

RISING TOGETHER



Guiding Every Student Higher



2026 Federal Programs Institute

Guiding Programs Higher: Essential Insights for Every Director

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Program Agenda

- Introductions
- Top 10...and more
- Information on TAFPA
- Closing and Q and A

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#10

Documentation Is Your Best Friend

- If it is not documented...it did not happen. *How it is documented is many times as important as why*
- You need to maintain:
 - Budget justifications and inventory,
 - Time and effort records (where applicable),
 - Procurement documentation,
 - Program evaluations,
 - Monitoring records,
 - Stakeholder engagement evidence
 - *What else would you include??*
- You should:
 - Be strategic on how you document
 - Be consistent and structured (for your own sanity)

#9

What About Supplement, Not Supplant?

- It is non-negotiable.
- **Supplement (Allowed & Encouraged):** To *add to, enhance, or expand* existing programs using federal funds. Federal money should build upon state or local investments.
- **Supplant (Strictly Prohibited):** To *replace or substitute* state or local funds with federal grant money. You cannot shift existing state/local expenses onto a federal grant to free up non-federal funds for other uses.
- Basically...federal funds should supplement state and local funds rather than replacing them.

Would the district or school be paying for this activity if federal funds were not available? If yes...proceed with caution.

#8

Know the Purpose Behind Every Funding Stream

- Federal programs are designed to improve educational outcomes for specific student groups. Understanding the intent of each program is just as important as knowing the regulations.
 - Title I, Part A: Improving outcomes for disadvantaged students
 - Title II, Part A: Effective instruction and educator development
 - Title III: English learners
 - Title IV, Part A: Well-rounded education, safe and healthy schools, and technology
 - McKinney-Vento: Students experiencing homelessness

A great tool to use is the FY27 Federal Spending Handbook!

#7

Continuous Monitoring is Essential

- Don't wait for state or federal monitoring visits.
- Prepare each year as if you are a level 3
- Conduct internal monitoring by:
 - Reviewing program implementation
 - Reviewing fiscal records
 - Reviewing school-level compliance
 - Gathering and maintaining evidence

If you are looking through the lens of continuous improvement, you are less likely to be surprised.

#6

Data Drives Decisions

Strong ESEA directors use data to:

- Identify needs
- Allocate resources
- Monitor implementation
- Evaluate effectiveness
- Focus on both compliance measures and student outcome measures.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) Drives Everything

What do you use for your CNA?

Federal funds cannot be spent based on gut feeling or convenience.

- Expenditures must be aligned with **CNA** and...
- Should be in your District and School Improvement Plan
- If an expense isn't tied to an identified need, it isn't compliant.

Ask yourself: is it allowable, is it reasonable, is it necessary?

#5

Get a General Knowledge of Rules and Regulations...

- Know where to find appropriate rules, regs, statutes
- Refer to UGG and EDGAR
- Familiarize yourself with Bruman and NAFEPA
 - *Where do you get your information?*

Where do you get your information?

#4

Stakeholder Consultation Matters

- **ESSA emphasizes meaningful engagement with:**
 - Parents and families
 - Teachers
 - Principals
 - Community organizations
 - Tribal representatives (when applicable)
 - Private schools
 - Consultation should be ongoing, not a one-time event.
- Make sure opportunities are varied and, if a language barrier exists, provide appropriate translation services.**

#3

Compliance Is Important, But Outcomes Matter Most

The ultimate goal is not perfect paperwork; it's improving student achievement and opportunity.

Ask consistently:

- Are students benefiting?
- Are achievement gaps closing?
- Are services reaching intended populations?
- Is the investment producing results?

Also...

- Are you having meaningful and ongoing conversations with parents and families (and all stakeholders)?

#2

Alignment with District Leadership & Instruction

- ESEA Directors shouldn't operate in a compliance silo.
- The most successful directors work hand-in-hand with curriculum leaders, finance officers, and school principals to ensure federal grants directly support the district's overarching strategic plan and student achievement goals.
- Communication is ESSENTIAL

#1

Make friends with the RIGHT people.

As a Federal Programs Director, you should:

- Connect with your CORE person; keep those lines of communication open.
- Participate in your CORE Supervisor meetings. If you do not meet, start a meeting.
- Build a group of people in your surrounding districts whom you can call on to ask questions.

Do NOT be afraid to ask questions.

Join...



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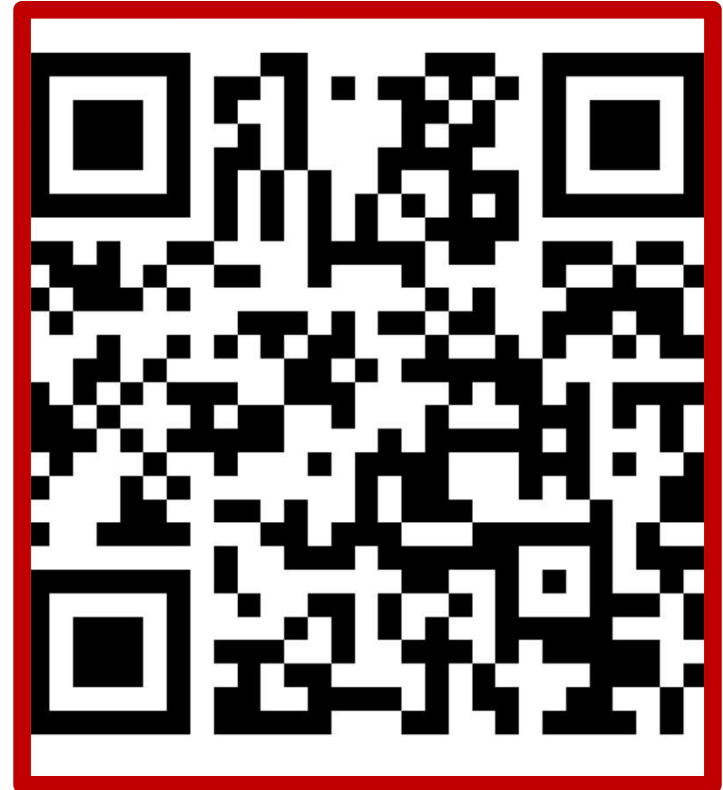


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**Please share your
feedback from this
session.**

You may also find complete the
feedback survey at this link.

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Feedback Form](#)



What's Next | 1:00 – 2:10 p.m.

- Strengthening Neglected & Delinquent Programs (Room 3)
- Building Digital Workflows for Compliance (Room 4)
- ESL Rule in Real-World Contexts (Room 5)
- From Policy to Practice (Room 6)
- Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness (Room 9/10)



BONUS

What would you add to the list??





Questions??

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