

TITLE I UNIFIED PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

The Title I Unified Plan is required for each of the following:

- School in need of improvement (SINI)
- School with approved Title I schoolwide program

Note: The district in need of improvement (DINI) plan is a separate plan. The completed DINI plan must be uploaded to the *NCLB* Application on the EWEG system in addition to all relevant Unified Plans using the Title I Unified Plan tab.

The Unified Plan template is available on the NJDOE Web site at: www.nj.gov/education/grants/entitlement/nclb/. The Unified Plan Verification screen in the *NCLB* Application must be completed after all required plans are uploaded.

SINIs that operate targeted assistance programs and all schools operating schoolwide programs also must upload to the *NCLB* Application a completed budget using the Excel spreadsheet pages posted at: www.nj.gov/education/grants/entitlement/nclb/. The school budget page is completed to show how Title I funds for the school will be spent and must match the activities identified in the Unified Plan.

NCLB Requirements (§1116) and General Information for SINIs

NCLB requires that every school in need of improvement develop a school plan or revise its existing one to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, so that greater numbers of students achieve proficiency in the areas of language arts literacy and mathematics. Schools in need of improvement must develop a new plan or revise an existing one, no later than three months after the school has been identified. §200.41

NCLB Requirements (§1114) and General Information for Title I Schoolwide Programs

NCLB legislation allows a school with 40% or more poverty to develop a schoolwide plan. Funds from other federal, state, and local sources may be consolidated in order to upgrade the entire educational program of this school. Information on the requirements of schoolwide programs are explained in detail in the *NCLB Reference Manual*. Schools applying for schoolwide status must take a planning year and submit the Title I Unified Plan.

The *NCLB* final regulations state that “A school operating a schoolwide program must annually evaluate the implementation of, and the results achieved by, the schoolwide program and revise the plan as necessary based on the results of the evaluation to ensure continuous improvement of students in the school.” (67 FR 71710) The Title I Unified Plan will fulfill this requirement.

Essential Elements of the Title I Unified Plan

Schools in need of improvement and Title I schools operating approved schoolwide programs must complete/update the Unified Plan and submit it with the *NCLB*

Consolidated Application. The purpose of the plan is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. By providing a framework for analyzing problems and addressing instructional issues, the plan will assist schools in their effort to increase student proficiency levels. The Unified Plan for each school must be comprehensive, highly structured, and focused on instruction. All elements in the plan must be completed.

If applicable, include in the development of the plan, the recommendations of the CAPA Report for the school. All of the agreed upon prioritized recommendations for the school must be included in the plan.

Unified Plan Committee

The district and school must consult with parents, school staff, and others, such as outside experts from institutes of higher education and federal and state-funded technical assistance centers, in reviewing, developing, or revising the Title I Unified Plan. **The plan must be peer reviewed and documented as such.**

Complete the information requested about the committee and the peer reviewers requested on the Unified Plan template. *A suggested peer review process is provided on the Title I Web site at www.nj.gov/education/title1/program/.*

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

The continuous needs assessment process must be conducted *annually* in the context of the achievement of the previous year's performance targets. The evaluation of the previously implemented programs must be considered in this process. Schools must use the best available data for the needs assessment. Focus must be directed to underperforming student subgroups. If applicable, include information from the CAPA Report and AYP results. The needs assessment also should be used to help determine how SIA funds will be expended.

Plan Components

Plan components for the new school year must draw on the analyses of the school's data, evaluation of the current programs, and student progress. Performance targets must be measurable and quantitative. Programs must be research based.

SINI Requirements

SINIs must continue to offer school choice and SES to parents.

Corrective Action

SINIs in Year 4 must complete the Corrective Action section of the Unified Plan. The plan must specify how the district will work with School Support Teams to identify the school for one of the following corrective actions:

- Provide, for all relevant staff, appropriate, scientifically research-based professional development that is likely to improve academic achievement of low-performing students;
- Institute a new curriculum grounded in scientifically based research and provide appropriate professional development to support its implementation;

- Extend the length of the school year or school day;
- Replace the school staff who are deemed relevant to the school not making adequate progress;
- Significantly decrease management authority at the school;
- Restructure the internal organization of the school; or
- Appoint one or more outside experts to advise the school: (1) how to revise and strengthen the improvement plan it created while in school improvement status; and (2) how to address the specific issues underlying the school's continued inability to make AYP. §1116(b)(7)(C); §200.42

