

Rural Education Initiative

Purpose of the Program

The Rural Education Initiative (REI) is designed to assist rural local educational agencies (LEAs) 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.

The **Small Rural School Achievement Program (SRSA)** provides funds targeted and designed for schools with small populations in lower-density areas. Funds are given directly to LEAs with designation by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). ***The Tennessee Department of Education does not administer this program.***

The **Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS)** grant program's purpose is to provide rural LEAs with financial assistance for initiatives aimed at improving student achievement. The grant is non-competitive, and eligibility is determined by statute.

RLIS awards are issued annually to state education agencies (SEAs), which make sub-grants to LEAs that meet the applicable requirements. To qualify for RLIS an LEA has to meet the following requirements:

- **20 percent or more** of the children **age 5 to 17** served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line as reported in the [RLIS Eligibility page](#). See the Fiscal Year REAP Master Eligibility Spreadsheet once on the website.
- **Each** school within the LEA must have a **locale code** of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43 as assigned by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Utilization of Funds

LEAs that receive RLIS grants may use the funds to carry out the following types of activities:

- Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs
 - e.g.: School-based instructional coaches.
- Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction
 - e.g.: Training on how to use data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning.
- Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
 - e.g.: Four Chromebooks for small group work within the ESL class.
- Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment
 - e.g.: the LEA uses funds for a part-time school resource officer for one school.
- Parental and family engagement activities

Guidance Documents

Guide to Using RLIS Funds: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/rural-insular-native-achievement-programs/rural-education-achievement-program/quick-guide-using-small-rural-school-achievement-srsa-rural-low-income-school-rlis-funds/>

Informational Document on the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP):

<https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/19-0043-REAP-Informational-Document-final-OS-Approved-1.pdf>