

ESSA Quick Reference Brief: Title I-A Schoolwide Programs

What the Law Says

The purpose of Title I, Part A is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and help ensure that all children meet challenging academic standards.

Title I-A provides financial assistance to districts and schools who serve a larger population of children from families experiencing poverty. By providing additional resources, the program is intended to help close the opportunity gaps and thus the achievement gap that some students experience. As outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title I-A funded schools may implement one of two approaches: 1) a School-wide Program or 2) a Targeted Assistance Program.¹

Schoolwide programs funded under Title I, Part A offer the opportunity to invest in strategies that help all students, because all students in a schoolwide program can be served². While many schools target services to the most in-need students, a schoolwide program allows for the implementation of tiered supports addressing student needs at every level.

Using data gathered about student need and the eligibility criteria below, districts determine which schools to serve and whether they will employ a schoolwide or targeted assistance program.

| Category | Targeted Assistance | Schoolwide |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| School Eligibility | Any school with a poverty level of 35% or the district’s poverty average (whichever is lower). | Any school with a poverty level of at least 40%. A school with less than 40% poverty may request through ODE to conduct a schoolwide program. |
| Student Participation | Resources are directed to students meeting the established targeting criteria (i.e.; those most at risk of failing to meet State academic standards). | All students in the school have access to activities under a schoolwide plan. |
| Professional Development | Professional development with Title I funds focuses on staff that provide direct support to Title I students. | Title I funds can be used to provide professional development for all staff. |
| Planning and Evaluation | Plan includes a general description of targeted assistance school activities to support students identified as eligible for services. Plan includes criteria for student eligibility. | The schoolwide plan must be developed for reforming the total instructional program in the school. The plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment ³ and includes specific goals and strategies. Plan is reviewed annually with the input of families, and updated as needed. |

¹ ESSA Sections 1114 and 1115

² ESSA Section 1114(a)(2)(A)

³ The comprehensive needs assessment for a schoolwide plan must address the needs of the school being served. This is separate from the CNA that districts complete unless it is a one-school district.

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What It Means

Schools where 40% percent or more of families are experiencing poverty are eligible to adopt schoolwide programs to support students most at risk of not meeting Oregon’s standards. The schoolwide model is more **flexible** (all students participate), **coordinated** (all students are responsible for meeting the same high standards) and **unifying** (parents, community members and staff come together to redesign the school). In short, through implementation of a schoolwide program the school can address community needs and systemic issues impacting students’ abilities to succeed.

Plan Requirements

There are three critical components to a schoolwide program: the **needs assessment**, the **comprehensive schoolwide plan**, and the process for **annual review of the plan**.

- **The school’s plan should be based on a comprehensive needs assessment.** Through the needs assessment, a school must consult with a broad range of community members, including families, school staff, and others, and examine relevant academic achievement data to understand students’ most pressing needs and their root causes. While the school must consider student performance on the state assessment, school leaders should also consider other data including enrollment counts, dropout rates, graduation rates, school demographics, classroom observations and/or surveys of students, teachers, parents and community attitudes and perceptions.⁴
- **The schoolwide plan is a strategic tool that identifies the school’s priorities and goals** and explains which improvement strategies it will use to address identified strengths and needs. Each Title I-A funded school conducting a schoolwide program must have a plan on file to readily share with families, community and the school district that **identifies at least 3 priorities** for the school and describes:
 - How the school will improve academic achievement throughout the school;⁵
 - How the strategies the school will employ provide opportunities and address the learning needs of all students in the school⁶; and
 - How the methods and instructional strategies that the school intends to use will strengthen the academic program in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, including programs and activities necessary to provide a well-rounded education.⁷

⁴ ESSA Section 1114(b)(6)

⁵ ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)

⁶ ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)(A)(i), (iii)

⁷ ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)(A)(i), (iii)

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- Schools should have a process in place to annually evaluate the schoolwide plan using data from the State’s assessments, other student performance data, and perception data to determine if the schoolwide program has been effective in addressing the major problem areas and, in turn, increasing student achievement, particularly for the lowest-achieving students.⁸

Sharing and Submitting the School Plan

Parents/guardians must be informed annually of their school's participation in Title I-A and its requirements as well as their rights and opportunities to be involved.⁹ Each Title I-A funded school conducting a schoolwide program must have a plan and relevant documentation that is **easily accessible and shared** with families, community members and the school district.

Plans are not required to be submitted to ODE on an annual basis. Rather, when a district is identified for monitoring, the district submits the most recent copy of the plan along with additional school-level documentation:

- Title I-A Annual Meeting documentation
- Family Engagement Plan (reviewed and revised with parent input annually)
- Parent-School Compact (reviewed and revised with parent input annually)
- Building Family Capacity documentation
- Verification of staff qualifications
- Para-professional highly qualified documentation

Questions for Reflection

1. Do the priorities identified in our schoolwide plan reflect what our comprehensive needs assessment tells us about the strengths and needs of our students?
2. Do the principal and teachers in the school have a clear understanding of the plan and how it will support all students in the building?
3. Does our community understand our schoolwide plan?
4. Which community members and parents were involved in the creation of our last plan?
5. How can we strengthen communication and engagement with families and community members in the development and evaluation of our plan?
6. When was the last evaluation conducted and what information did it reveal? What resources are needed to support the students and school leaders?

⁸ ESSA Section 1114(b)(3); 34 C.F.R. § 200.26(c)

⁹ ESSA Section 1114(b)(2)

ESSA Quick Reference Brief: Title I-A Schoolwide Programs Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How does a school move from conducting a Targeted Assistance Program (TAS) to a Schoolwide Program (SWP)?** A school's population and circumstance may change over time in ways that makes a shifting to a schoolwide model more appropriate. Schools that wish to transition from targeted assistance to schoolwide must: 1) conduct a comprehensive needs assessment; 2) determine priorities, and 3) develop a [schoolwide plan](#) which is submitted to ODE.

Additionally, **the plan must be developed with the involvement of family and community members** and, if appropriate, in coordination and integration with other federal, state, and local services, resources, and programs. Finally, there are annual documents that the school will need to revise and review each year [which can be found here](#).

2. **What if a SWP school closes and then wants to reopen?** If the school maintains its original attendance area and demographics, continuing with a schoolwide program could be considered. A current needs assessment would need to be conducted and the plan would need to be revised accordingly.
3. **Our district is building a new school. How do we determine if it is Title I-A eligible and which program would be most appropriate?** The district first needs to collect data regarding the number of economically disadvantaged students anticipated to attend the new school in order to determine whether the school is eligible to be served with Title I-A funds. Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment would be the next step necessary to determine the needs of students and whether a targeted or schoolwide approach would be best.
4. **Do participating private schools have to develop a schoolwide plan?**
No. Private schools that receive equitable services under Title I-A may only operate a targeted assistance program.

Resources

- [ESSA Schoolwide Guidance](#) (USED)
- [Oregon Federal Funds Guide](#) (ODE)
- [Leveraging Title I Schoolwide Programs](#) (Communities in Schools)
- [Criteria for Title I-A Schoolwide Plans](#) (ODE)
- [Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Planning web page](#) (ODE)

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