PLUS PROGRAM · SAMPLE GRANT · TITLE IV, PART A

SAMPLE TITLE IV, PART A PLAN

SILVER PINES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR A FICTIONAL SCHOOL. FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY.

ABOUT THIS SAMPLE

Silver Pines Unified School District is fictional. Every local figure in this sample is invented for illustration. The facts about the PLUS Program and Direction are accurate. Writer's notes appear in quoted boxes after each major section. They explain what the section has to do and what you replace with your own district's story.

Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program. It is a federal formula grant, not a competition. In California, the California Department of Education (CDE) allocates it through the Consolidated Application and Reporting System (CARS). An LEA is eligible if it received Title I, Part A funds in the prior year and completes the Consolidated Application and an LCAP Federal Addendum. The program has three purposes: access to a well-rounded education, improved school conditions for learning, and more effective use of technology. PLUS fits the second purpose. It is an evidence-based system for improving school climate, and its Direction platform gives the district the data it needs for the Title IV, Part A needs assessment. For 2026-27, CDE lists $158,614,575 for the program statewide, with a federal funding period of July 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. The 2026-27 Consolidated Application and an approved LCAP Federal Addendum are due December 15, 2026. This sample is written as the district's plan for the next three-year needs assessment cycle, beginning in 2027-28.

> **Writer's note on federal funding.** Title IV, Part A is funded for the 2026-27 school year. The President's 2027 budget request proposes $0 for the program and folds it into a new single state formula grant. The House Appropriations Committee rejected that consolidation in June 2026, the Senate has not acted, and a temporary funding bill runs through December 11, 2026. Plan years in this sample begin in 2027-28, so confirm your allocation before you finalize the plan. If it changes, the same language fits a Title I schoolwide plan or an LCAP action.
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> **Writer's note.** There is no application to win here. You are writing the Title IV, Part A section of your LCAP Federal Addendum and the spending plan behind it. Reviewers at CDE and your own federal programs office will read it for compliance and coherence. They want to see that the needs assessment drives the spending, that the spending meets the distribution rules and that each activity is allowable. Confirm the current year's dates and your allocation in CARS before you write.

TITLE IV, PART A ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS (ESSA SECTION 4106(E)(1))

Silver Pines Unified serves 14,800 students in grades K to 12. It has two middle schools (Bluebird Canyon Middle and Aspen Middle) and three high schools (Silver Pines High, Marigold Valley High and Bristlecone High). The district's Title IV, Part A allocation is illustrated here at $171,345 per year. Because the allocation is more than $30,000, the district conducts a Title IV, Part A needs assessment once every three years and meets the spending distribution requirements.

(A) PARTNERSHIPS

The district will contract with the provider of the PLUS Program (Peer Leaders Uniting Students) for training, curriculum and the Direction platform. The district will treat the provider as a contractor under its procurement policy. PLUS Teams will also work with each school's wellness center and with the county office of education's PBIS coordinators.

(B) WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (SECTION 4107)

The district will continue its middle school music and visual arts expansion, described in its own section of this plan. No PLUS costs are charged to the well-rounded education priority.

(C) SAFE AND HEALTHY STUDENTS (SECTION 4108)

The district will implement PLUS Districtwide at its five secondary schools. PLUS is an evidence-based school climate program that has been used in California schools for about 25 years. It uses youth participatory action research (YPAR). Students gather and analyze data about their own school and lead the response alongside adults. It is grounded in youth development, the resiliency framework and the Safe Schools Initiative finding that students have a role and responsibility in sustaining a safe school.

At each school, a PLUS Team of 25 to 30 students meets in a dedicated class section taught by the PLUS Advisor. The Advisor selects students to reflect the whole student body. Students are not elected and there are no officers. An adult PLUS staff team supports the work. It includes a site administrator, a counselor or PBIS lead, and the Advisor.

Each school runs nine 30-day cycles a year, after an August pre-cycle where students learn the process.

