

## Local Title I Planning for Schools and Districts in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):

*Guidance for Local Superintendents and School Board Members and their potential allies at the local level*

**Purpose:** To outline best practices for planning for use of Title I funds at the district and school level

### What the Law Requires:

Section 1112 Local Educational Agency (LEA) Plans detail Title I plan requirements. As we note in our Stakeholder Engagement guidance, ESSA names the following groups to be consulted for local Title I planning:

Teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, charter school leaders (in a local educational agency that has charter schools), administrators (including administrators of programs described in other parts of this title), other appropriate school personnel, and parents.

Here are required Title I plan provisions particularly relevant to community schools:

‘(b) PLAN PROVISIONS. —To ensure that all children receive a high-quality education, and to close the achievement gap between children meeting the challenging State academic standards and those children who are not meeting such standards, each local educational agency plan shall describe— “(1) how the local educational agency will monitor students’ progress in meeting the challenging State academic standards by — “(A) developing and implementing a **well-rounded program of instruction** to meet the academic needs of all students; ‘(B) **identifying students who may be at risk** for academic failure; (C) **providing additional educational assistance to individual students** the local educational agency or school determines need help in meeting the challenging State academic standards; and ‘(D) identifying and implementing **instructional and other strategies intended to strengthen academic programs and improve school conditions for student learning**;

(11) how the local educational agency will support efforts to **reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, which may include identifying and supporting schools with high rates of discipline** ... how such agency will support programs that coordinate and integrate — “(A) academic and career and technical education content through coordinated instructional strategies, that may incorporate **experiential learning opportunities** and promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations or industries in the State; and “(B) **work-based learning opportunities** that provide students in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit.

Section 1111 State Plans detail what both states and districts must include in annual report cards:

(viii) Information submitted by the State educational agency and each local educational agency in the State, in accordance with data collection conducted pursuant to section 203(c)(1) of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3413(c)(1)), on— “(I) **measures of school quality, climate, and safety, including rates of in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, chronic absenteeism (including both excused and unexcused absences), incidences of violence, including bullying and harassment**

### What it Means:

- LEA’s must go beyond academic proficiency and look to create enriching learning opportunities for students, including a well-rounded program of instruction, experiential learning, and work-based learning. They must also work to address school climate, school discipline, and chronic absenteeism.
- LEA’s must coordinate and integrate Title I services with other educational services at the LEA or individual school level, including services for English learners, children with disabilities, migratory children, and others.
- Results-focused school-community partnerships that are fundamental to community schools can help to address these measures and facilitate coordination of efforts.



**What we advocate:** From the community schools perspective we believe that community representatives should be included in the local Title I planning process since they bring assets and expertise to bear on the academic and non-academic measures LEA's are required to address.

#### **Take Action-Local Superintendents and School Boards:**

- 1) **Convene a "Dream Team" of school and community stakeholders for your planning process:** School stakeholders should include teachers, principals, specialized instructional support personnel and other school-based staff, the local teacher's union, and young people, including recent high school graduates and "disconnected" youth who have important perspectives. Community partners should include local government, United Ways, community-based organizations, higher education, philanthropy, private sector, faith-based institutions, youth organizing groups, and others. Invite a mix of partners that are already involved with schools, and that you want to get involved; and that engage the range of student demographics in your district.
- 2) **Embed as a core component of your plan the strategic use of community partnerships** to achieve the results you seek and the new requirements in the law. Consider using the [Coalition's results framework](#) to organize your results and corresponding partnerships you seek.
- 3) **Adopt the community school strategy for schoolwide programs.** The schoolwide program as described in ESSA aligns extremely well with the community schools strategy to recognize the importance of addressing student needs beyond academics to include health, social and emotional needs, and the value of mobilizing community partners to address these needs that leads to greater student success. Designate a coordinator in these schools to coordinate partnerships.
- 4) **Ensure that consultation of parents/families and community partners in the planning process is robust and sustained.** Make this engagement ongoing, not just for ESSA planning. Convene this group of parent/family and community stakeholders regularly to get input and feedback on local Title I implementation, using a [collaborative leadership structure](#) practiced in successful community school initiatives across the country.

#### **Take Action-Community Partners:**

- 1) **Contact your local superintendent and school board now.** Introduce yourself and how you work with schools, and ask to set up a meeting to discuss the role of community partners in ESSA local Title I planning and implementation.
- 2) **Connect with other organizations in your district that play a leading role in community-school partnerships** with whom you already have relationships. These organizations can include non-profits like United Ways, and Boys and Girls Clubs; higher education institutions; businesses and faith-based institutions; and local government. Reach out to any existing local community partner coalitions as well. Share your goal of getting community voice into local ESSA Title I planning and implementation, and how this will help build on and expand the great work you're doing now. Build an alliance to inform and influence Title I planning.
- 3) **Share with your superintendent the success you're seeing at the school level through results-focused school-community partnerships.** Use that success to make the case for incorporating community partnerships deeply into local Title I plans.
- 4) **Stress that the district's engagement of parents and community partners should occur not just for the ESSA planning process, but continuously through ESSA implementation.** This continuous engagement will ensure the full impact of this partnership, and will build trust and capacity throughout the district.

#### **Resources:**

- [Engaging All Leaders Infographic](#), [Community Schools Collaborative Leadership Structure Graphic](#)