Date: November 24, 2021
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route to: Title I Directors, Principals of Title I Targeted Assistance Schools
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services
Deadline: December 22, 2021

Title I Targeted Assistance Schools – Process to Transition to Schoolwide Programs

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I-funded schools currently operating targeted assistance programs have the option to transition to Title I schoolwide programs. Transitioning to a Title I schoolwide program allows a district to use Title I funds to improve academic achievement and enables a school to more effectively leverage Federal funds to upgrade its entire educational program.

Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, any school that plans to transition to a Title I schoolwide program (as outlined on p.4 of the Title I Schoolwide Transition Process) must notify the NJDOE by completing the 2022-2023 Application of Intent to Operate a Title I Schoolwide Program by Wednesday, December 22, 2021. This application will be submitted electronically to the Office of Supplemental Educational Programs via the following link 2022-2023 Schoolwide Intent to Operate Application.

Note: Schools already approved to operate a Title I schoolwide program prior to the 2022-2023 school year do not need to re-apply annually.

Background
The following Title I-funded targeted assistance schools may elect to transition to a Title I schoolwide program for the 2022-2023 school year:

- Title I targeted assistance schools with less than 40-percent poverty, for which the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) grants an approved waiver (now completed and approved as part of the Intent to Operate Application process); and
- Title I targeted assistance schools that meet the 40-percent poverty requirement.

In accordance with ESEA section 1114 a school operating a Title I targeted assistance program ESEA section 1115 that elects to transition to a Title I schoolwide program must:

- Conduct at least one year of planning for a transition to a schoolwide program, which may be waived if the school previously has been operating under a strategic plan or improvement plan that addressed the entire school;
- Consult with all relevant school stakeholder groups; and
- Submit an Annual School Plan (ASP) that addresses the following required components:
  1. A Comprehensive Needs Assessment of the entire school;
  2. Strategies to address school needs, including a description of how such strategies will:
     a. Provide opportunities for all children, including each subgroup of students, as defined in ESEA §1111(c)(2), to meet the challenging State academic standards;
     b. 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

c. Address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of low-achieving students who are at risk of not meeting the challenging State academic standards, through various support activities; and

3. An annual evaluation of the implemented programs and services as articulated in the ASP.

**Schoolwide Poverty Percentage Waiver Request**
Schools with less than 40-percent poverty rates that are interested in transitioning to a Title I schoolwide program for the 2022-2023 school year must indicate that they will require a waiver on the Application of Intent to Operate a Title I schoolwide Program.

**Schoolwide Program Guidance**
To assist schools with the schoolwide transition process, the Office of Supplemental Educational Programs, has created a “Title I Schoolwide Transition Process” guide.

Additional details on Title I schoolwide programs are provided in the following guidance document from the United States Department of Education (USED) Supporting School Reform by Leveraging Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program. This guidance highlights advantages and flexibilities inherent in a Title I schoolwide program.

**Contact Information**
For questions about transitioning to a Title I schoolwide program, please email the Title I Schoolwide account at schoolwide@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
  NJDOE Staff
  Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
  Garden State Coalition of Schools
  NJ LEE Group