Restructuring

For schools going into Year 5, Planning for Restructuring, the district's alternative governance option for restructuring must be identified in the Unified Plan along with the district's support plan. **(A separate School Restructuring Plan must be submitted for review and approval under separate cover within an alternate time frame.)** For purposes of the Title I Unified Plan, the district should anticipate which option might be pursued. The options include the following:

1. Implement any major restructuring of the school's governance that is consistent with the principles of restructuring as set forth in the *No Child Left Behind Act*.
2. Re-open the school as a public charter school as defined by state statute and regulation (N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A).
3. Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's inability to make adequate progress (consistent with existing contractual provisions and applicable statutory protections in Title 18A).

District Components of the Title I Unified Plan

The District Components of the Title I Unified Plan detail efforts at the district level to assist identified schools in need of improvement. Analyzing results from state assessments and other relevant data is crucial as districts develop their plan to assist schools in need of improvement. Also, the district must examine instructional, organizational, governance, or systemic factors at the district level and the status of its curriculum alignment efforts. Additional factors to be assessed include district policies and procedures, communications with schools and teachers, budgets and resource allocation, and technical assistance. The district must specify the scientifically based strategies used to strengthen instruction, professional development activities, and parent involvement activities.

NCLB §1116 requires districts to provide consultation and technical assistance to identified Title I schools in need of improvement during the development, implementation, and revision of each school's Unified Plan. The district must increase assistance to improve the schools identified and provide activities and direction for each Title I school in need of improvement. The district must support identified schools and provide, or provide for, technical assistance.

The Unified Plan also must include an analysis of the previous Unified Plan's improvement elements and their impact on student achievement along with technical

assistance that is needed by the NJDOE to assist with the implementation of the new plan.

If applicable, include in the development of the plan the recommendations of the CAPA Report for the schools that were reviewed. All of the agreed-upon prioritized recommendations for the district must be included in the plan.

In addition to completing the district components of the plan, the district must continue to ensure that all students in schools identified for corrective action or restructuring have the option to transfer, continue to ensure that eligible students have access to supplemental educational services, and continue to provide, or provide for, technical assistance to SINIs.

SIA, Part A

The school improvement grant called SIA, Part A provides additional funds for schools in need of improvement to augment the programs outlined in the Unified Plan. These funds can be used to expand the programs and services being funded by Title I, Part A or can help the school address additional priority problems the school identified in their needs assessment.

Recipients of SIA, Part A funds must file an amendment to their *NCLB* Application and complete the screens under the SIA, Part A Application Section in addition to completing the resource allocation information for the SIA, Part A section of the Unified Plan. The revised Unified Plan must be uploaded to the *NCLB* Application on the EWEG system.

TITLE I UNIFIED PLAN SCHOOL NEEDS ASSESSMENT/PROGRAM PLAN

Note:

A School Needs Assessment, Program/Activity Plan, and Title I Unified Plan must be completed for **each** Title I school in need of improvement (SINI) and school operating an approved Title I schoolwide program. The Unified Plan template is posted on the Grants Web site at: www.nj.gov/education/grants/entitlement/nclb/. Completed plans must be uploaded to the *NCLB* Application via the Title I Unified Plan tab. Individual forms including a School Needs Assessment, Actual Performance Targets Achieved, Description of Selected Priority Problems, and School Program/Activity Plan must be submitted as part of the Unified Plan.

The continuous needs assessment process must be conducted *annually* in the context of the achievement of the previous year's performance targets. The evaluation of the previously implemented programs funded under *NCLB* must be considered in this process. Districts must use the best available data for the needs assessment. Focus must be directed to underperforming subgroups within the district. If applicable, include information from the CAPA Report and AYP results for schools within the district. The needs assessment should be used to help determine how SIA funds will be expended.

School Needs Assessment and Program/Activity Plan

Complete the **Needs Assessment** form identifying priority problems and target populations. **Note:** Title I requires that certain populations be considered in the needs assessment process on an annual basis. Therefore, districts receiving Title I funds **must** certify that Population Categories, items A-M were assessed this year. This provides an assurance that all required populations have been annually assessed.

