

APPENDIX G -- SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW

This section gives very basic information about schoolwide programs. Please consult the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Title I staff at (406) 444-5660 for more detailed information, or visit the schoolwide programs page on the OPI website at: http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/TitlePrgrms/TitleIA/TitleIA.html#gpm1_12

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I Part A authorizes school districts to operate "schoolwide" programs in eligible schools. The impact is that districts have more flexibility in using federal "Title" funds and other federal and non-federal funds to address school improvement and academic achievement for all students in eligible schools.

ELIGIBILITY AND PURPOSE

To be eligible to operate a schoolwide program, the school must be served by an ESEA Title I, Part A program. The school must meet a poverty threshold of at least 40%. That is, at least 40% of the students enrolled in the school or residing in the school's attendance area must qualify as being from low income families.

Federal guidance: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/designingswpguid.doc>

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLWIDE PLAN

An eligible school must develop a comprehensive Schoolwide Plan in order to participate. The plan must address the reform of the whole instructional program of the school. ESEA specifies the components and details required to be included in the plan.

OPI has a template available for completing a Schoolwide Plan on the OPI website at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/TitleI/SchoolwideProgramPlanTemplate.pdf>

OPI also requires the district's Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) to include Schoolwide Plan sections for each school operating a schoolwide program. *Note: Each school operating a Schoolwide Plan must enter a separate plan in the CSIP.*

TEN COMPONENTS OF A SCHOOLWIDE PLAN

The ESEA requires ten components to be addressed in a Schoolwide Plan. The information below is meant to give an overview. However, the federal regulations are complex, so schools and districts must consult federal guidelines for specific information about each component.

A Schoolwide Plan must include the following components:

1. Comprehensive needs assessment;
2. School reform strategies;
3. Instruction by highly qualified professional staff;
4. High-quality and ongoing professional development;
5. Strategies to attract highly-qualified staff;
6. Strategies to increase parental involvement;
7. Preschool/other transition strategies;
8. Teacher participation in making assessment decisions;
9. Timely and additional assistance to students having difficulty mastering the standards; and
10. Coordination and integration of federal, state, and local programs and resources.

PREPARATION AND APPROVAL OF A SCHOOLWIDE PLAN

Each school in a district that intends to operate as a schoolwide program must first send a letter to the OPI Title I Program Office stating the intent to operate a schoolwide program.

Next the school must complete and submit a written Schoolwide Plan. There must be a separate plan for each school intending to move from a Targeted Assistance to a schoolwide Program. Districts are not allowed to operate as a schoolwide program.

The district must approve each Schoolwide Plan before the plan can be implemented. The district Title I Coordinator, together with the district's Schoolwide Program Support Team, must review the planning document and make recommendations regarding the viability of the Schoolwide Plan under consideration.

OPI SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAM PLAN TEMPLATE

The OPI provides a guide to assist the district Title I Coordinator and Schoolwide Program Support Team in reviewing and refining each Schoolwide Plan to ensure the plan meets the federal requirements. The completed guide must be submitted to the OPI Title I Program Office for review.

The guide is posted at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/TitleI/SchoolwideProgramPlanTemplate.pdf>

HOW SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAMS AFFECT THE USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Application Process

If a school system has one or more schools with an approved Schoolwide Plan, the school system will indicate their plan for using funds from the various ESEA grant programs for the schoolwide program(s) and for the targeted assistance programs

when submitting the ESEA Consolidated Application on E-Grants. E-Grants is the OPI's electronic grants management system.

The ESEA Consolidated Application on E-Grants contains ESEA Title I, Part A and several other ESEA "Title" programs. Federal schoolwide program regulations allow schoolwide programs to use monies from each of the programs included in the Consolidated Application (and other funds), depending on the approved Schoolwide Plan(s).

The applicant may contact the OPI Title I staff at (406)444-5660 for assistance in completing the ESEA Consolidated Application to cover schoolwide programs.

OPI Project Number

If a subgrantee's application indicates the use of money from one or more ESEA allocations to fund one or more schoolwide programs, the OPI will establish a schoolwide project for the subgrantee with a unique project number.

The subgrantee must submit a separate Cash Request for schoolwide project funds, account for revenues and expenditures of the funds using a separate project reporter code on the accounting records, and submit separate fiscal and program close-out reports for the schoolwide project.

OPI Accounting Codes for Schoolwide Projects

The District Clerk/Business Manager must separately account for a schoolwide project by assigning a unique project reporter code within the district's Miscellaneous Programs Fund (15). The required revenue code for schoolwide projects is 4940. The required expenditure program code is 494.

Flexible Use of Funds for Schoolwide Projects

Federal regulations allow the funds allocated for a schoolwide project, including all federal and non-federal resources the entity has allocated for that school's activities, to be used without restrictions of the program from which funds were allocated. However, the school and the school district are still required to meet the overall requirements of the federal programs. That is, allowable costs are not restricted by specific program regulations as long as the purposes and goals required by the federal programs are achieved.

One major difference this makes to a subgrantee is that the district may pay staff of a school operating under a schoolwide program using a combination of federal and non-federal funding sources without regard to the activities the staff person is performing compared to the federal program used to pay the person. For example, schoolwide funds from Title I, Part A may be used to pay any teacher in a schoolwide program since selection of eligible students is not required. Thus, the subgrantee has more flexibility to use funds across federal and state programs to address the academic achievement needs of all students of a school. In practical terms, this means the staff of a schoolwide program do not have to maintain time and effort records (timesheets,

activity logs, etc.) to document their time charged to multiple programs. However, staff who work for both a schoolwide program and a non-schoolwide program will still have to track time and effort.