Additional Guidance on Supplementary Instruction

Focus: U.S. History

Our office has recently gotten numerous inquiries from post management and from others about American history course materials offered for sale for use outside the classroom. After consultation with several offices at headquarters, we have prepared the guidance below to help the field in connection with reviewing requests for reimbursement of the cost of such courseware under Supplementary Instruction.

Use of the Supplementary Instruction Allowance

When supporting a child’s education while posted overseas, a supplementary instruction allowance may be requested as outlined in the Department of State Standardized Regulations (See DSSR [276.9](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=249&menu_id=75)). The allowance recognizes that school choice options and curriculums may differ from post to post and that each child is unique in their learning abilities.

Eligibility for supplemental instruction funds is made on an individual basis. The FACTS about the supplemental instruction funds are:

1. Parents should identify the specific materials/supplemental instruction for purchase that supplement their child’s education. Per the DSSR, reimbursement is provided only for academic subjects generally offered by public schools in the U.S. but that are not offered by the child’s school at post.

2. To request supplementary instruction funds, parents should provide a complete written description of the program(s) and/or expenditures to the post’s Financial Management Officer (FMO). It is recommended that this be done prior to purchases to assess whether or not post will approve such expenditures. The FMO will evaluate the eligibility as described in the DSSR [276.9](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=249&menu_id=75).

3. Approval of the funding is made on a case by case basis. There is no entitlement to supplementary instruction funds.

4. Clarification of the appropriate use of the funding lies with the Office of Allowances (AllowancesO@state.gov). FAQs related to supplementary instruction funds can be found elsewhere on this homepage under "[Frequently Asked Questions](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=108&menu_id=75)", "[Education Supplementary Instruction](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=172&menu_id=75)".

5. Please note the following:

a. Costs must be reasonable (as determined by the FMO at post);

b. Supplementary instruction funds can apply at any grade level, to pay for grade-level appropriate materials or instruction;

c. Materials/instruction does not have to count for ‘credit’ at any particular school;

d. Courses do not have to have face-to-face interaction to qualify;

e. That a public school in the U.S. will accept a child transferring from an international school which does not teach the subject(s) in question (e.g., American history) is not a reason to deny the supplementary instruction funds;

f. Parents are best positioned to determine the particular curriculum that they feel is best for their child(ren), within the stricture of the DSSR and other applicable regulations (e.g., it must be grade and subject appropriate).