1. Complete the **Actual Performance Targets Achieved** to help identify if last year's targets were achieved. The actual outcomes must be considered during the continuous needs assessment process. Programs and activities would then be adjusted to address the changing needs within the school.
2. Select the priority problems to be addressed in this year's application (continuation of priority problems selected in the previous year or selection of additional/new priority problems). A detailed description of the selected priority problem(s) and populations are to be provided on the **Description of Selected Priority Problems Identified During the Needs Assessment** form.

The description should address the following:

- Target Population
- CAPA Findings
- AYP Indicator Missed

- Causes of Selected Priority Problem
- Areas to be Measured
- Measurement Tool
- Identification of Data Sources
- Other Relevant Information
- Person Responsible for Implementing Improvement

Examples of measurement areas are: state assessment data, other related data, disaggregated data, highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals, and professional development programs.

The analysis should also address the data and the needs in the context of each identified population. If applicable, include information from the CAPA Report.

All the problems identified in the School Needs Assessment must be addressed in the Title I Unified Plan. Only selected priority problems will be funded and described in the Program/Activity Plan.

Priority Problem Code(s) – Population Letter and Problem Number

Use the identifiers from the Needs Assessment: Population Categories (A-S) and the Needs Categories (1-66).

For example:

- Population Categories – economically disadvantaged is D
 - Needs Categories –Student Academic Needs–closing the achievement gap is 1
- These codes are to be transferred to column (1) of the Program Activity Plan.

3. Complete the **School Program/Activity Plan**. Select only the priority problems that will be addressed in this grant application. The letter/number code for each selected priority problem will be used on the School Program/Activity Plan.

The School Program/Activity Plan

- Summarizes the needs assessment and its populations and identified priority problem(s)
- Specifies the relationship to the Performance Goals and Indicators, which are listed in the *NCLB* Application under the Program Plan section
- Identifies the Accountability Measures (Baseline, Targets, Outcomes, Tool/Method)
- Specifies the scientifically based program(s) and the related activities used to address the selected priority problems
- Identifies which priority problems were noted during a CAPA review or tied to missed AYP indicators

Column 1: Enter the codes for each selected priority problem(s) described on the "*Description of Selected Priority Problem Identified During the Needs Assessment.*"

Column 2: Using one or more of the five USDE Performance Goals, select one or more of the performance indicators to be measured that apply - USDE or LEA derived. Enter the codes for the USDE performance goals and the USDE and/or LEA derived performance indicators (i.e., 1.1; 3.2).

Column 3: Identify baseline data and performance targets/measurements of achievement/success for each priority problem listed in column (1) for the previous year.

Column 4: Identify Actual Outcomes from the previous year. A separate form representing this column is included in the Unified Plan template. Tools/methods that were identified to measure and collect this information on performance targets must be used. Districts are encouraged to use the best available data.

Examples of such tools/methods are: state assessments, local assessment data, attendance, discipline, promotion trends, instruction time, student/teacher relationships, focus groups, surveys, experimental control designs, socialization, teacher retention/job satisfaction, teacher qualifications, grades, classroom observations, standardized tests, portfolios, statistical evidence, state assessment data, and disaggregated data.

Column 5: Identify the tool/method by which success in reaching the performance target will be measured. See examples of measurement tools listed above.

Column 6: Before continuing to implement activities that were federally funded in the previous year, districts/schools must determine their success in achieving the performance targets. The results of the evaluation must be used to refine, improve, strengthen, discontinue or replace the program.

- List the scientifically based program using letters A, B, C, etc. (A list of programs and strategies is provided in the *NCLB* Application under the Allowable Uses tab.)
- List the activities that will be used to address each selected priority problem(s) identified in column (1). Number each activity sequentially (i.e., 1, 2, 3 ...) under each scientifically based program. (The definition of scientifically based research (*NCLB* §9191) can be found in the *NCLB Reference Manual*.)

Column 7: If the priority problem was cited as a finding or recommendation in a CAPA report, indicate the CAPA standard number(s) and recommendation number(s) from the CAPA Summary Report. CAPA findings are likely related to identified priority problems. Activities should complement the CAPA recommendations.

CAPA recommendations for the school are contained within each school's CAPA Summary Report. Schools are required to incorporate the recommendations from the CAPA Summary Report that were prioritized during the CAPA prioritization meeting and that will be funded using federal resources.

Column 8: If an AYP indicator was missed, this should be noted in this column. Districts should consider funding priority problems relating to missed indicators. Example: Special Ed.-Math.