1. **Protective factors.** Students lead youth development activities during the school day that build connection and belonging.
2. **Data integration.** Direction surveys a new representative sample of fewer than 10 percent of the campus with the same questions each cycle. It measures the student body, not individual students. The PLUS Team facilitates a Forum each month with a new group of students. High school Forums include 40 to 50 students and middle school Forums include 25 to 30. Students identify the issues on campus, how they affect students and what can be done. The Forum names the top four critical issues.

3. **Action planning.** Students review both kinds of data and plan the activities the campus needs. A cycle report goes to the principal, counselors, PBIS and MTSS teams and the district office.
4. **Engagement.** Students carry out the activities with the campus, share the data with the school community and measure again in the next cycle.

The statute lists activities that support safe and healthy students. PLUS supports several of them, as the table shows.

SECTION 4108 ACTIVITY	HOW PLUS SUPPORTS IT
Foster safe, healthy, supportive and drug-free environments	Monthly cycle measures and responds to risk factors (bullying, exclusion, harassment, fights, vaping) and builds protective factors (connection, belonging, caring relationships). Direction includes vaping questions, and its activity database includes vaping activities such as a feeder school vaping talk delivered by older PLUS students
Help prevent bullying and harassment	Forums focus on interactions between students on campus. Direction tracks bullying against a norm
Drug and violence prevention activities (Section 4108(5)(A))	Students identify patterns of conflict early and lead a schoolwide response each cycle
Instructional practices for relationship-building skills, such as effective communication	Students facilitate Forums, analyze data and present findings to adults

The PLUS Team also acts as a liaison to each school's wellness center. Students promote it through QR code campaigns and self-referral forms, which helps reduce stigma. Students do not counsel or mediate their peers.

(D) EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY (SECTION 4109)

The district will fund professional learning for teachers on effective classroom use of the devices it already owns. No Title IV, Part A funds will buy technology infrastructure.

(E) PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, INTENDED OUTCOMES AND PERIODIC EVALUATION

OBJECTIVE	BASELINE (SPRING 2027)	TARGET (SPRING 2030)
Grades 9 to 12 students reporting being bullied on campus in the last 30 days (Direction)	9%	At or below the 6% norm
Grades 7 and 8 students reporting being bullied on campus in the last 30 days (Direction)	14%	9%

OBJECTIVE	BASELINE (SPRING 2027)	TARGET (SPRING 2030)
Students reporting being left out by other students on purpose in the last 30 days (Direction)	21%	14%
Grade 7 students reporting high school connectedness (CHKS)	52%	60%
Grade 9 students reporting high school connectedness (CHKS)	47%	55%
Secondary suspension rate	6.2%	4.5%
Secondary schools running nine 30-day cycles a year	0	5

MEASURE	TOOL	HOW OFTEN	WHO REVIEWS
Bullying, exclusion and harassment (last 30 days)	Direction	Monthly	PLUS Teams, site PBIS and MTSS teams, district office
Schools above a Direction norm	Direction district alerts	Monthly	Director of Student Support Services
Cycles completed and Forum participants	PLUS cycle reports	Monthly	Site staff teams, district office
School connectedness, safety	California Healthy Kids Survey	Every other year	District office, LCAP committee
Suspension rate	DataQuest and district system	Annually	LCAP committee, board
Progress on all Title IV, Part A objectives	Annual Title IV review	Annually	Federal programs office, board

The Director of Student Support Services will present an annual Title IV, Part A review to the LCAP educational partners committee and the board each spring. It will include the district-level Direction report, which shows results across all five schools by grade level and student group and trends over time. The district will adjust the following year's spending plan based on the review.

> **Writer's note.** The Federal Addendum asks for each part, (A) through (E), in that order. Answer every part, even if the answer is "not applicable." Keep PLUS under (C) safe and healthy students. Do not stretch it into well-rounded education or technology to fill a distribution requirement. The objectives must come from your needs assessment, and each one needs a data source you will actually use. Do not cite academic achievement or reading scores. Do not describe PLUS as a counseling, crisis, mediation or suicide prevention program.

