

## Title I Schoolwide Programs

A Title I schoolwide program is a comprehensive reform strategy designed to upgrade the entire educational program in a Title I school in order to improve the achievement of the lowest-achieving students. (ESEA section 1114(a)(1)). Under the ESEA, a school may operate a schoolwide program if it meets any of the following conditions:

- A Title I school with 40 percent or more of its students living in poverty, regardless of the grades it serves.
- **A Title I school that receives a waiver from an SEA to operate a schoolwide program without meeting the 40 percent poverty threshold.**
- A Tier I or Tier II school in a State that requested and received a waiver through the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program that receives funds to implement one of the SIG intervention models.<sup>2</sup>

A school that operates a schoolwide program is able to take advantage of numerous benefits, including:

- **Serving all students.** A school operating a schoolwide program does not need to identify particular students as eligible to participate. (ESEA section 1114(a)(2)(A)(i)).
- **Consolidating federal, state, and local funds.** A school operating a schoolwide program may consolidate federal, state, and local education funds to better address the needs of students in the school. (ESEA section 1114(a)(1), (3)).

### **Implementing a Schoolwide Program:**

There are three required components of a schoolwide program that are essential to effective implementation: conducting a comprehensive needs assessment, preparing a comprehensive schoolwide plan, and annually reviewing and revising, as necessary, the schoolwide plan.

- Conducting a **comprehensive needs assessment.** To ensure that a school's comprehensive plan best serves the needs of those children who are failing, or are at-risk of failing, to meet the challenging State academic standards, the school must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. (ESEA section 1114(b)(6)). Through the needs assessment, a school must consult with a broad range of stakeholders, including parents, school staff, and others in the community, and examine relevant academic achievement data to understand students' most pressing needs and their root causes. (ESEA section 1114(b)(2); 34 C.F.R. § 200.26(a)). Where necessary, a school should attempt to engage in interviews, focus groups, or surveys, as well as review data on students, educators, and schools to gain a better understanding of the root causes of the identified needs.
- Preparing a **comprehensive schoolwide plan** that describes how the school will improve academic achievement throughout the school, but particularly for the lowest-achieving students, by addressing the needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)). The schoolwide plan must include a description of how the strategies the school will be implementing will provide opportunities and address the learning needs of all students in the school, particularly the needs of the lowest-achieving students. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)(A)(i), (iii)). The plan must also contain descriptions of 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. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)(A)(ii)). To ensure that the plan results in progress toward addressing the needs of the school, the plan should include benchmarks for the evaluation of program results. **This plan may be integrated into an existing improvement plan.**

- **Annually evaluating 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. Schools must **annually revise the plan**, as necessary, based on student needs and the results of the evaluation to ensure continuous improvement. (ESEA section 1114(b)(3); 34 C.F.R. § 200.26(c)).

### **Flexibility in Using Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program:**

Consistent with the benefits identified above, a school operating a schoolwide program may use Title I funds for any activity that supports the needs of students in the school as identified through the comprehensive needs assessment and articulated in the schoolwide plan. (ESEA section 1114(b)). In designing and implementing the schoolwide plan, a school must implement strategies that: (1) provide opportunities for all children to meet challenging state academic standards; (2) use methods and instructional strategies that strengthen the academic program in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education; and (3) address the needs of all students, but particularly those at risk of not meeting challenging State academic standards. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)(A)).

### **Examples of Uses of Funds in a Schoolwide Program (Based on the Needs Assessment):**

- High-quality preschool or full-day kindergarten and services to facilitate the transition from early learning to elementary education programs.
- Recruitment and retention of effective teachers, particularly in high-need subjects.
- Instructional coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development.
- Increased learning time.
- Evidence-based strategies to accelerate the acquisition of content knowledge for English learners.
- Activities designed to increase access and prepare students for success in high-quality advanced coursework to earn postsecondary credit while in high school (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment programs).
- Career and technical education programs to prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce.