

## **Title I Planning Information –**

- **Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Planning –**

Under the federal *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation, Title I districts and schools are required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify student and staff needs and to determine appropriate programs, services and activities. This process includes assessing the effectiveness of programs that were implemented in the prior year and identifying scientifically based research programs and strategies to be used. Effectiveness is measured by student academic performance. This process needs to begin now for program implementation in the coming school year.

A critical component of the comprehensive needs assessment process is the collection of data. These data may include survey results or focus group comments, performance analyses and observations, and discussion group results. When completing the needs assessment and prioritizing problems, the district and schools should gather disaggregated assessment data and review AYP results, as applicable.

Programs, services and activities that are determined as a result of the needs assessment process culminate in a program plan. After completing the comprehensive needs assessment, Title I schools in need of improvement, and/or schools operating an approved Title I schoolwide program must begin the process of preparing or revising their Title I Unified Plan. Schools that currently operate a Title I schoolwide program must update their plan on an annual basis. The process for submitting the plan is attached to this letter (see Attachment A) and posted on the Web site <http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/entitlement/nclb/>. The USDE guidance on “Designing Schoolwide Programs” is a resource that describes a comprehensive planning process and can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/designingswpguid.doc>.

The Title I Unified Plan is developed with input from all stakeholders. Schools that need to complete the plan should begin setting the agenda for their respective planning committees. Meetings should focus on the development of Title I programs, setting targets for student achievement and identifying methods to measure progress. The committee should incorporate CAPA recommendations into the Title I Unified Plan, if applicable. A template of the Title I Unified Plan is available with the required school level forms on the NJDOE Web site at <http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/entitlement/nclb/>. Districts are required to annually upload the Title I Unified Plan for their schools to EWEG.

Prior to developing the FY 2010 *NCLB* Consolidated Application, districts that serve eligible nonpublic school children and local Neglected & Delinquent facilities, must begin the consultation process. Before decisions are made that impact the participation of students in these populations, the district must consult with the appropriate officials to ensure that the programs and services offered are adequate to meet the needs of these students. Nonpublic school documentation forms, updated income eligibility guidelines and sample letters and surveys may be found on the NJDOE Web site at <http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/entitlement/nclb/>.

- Resource Allocation –

In August, districts allocate Title I funds to schools based on poverty using the EWEG system. Schools may or may not be eligible for funding and the funding may change from the prior year. Thus, the budget projections developed by the district for the April budget vote may need adjustment. Districts then must adjust their school budgets to reflect the actual Title I funds specified in EWEG. LEAs are not permitted to reduce the amount of state and local funds to Title I schools during this adjustment process. Failure to budget and expend the accurate Title I amounts in eligible schools may be an audit exception and such funds are subject to a corrective action and possible recovery to the state.

Programs selected for implementation at the school and district level depend on the resources. In Title I districts and schools, these Title I resources are used to fund additional programs that would not have been available using state and local funds. The federal supplement not supplant provision requires that federal funds be used to augment the regular educational program. These Title I funds must not be used to substitute for funds or services that would otherwise be provided. The statute requires that districts use federal funds received under Title I only to supplement the amount of funds available from nonfederal sources for the education of students participating in Title I services. The district cannot use these federal funds to supplant funds that would, in the absence of Title I funds, be spent on Title I students [Title I, Part A, Section 1120A (b)].

- Program Implementation –

Title I districts must develop and mail the various parental notifications prior to the beginning of the school year, as appropriate (e.g., notification of school in need of improvement status, school choice, supplemental educational services). In addition, the district must develop and distribute the annual Parents' Right-to-Know letter regarding highly qualified teacher (HQT) requirements. The district is encouraged to view the Title I Program Managers Training module with specific information on the responsibilities of managing the Title I grant on the NJDOE Web site <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/tech/managers/>