TITLE IV, PART A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Silver Pines Unified conducted its needs assessment in spring 2027 with its LCAP educational partners. These included teachers, principals, counselors, classified staff, parents, students and representatives of private schools in the district's boundaries. The district used Direction as the main tool for the safe and healthy students area. Direction is anonymous and COPPA compliant and collects no personal information from students. Each of the five secondary schools surveyed a representative sample of fewer than 10 percent of its students. The district also ran a Direction parent survey by QR code.

SAFE AND HEALTHY STUDENTS

INDICATOR	RESULT	YEAR	SOURCE
Grades 9 to 12 bullied on campus in the last 30 days	9% (norm 6%)	Spring 2027	Direction
Grades 7 and 8 bullied on campus in the last 30 days	14%	Spring 2027	Direction
Left out by other students on purpose in the last 30 days	21%	Spring 2027	Direction
Vaped on campus or saw vaping on campus in the last 30 days	33%	Spring 2027	Direction
Parents who report their child had a problem with other students this year	28%	Spring 2027	Direction parent survey
Grade 7 high school connectedness	52%	2025-26	California Healthy Kids Survey
Grade 9 high school connectedness	47%	2025-26	California Healthy Kids Survey
Secondary suspension rate	6.2%	2025-26	DataQuest

All three high schools were above the 6 percent norm for students bullied on campus in the last 30 days. Direction flagged each with a warning indicator. Results by student group showed higher rates of exclusion among English learners and students new to the district. Middle school students reported more bullying than high school students. Parents named problems between students as their top concern.

The district already has PBIS teams at every secondary school and an MTSS framework. Educational partners said those teams do not have current information from students about what is happening between them. The CHKS is given every other year, and its results arrive months later. Partners asked for a way to measure climate every month and to give students a real role in responding. This gap shaped the decision to fund PLUS.

WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION

The district's needs assessment found unequal access to music and visual arts at the middle schools. That finding and its response are described in the district's own well-rounded education section.

EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Teachers reported that many students have devices but that classroom use is uneven. The response is professional learning, described in the district's own technology section.

> **Writer's note.** CDE asks the LEA to identify the indicators or data points it used to examine needs in each of the three areas, the activities it will fund and how it will evaluate them. The needs assessment is required once every three years for LEAs receiving at least $30,000. Use your own Direction results, CHKS data and discipline data. Show results by student group if they reveal a gap. Remember that private school representatives must be part of consultation when the district provides equitable services.

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

PRIORITY	ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (2027-28)	SHARE	YEAR 2 (2028-29)	SHARE
Safe and healthy students	PLUS Districtwide and Direction	$52,945		$76,770	
Safe and healthy students	Restorative practices professional learning (district activity)	$20,000		$0	
Safe and healthy students subtotal		**$72,945**	**42.6%**	**$76,770**	**44.8%**
Well-rounded education	Middle school music and visual arts	$62,000	36.2%	$58,175	34.0%
Effective use of technology	Teacher professional learning (no infrastructure)	$30,000	17.5%	$30,000	17.5%
Equitable services	Private school students and teachers (amount set through consultation)	$6,400	3.7%	$6,400	3.7%
Total allocation (illustrative)		**$171,345**	**100.0%**	**$171,345**	**100.0%**

The plan meets each distribution requirement in both years. Safe and healthy students receives more than the 20 percent minimum. Well-rounded education receives more than the 20 percent minimum. A portion supports effective use of technology, and none of it buys infrastructure, so the 15 percent infrastructure cap is not reached. The district will prioritize the distribution of funds to schools based on need. All five PLUS

schools are Title I schoolwide sites, and the three high schools were flagged above the Direction bullying norm.

