

ESSA Quick Reference Brief: Developing Schoolwide Plans for Title I-A

The purpose of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is to provide all children an opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education. Title I, part A of ESSA 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 ensure that all students have access to academically enriching curriculum and meet the state’s challenging academic standards. As outlined in the ESSA, Title I-A funded schools may implement one of two approaches: 1) a Schoolwide Program or 2) a Targeted Assistance Program.¹ These approaches specify how a school receiving Title I-A funds can support students meeting the standards.

What the Law Says

Schoolwide programs funded under Title I, Part A offer the opportunity to invest in strategies that help all students in the school². Schools that implement a schoolwide program under Title I-A must develop a plan that:

- Provides opportunities for **all** children to meet the challenging State academic standards;
- Strengthens the academic program in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum; and
- Addresses the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of students who have been historically underserved.

The plan must be based on a comprehensive needs assessment³ and include specific outcomes and strategies to address the learning needs of all students in the school.⁴ In addition, the plan must be reviewed annually with the input of families, and updated as needed.⁵

Creating the Schoolwide Plan

The continuous improvement process lends itself well to school-level planning, and districts have a great deal of autonomy in determining the format of their schoolwide plans. ODE has created an [optional template](#) that schools can use, or they can design their own. Regardless of the format used, the following [components must be included in all schoolwide plans](#): Needs Assessment Summary, Goals, Activities & Measures, Family Engagement, and Evaluation & Review.



Need Assessment Summary

Completing a needs assessment helps schools identify the goals and strategies that they will take to address the underlying inequities and challenges facing their students. A comprehensive needs assessment should include review of multiple sources of data from at least three categories - Student Data, Perception Data, and Systems

¹ ESSA Sections 1114 and 1115

² ESSA Section 1114(a)(2)(A)

³ ESSA Section 1114(b)(6)

⁴ ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)(A)(i), (iii)

⁵ ESSA Section 1114(b)(3)

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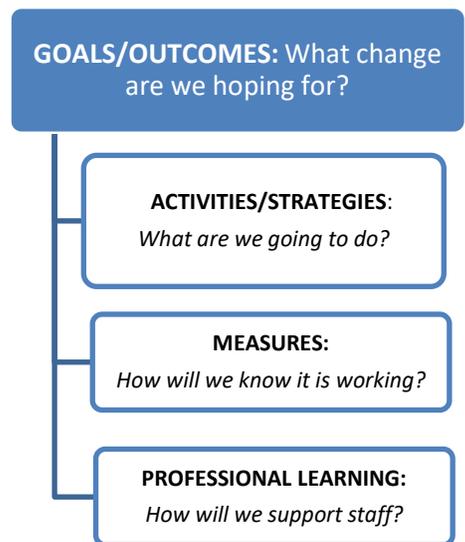
Data - and should be informed by robust community engagement. The needs assessment should include the following components:

- **Student demographics**, including the students served in the school and trends in enrollment.
- **Student outcome data**, including academic, behavioral, programmatic, as well as systems and perception data.
- **Identified strengths and needs of the students served**, which can include a review of the barriers and root causes of the challenges identified as well as opportunities to engage staff, students, and the community around the identified goals and strategies.
- **A review of which voices were engaged in the needs assessment**, including an examination of [who was engaged](#) in the development of the schoolwide plan and if there was representation from all community members (e.g.; students, staff, families, [tribal organizations](#)).

Goals, Activities, and Measures

As the result of the review of data and input from all voices, a comprehensive schoolwide plan should include the following elements:

- **Goals/Outcomes** – Outcomes are the changes in health, behavior, actions, attitudes, or policies that affect students, educators, and families.
- **Activities** –The actions the school will take to address the goals identified in the plan.
- **Measures** - How the effectiveness of activities will be measured.
- **Professional Learning** - The professional learning opportunities provided to support staff in implementing strategies and activities.



Strategies for Family Engagement

Engagement is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process. Authentic and meaningful engagement is an iterative process where leaders must continuously ask “whose perspective is missing?” Then, inclusive processes and actions must follow that build trust and respond to community needs and assets. To be most effective, and to ensure that no one is inadvertently left out, schools should utilize more than one strategy that authentically engages families. The timing of meetings, the primary language(s) spoken, and supports for childcare and transportation can all have an impact.

Districts and schools that receive Title I-A funds should communicate, collaborate, and work as partners with families on the development of the school wide plan. Intentionality in methods of engagement supports families’ involvement in the school and ensures they are welcomed. **In addition, each Title I-A funded school within the district** must collaborate with families to develop and implement:

- a plan to engage parents/guardians and families;⁶

⁶ ESEA Section 1116(b)
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- structures for families to provide input and feedback on school plan and processes;⁷ and
- a compact detailing the shared responsibility for student achievement between students, families, and teachers.⁸

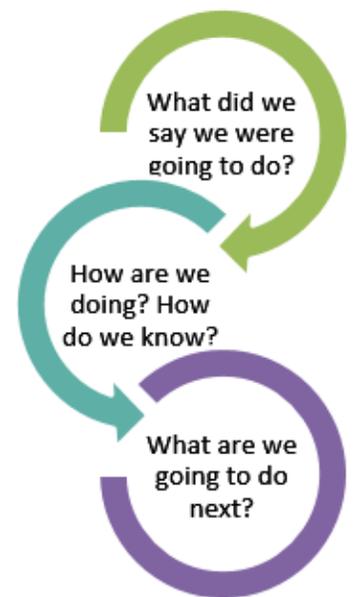
Schools must also annually convene families to share details of the school's program⁹ and build family capacity as partners with the school in their child's education.¹⁰

Evaluation and Review

Schools should have a process in place to annually evaluate the schoolwide plan to determine if the school is on track to meet their goals. Data to include in the evaluation process can include student outcome data, perception data, behavioral data, and any other metrics that the school feels necessary to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the enacted strategies.¹¹

Questions for Reflection

1. How does our school ensure that family engagement is meaningful and that all voices, particularly voices of those from historically underserved groups, are heard?
2. What would success in reaching our goals look like in one, two, or three years? What are the major milestones this year?
3. What is our process for reviewing the schoolwide plan? Who is involved and what data is reviewed during that process?
4. When was the last time we evaluated our schoolwide plan? What progress was made towards improving student achievement?
5. How does the district support each school in the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of its plan?



Resources

- [Title I-A Schoolwide Planning Template](#)
- [Criteria for Title I-A Schoolwide Plans](#)
- [ORIS Needs Assessment Tool for Schools](#)
- [ESSA Quick Reference Brief: Title I-A Schoolwide Programs](#)
- [Community Engagement Toolkit](#)
- [Tribal Consultation Toolkit](#)

⁷ ESEA Section 1116(c)

⁸ ESEA Section 1116(d)

⁹ ESEA Section 1116(c)

¹⁰ ESEA Section 1116(e)

¹¹ ESSA Section 1114(b)(3); 34 C.F.R. § 200.26(c)