Timeline

Activity	Timeline
SEAs Provide REAP Eligibility Data	Winter
REAP Eligibility Determinations Made	Spring
SRSA and SQA Applications Released	Late Spring
Department Processes Applications	Summer
SRSA and RLIS Grants Awarded	Awarded beginning July 1

CHAPTER 16: Frequently Asked Questions

16.1 Q: How are Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) allocations made?

A: The US Department of Education calculates the SRSA grant allocation of an eligible LEA based on a statutory formula. (See Appendix A)

16.2 Q: How do I access my SRSA funds?

A: You can access your SRSA funds through the G5 grants website, (www.G5.gov). You will need a username and password, and to register a bank account. If you need help with G5, call the G5 technical hotline at 888-336-8930 (Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. EST to 6:00 p.m. EST, Monday-Friday).

16.3 Q: If a LEA is a dual eligible-LEA (eligible for both the SRSA and RLIS programs), which program should it choose?

A: An LEA should research the requirements and provisions of both the SRSA and the RLIS program to determine which program best meets its needs. While the Department cannot tell an LEA on which program to choose, please go to the REAP webpage for frequently asked questions regarding REAP dual-eligible LEAs.

16.4 Q: How are Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) allocations made?

A: The US Department of Education allocates RLIS funds to States by formula. The amount of funding a State receives is based on its proportionate share of children in average daily attendance in all LEAs eligible to participate in the RLIS program. (See Appendix B)

16.5 Q: Can a dual-eligible LEA exercise Alternative use of Funds Authority?

A: Yes, all dual-eligible LEAs may exercise the Alternative Use of Fund Authority, regardless of which grant they choose. *[ESSA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, Section 5221(a) & (c)].*

16.6 Q: What does the US Department of Education use to determine if an LEA meets the 20 percent poverty threshold?

A: The US Department of Education uses the most recent US Census Bureau Small Area Income Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) in determining district poverty eligibility for the RLIS program.

16.7 Q: What if there are no Census poverty data for an LEA?

A: A State may provide the US Department of Education with the adjusted poverty data that it uses to make its allocations to LEAs under Part A of Title I to determine the eligibility of LEAs for which Census poverty estimates are unavailable.

16.8 Q: Can a LEA exercise AFUA if the statutory formula for SRSA result in an amount of \$0 even for an LEA that is SRSA eligible?

A: Yes, Some LEAs meet the eligibility criteria of the SRSA program (i.e., being both small and rural) but may not receive a positive SRSA grant award due to the funding formula. If the combined amount of Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A funding for a preceding fiscal year is close to the LEA's initial SRSA award amount, the resulting final SRSA award amount can end up being very low or even \$0.

NOTE: An LEA with a \$0 SRSA award amount and meet eligibility for SRSA can exercise the Alternative Fund Use Authority (AFUA).

16.9 Q: Must an LEA use SRSA or RLIS funds only to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local education funds?

A: Yes, funds made available under subpart 1 or subpart 2 shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other federal, state, or local education funds. *[ESSA, Section 5232]*

16.10 Q: May a charter school participate in the REAP program?

A: Yes, a charter school's eligibility for the SRSA or RLIS program depends upon whether the charter school is an LEA. If a charter school is reported as an LEA by the State and meets the definition of LEA in ESEA section 8101(30), it is eligible to receive an SRSA or RLIS grant award so long as it meets the eligibility criteria for these programs. A charter school that is a public school but not an LEA is not eligible for RLIS or SRSA award. However, it may participate in the program through its LEA, provided the LEA receives either an RLIS or SRSA award.

16.11 Q: May a virtual school participate in the REAP program?

A: No, schools that are full virtual centers (i.e., all instruction offered by the school

is virtual, although students and teachers may meet in person for field trips, school-sponsored social events or assessment purposes; all students receive all instruction virtually) are ineligible to benefit from REAP funding.

GLOSSARY

ADA- Average Daily Attendance, [ESSA, Section 5231 (a)(1)(2)]

AFUA- Alternative Fund Use Authority

ALN- Assistance Listing Number was formerly known as the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA Number).

ESA- Educational Service Agency

LEA- Local Education Agency

NCES- National Center of Educational Statistics

MES- Master Eligibility Spreadsheet. REAP's public excel spreadsheet that includes all LEAs REAP eligibility status.

Period of Performance- The period of performance for federal funds is 27 months, beginning July 1 of the current fiscal year and extending to September 30, of the second following fiscal year.

Poverty Line- The term "poverty line" means the official poverty line defined by the Office of Management and Budget based on the most recent data available from the Bureau of the Census. Section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act

RLIS Hold Harmless LEAs- When making RLIS awards in FY2021 through 2027, an LEA may be designated "HH" for Hold Harmless because the LEA (1) received an RLIS grant in FY2020 on the basis of alternative poverty data submitted by the State, (2) had a service area in which less than 20 percent of children ages 5 through 17 were from families with incomes below the poverty line, as determined by SAIPE data in FY2020, and (3) met the rural eligibility criteria described in section 5221(b)(1)(a)(ii).

RLIS- Rural and Low-Income Schools

SAIPE- Small Area Income Poverty Estimate, US Census Data

SEA- State Education Agency

SRSA- Small, Rural Schools Achievement

UEI – Unique Entity ID

RESOURCES

- FY2026-2027 SRSA LEAs. [Open here to view eligible LEAs.](#)
- FY2026-2027 RLIS LEAs. [Open here to view eligible LEAs.](#)
- USDE REAP Informational Document: [The Rural Education Achievement Program](#)
- USDE Contact: Email: reap@ed.gov.
- Registering and Maintaining a UEI log into <https://sam.gov/>
- To access Grant Awards in G5, visit [Welcome to G5 - Department of Education](#)
- For a step-by-step guide for accessing SRSA funds in G5 go to G5 support webpage.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SRSA Allocation Formula

[ESSA, Title V, Part B, Section 5212 (b)(2)(3)]

To project your SRSA supplemental allocation, the LEA will need to know its average daily attendance (ADA) and the amount of Title II-A and Title IV-A funding the LEA received in the prior fiscal year.

Take the number of students in average daily attendance (ADA)	432
Subtract 50	432-50= 382
Multiply the total by \$100	382 x \$100=\$38,200
Add \$20,000 to the sum (total amount may not exceed \$60,000)	\$38,200+\$20,000= \$58,200
If the total is above \$60,000, this amount is capped at \$60,000	
From the amount above, subtract the sum of the allocation received by the LEA during the prior fiscal year under Title II-A and Title IV, Part A.	Title II-A allocations= \$12,500 Title IV A allocations \$10,000.00
This is your projected SRSA grant allocation	\$35,700.00

NOTE: The projected amount may be ratably reduced or increased, depending on the amount appropriated by Congress for the program, and the number of eligible LEAs.

APPENDIX B: RLIS Allocation Formula

When the final list of LEAs eligible to receive an RLIS subgrant (excluding dual-eligible LEAs that chose to participate in SRSA) is generated, USDE calculates the total number of students in average daily attendance (based on the ADA data for each LEA provided by the SEA) across all RLIS LEAs by State and nationwide. USDE then determines each State’s proportionate share of the total number of students in average daily attendance in all RLIS LEAs. Finally, USDE calculates each State’s award amount by multiplying the total amount of funding available for RLIS awards by the State’s proportionate share.