> **Writer's note.** Show each year's distribution so CDE can see the minimums are met even as PLUS costs change. Confirm with your federal programs office how your district counts the equitable services share when it calculates percentages. Ask CDE's Title IV office if you are unsure. If your district plans indirect costs or administrative costs, check the current limits before you add them.

PLUS SPENDING PLAN

LINE	CALCULATION	YEAR 1 (2027-28)	YEAR 2 (2028-29)	YEAR 3 (2029-30)	TOTAL
PLUS Districtwide site subscriptions	5 sites × $1,495 per year	$7,475	$7,475	$7,475	$22,425
PLUS district subscription	$2,995 per year	$2,995	$2,995	$2,995	$8,985
On-site training days	Year 1: 5 days × $3,500. Years 2 and 3: 1 day × $3,500	$17,500	$3,500	$3,500	$24,500
Trainer travel and lodging (estimate)	Year 1: 5-day visit. Years 2 and 3: 1-day visit	$2,500	$800	$800	$4,100
PLUS Advisor Institute registration	5 Advisors × $1,495	$7,475	$0	$0	$7,475
Advisor Institute lodging (illustrative)	5 Advisors × 3 nights × $250	$3,750	$0	$0	$3,750
Advisor Institute travel (illustrative)	5 Advisors × $250	$1,250	$0	$0	$1,250
Substitute coverage for training (illustrative)	Year 1: 10 teachers × 5 days × $200. Years 2 and 3: 10 teachers × 1 day × $200	$10,000	$2,000	$2,000	$14,000
PLUS Advisor collaboration time, 0.1 FTE (illustrative)	5 Advisors × 0.1 × $120,000	$0	$60,000	$60,000	$120,000
PLUS Team student leadership training	Request a quote. Not included in totals	Quote	Quote	Quote	Quote
Total charged to Title IV, Part A		**$52,945**	**$76,770**	**$76,770**	**$206,485**

FUNDED FROM LCFF (NOT TITLE IV, PART A)	CALCULATION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL
PLUS class section, 0.1 FTE (illustrative)	5 Advisors × 0.1 × $120,000	$0	$60,000	$60,000	$120,000

The district recommends 0.2 FTE for each PLUS Advisor. Half of that is the PLUS class section. The district funds the class section from LCFF because it already staffs elective sections from that source. The other half, 0.1 FTE, is new collaboration time charged to Title IV, Part A. It lets the Advisor serve on the site PBIS team, MTSS team and school safety committee, bringing each cycle's data to those teams and carrying decisions back to the class. Classes begin in August 2028, so Advisor time starts in Year 2.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Site subscriptions ($22,425). Each school receives the online subscription with unlimited Direction surveys and the activity resource database, the PLUS curriculum, one School Climate Conference or School Safety Conference registration, and one 2-Day training registration for a new staff member each year. This supports the monthly cycle and every Direction objective.

District subscription ($8,985). The district subscription gives the district office results across all five schools, trends by grade level and student group, district alerts, survey assignment, raw data download, participation tracking and a board report. It supplies the data for the annual Title IV review and the next needs assessment in spring 2030. It includes one conference registration for the district office.

On-site training ($24,500) and trainer travel ($4,100). Year 1 follows the standard PLUS Districtwide rollout in winter 2027-28. Days 1 and 2 are the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training for all five staff teams. Day 3 covers data implementation and Day 4 covers activity implementation. Day 5, the final follow-up training, takes place in August 2028 before the pre-cycle. Years 2 and 3 each include one follow-up day. Travel and lodging figures are estimates to be replaced with the provider's quote.

PLUS Advisor Institute ($12,475 total). The Institute is held each June in Temecula. All five Advisors attend in June 2028. It prepares the Advisor to teach the PLUS class and lead its activities. The 2-Day training prepares the staff team to run the program schoolwide. The Institute provides lunches and refreshments, and the district covers lodging and travel.

Substitute coverage ($14,000). Two teachers from each school need substitutes on training days. The daily rate is illustrative.

