

TITLE I UNIFIED PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Schools operating approved Title I schoolwide programs or applying for schoolwide status
- Schools in need of improvement (SINIs)
- District supporting SINIs

There are also elements for schools receiving SIA, Part A and SIA, Part G awards.

SINIs in Year 3 and above must complete the Action Planning forms that are included in the Unified Plan template.

Note: Starting in the 2009-2010 school year, districts in need of improvement (DINIs) must complete a separate plan.

When the programs/activities for 2010 are identified, the following schools must complete the school budget pages to show how Title I funds for the school will be spent:

- Targeted assistance schools in need of improvement
- Schools that operate schoolwide programs that do NOT blend funds
- Schools that receive an SIA, Part A award
- Schools that receive an SIA, Part G award

The budget pages include a Budget Summary form and Budget Detail forms A through F. All budget forms and the Unified Plan template are available on the NJDOE Web site at www.nj.gov/education/grants/entitlement/nclb/. These documents must be submitted with the NCLB Consolidated Application. They are uploaded via the EWEG system using the Title I Unified Plan screen under the Title I Program Specific tab. The Unified Plan Verification screen must be completed after all required plans are uploaded.

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 submit a schoolwide plan for approval. 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 schools 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 to the NJDOE for review and approval. The Application to

Operate a Title I Schoolwide Program document must also be completed and submitted to the Office of Student Achievement and Accountability.

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.

All schoolwide components are incorporated into the Title I Unified Plan. Schools newly applying for schoolwide status must follow the schoolwide approval process, which includes a planning year, completion of the Unified Plan, and submission of additional documentation as required in the Application to Operate a Title I Schoolwide Program.

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. With input from the committee, the school’s vision statement and mission must be developed.

The steps in the planning process are implemented to develop the annual school plan using the Unified Plan template. When the plan is completed, it must be **peer reviewed and documented as such**. Each plan must go through a peer review process. A suggested process is provided on the Title I Web site at www.nj.gov/education/title1/program/.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

A continuous needs assessment process must be conducted *annually* in the context of the achievement of the previous year’s performance targets and the actual outcomes. The evaluation of the previously implemented programs must be considered in this process. Districts must use the best available data for the needs assessment. Data may be obtained from state assessments, local or commercial assessments, attendance and discipline records, promotion trends, focus groups, and surveys, among others. 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.

Essential Elements of the Title I Unified Plan

The purpose of the plan is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. By providing a framework for analyzing problems, evaluating existing programs, and addressing instructional issues, the plan will assist schools in their effort to increase student proficiency levels. The Unified Plan for each school should be comprehensive, highly structured, and focused on instruction. Specifically, the plan must include measurable goals and address the following elements:

- Academic Achievement
 - Core academic subjects and the strategies used to teach them

- Extended day/year programs
- Professional development
- Highly Qualified Staff
- Mentoring Programs
- Parent involvement
- Technical Assistance*
- District Support Components
- Resource Allocation
- Corrective Action Components
- Restructuring Components
- SIA Part A Elements
- SIA Part G Elements

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.

*Technical Assistance is support offered to the school in any form necessary. It can include the development of policies, procedures and evaluation instruments, data analysis, coaching, program planning, budgeting, and the provision of specialized information. Assistance may be offered directly by district staff, the NJDOE or an outside consultant.

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 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 to determine factors that are contributing to the school's improvement status. 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 how it will support the school's scientifically based strategies for strengthening instruction, extended day and extended year programs, parent involvement activities, and professional development.

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 must also 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 the school has received a CAPA review, include all prioritized *district* recommendations 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 EWEG NCLB Application and complete the screens under the SIA, Part A tab in addition to completing the SIA, Part A section of the Unified Plan. The revised Unified Plan must be uploaded to EWEG.

Note: Excel budget pages must also be uploaded for SIA, Part A funds.

SIA, Part G

SIA, Part G funds are offered to specific schools in need of improvement to extend or expand the programs and services described in the school's Unified Plan that addressed the priority problems identified in the needs assessment.

Districts must also implement the following federal strategies:

1. Provide customized technical assistance and/or professional development that is designed to build the capacity of district and school staff to improve schools and is informed by student achievement and other outcome-related measures.
2. Utilize research-based strategies or practices to change instructional practice to address the academic achievement problems that caused the school to be identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.
3. Create partnerships among the NJDOE, district, and other entities for the purpose of delivering technical assistance, professional development, and management advice.
4. Implement other strategies determined by the NJDOE or district, as appropriate, for which data indicate the strategy is likely to result in improved teaching and learning in schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

SIA, Part G recipients must file an amendment to their EWEG NCLB Application and complete the screens under the SIA, Part G tab in addition to completing the SIA, Part G section of the Unified Plan. The revised Unified Plan must be uploaded to EWEG.

Note: Excel budget pages must also be uploaded for SIA, Part G funds.