Advisor collaboration time ($120,000). This funds the new 0.1 FTE described above. It is the piece that connects student data to the PBIS, MTSS and safety teams.

Student leadership training (quote pending). Training for PLUS Team students is optional and sized to the rollout. The district will request a quote.

Writer's note. Title IV, Part A funds must supplement, and not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for these activities. Before you charge any PLUS cost to Title IV, Part A, ask whether the district would pay for it from state or local funds anyway. If your district already funds a leadership class, a climate survey or an Advisor's time from LCFF, moving that cost to Title IV, Part A is a supplanting risk. This sample avoids the problem by charging only new costs: the PLUS subscriptions and training, and new collaboration time the Advisor did not have before. The class section stays on LCFF. Document the decision in writing and keep it with your federal program records. Confirm pricing at plusprogram.org/costs, or by email at pce@pcesolutions.org or by phone at 866.403.9484.

EVIDENCE BASE

PLUS meets the ESSA standard for moderate evidence (Tier 2). University research teams at UC Berkeley, the University of Oregon and the University of Florida continue to study PLUS. A five-year University of Oregon study of student voice in California high schools, funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, is underway. Direction hosts validated University of Oregon and University of Florida instruments for grades 6 to 12 and the Georgia Southern University Bullying Suite of Surveys for students, staff and parents. Districts using PLUS include Stockton Unified (since 2012), Hemet Unified (since 2010), Lake Elsinore Unified (more than 10 years), Kern High School District, Patterson Unified and Compton Unified. More than 80 percent of PLUS schools renew each year.

1. A quasi-experimental study published in the Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness used propensity score matching to compare 153 students in a year-long PLUS elective at six high schools in one California district with similar peers. Participation significantly improved attendance. (PDF)
2. Abraczinskas, M., Kornbluh, M., Golden, A. R., Glende, J., Velez, V., Vines, E., and Ozer, E. J. (2022). "Preventing Bullying and Improving School Climate Through Integrating Youth Participatory Action Research Into School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports." Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion, 3(2). (PDF)
3. Cohen, A. K., Ozer, E. J., Abraczinskas, M., Voight, A., Kirshner, B., and Devinney, M. (2019). "Opportunities for Youth Participatory Action Research to Inform School District Decisions." Evidence and Policy. (PDF)
4. Gauna, R. (2017). "The Peer Leaders Uniting Students (PLUS) Program: The Impact on School Climate, Student Engagement, and Student Mentoring." Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University Irvine. (PDF)

Writer's note. The Federal Addendum does not have an evidence section, but your federal programs office and LCAP committee will ask why this program. A short evidence summary in your internal spending plan answers that question.

SUSTAINABILITY

After Year 1, the ongoing PLUS cost is the subscriptions plus the Advisor's collaboration time. Each year's site subscription includes a 2-Day training registration for one new staff member, so turnover does not require new training funds. The district will review PLUS results in the annual Title IV review and again in the spring 2030 needs assessment. If results hold, the district will continue PLUS under its LCAP school climate goal, with Title IV, Part A as one of several funding sources.

> **Writer's note.** Title IV, Part A is annual formula funding, and allocations can change from year to year. Name a second funding source in your LCAP so the program does not depend on one allocation.

SOURCES

- CDE: Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment (funding page)
- CDE: Funding Profile, Title IV, Part A, 2026-27
- CDE: Title IV, Part A Apportionment Overview, 2026-27
- CDE: Title IV, Part A First Apportionment Letter, 2026-27
- CDE: Consolidated Application assurances, Title IV, Part A
- Example LCAP Federal Addendum using the CDE template, Title IV, Part A prompts (San Lorenzo Unified, approved June 2026)
- 20 U.S.C. 7118, activities to support safe and healthy students (ESSA Section 4108)
- 20 U.S.C. 7120, supplement, not supplant (ESSA Section 4110)