

Serving Schools with Title I Funds

A Guide for Planning Ahead: Updated for ESSA



Overview

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides federal dollars to schools to help students at risk of not meeting the Colorado English Language Proficiency (CELP) and Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). Current appropriations do not provide enough money to serve all eligible children; therefore, the intent of the law is to concentrate the funds in schools with the highest percentages of poverty and to provide sufficient funds to make a difference in the academic performance of these students.

This fact sheet provides information on the steps, data elements, and program requirements involved in serving schools with Title I funds in a compliant and impactful manner.

Poverty Measures

Title I schools must be served in rank order by poverty percentage unless they reside in a district with less than 1,000 students enrolled or with only one school per grade span. There are different measures of poverty that can be used when determining rank order. The selected poverty measure is what will be used to determine the number of low-income students at district schools and the proportionate share for eligible non-public schools. The following provide a brief description of each measure:

Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL)

The number and percentage of students in the school and district who are reported through Student October Count as eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch. This is automatically calculated in the ESEA Consolidated Application when selecting this poverty measure.

Free Lunch (FL)

The number and percentage of students in the school and district who are reported through Student October Count as eligible to receive Free Lunch. This is automatically calculated in the ESEA Consolidated Application when selecting this poverty measure.

Free and Reduced Price Lunch & Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

The number and percentage of students in the school and district who are reported through Student October Count as eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch in schools that are participating in the Community Eligibility Provision. This poverty data will need to be manually entered by the LEA in the school profiles section of the ESEA Consolidated Application.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) or Colorado Works

The number and percentage of students in the school and district who are eligible to participate in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, known in Colorado as Colorado Works, a federal program that provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children. Children in a household eligible to participate in Colorado Works may be classified as categorically eligible for free meals. This poverty data will need to be manually entered by the LEA in the school profiles section of the ESEA Consolidated Application.

Medicaid or Health First Colorado

The number and percentage of students in the school and district who are eligible to participate in Medicaid, known in Colorado as Health First Colorado. In order to be eligible for Colorado's Medicaid Program, children must be between the ages of 0 and 18. For those who do not qualify for Health First Colorado, Colorado offers children additional



coverage through a special program called Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+). The income requirements for Health First Colorado and CHP+ are based off the Modified Gross Adjusted Income system. This poverty data will need to be manually entered by the LEA in the school profiles section of the ESEA Consolidated Application.

US Census Data

The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates program (SAIPE) annually updates school district poverty estimates to support the administration and allocation of Title I funding. These data include estimates of total number of children ages 5 to 17 in families in poverty. SAIPE school district estimates are developed from model-based county estimates and inputs from the decennial census and federal tax information. This poverty data will need to be manually entered by the LEA in the school profiles section of the ESEA Consolidated Application.

Methods for Serving

The table below details the different methods for serving schools with Title I funds based on the selected poverty measure.

Method	Who Must Be Served	Who May Be Served	Other Considerations
Total District Enrollment less than 1,000 students	n/a	Any school may be served	District enrollment count must be less than 1,000 students.
One School per Grade Span	n/a	Any school may be served	District must have no more than one school in each grade span (Elementary, Middle, High).
Percentage District Wide	Schools whose poverty rate is above 75%*	Schools whose poverty rate is above the district's poverty rate	Schools must be served in rank order regardless of grade span.
35% Rule District Wide	Schools whose poverty rate is above 75%*	Schools whose poverty rate is above 35%	Schools must be served in rank order regardless of grade span.
Grade Span Grouping + District Wide Percentage	Schools whose poverty rate is above 75%* (regardless of grade span)	Schools within the prioritized grade span(s) whose poverty rate is above the district's poverty rate	A grade span must be prioritized (can be more than one) and schools must be served in rank order within the prioritized grade span(s)
Grade Span Grouping + Group Wide Percentage	Schools whose poverty rate is above 75%* (regardless of grade span)	Schools within the prioritized grade span(s) whose poverty rate is above that of the applicable grade span	A grade span must be prioritized (can be more than one) and schools must be served in rank order within the prioritized grade span(s)
Grade Span Grouping + 35% Rule	Schools whose poverty rate is above 75%* (regardless of grade span)	Schools within the prioritized grade span(s) whose poverty rate is above 35%	A grade span must be prioritized (can be more than one) and schools must be served in rank order within the prioritized grade span(s)

*The threshold is lowered to 50% for high schools if the LEA chooses to utilize the optional 50% rule allowed under ESSA.



Guiding Questions

- Has the current method for serving schools resulted in some schools needs not being met?
- Should the LEA consider using a new method? Why or why not?
- Would selecting a different method result in new schools that have high needs becoming eligible that were not previously eligible? Would any schools become ineligible?

Determining Title I, Part A School Eligibility and Per Pupil Allocations

An LEA must rank its schools above the 75 percent poverty threshold without regard to grade span and serve those schools in rank order of poverty before it serves any schools at or below the 75 percent poverty threshold. Under the new ESSA exception, an LEA may, but is not required to, continue to serve (in rank order of poverty) high schools with poverty percentages between 50 and 75 percent before it either serves other schools with a poverty percentage of 75 percent or below or begins to rank and serve schools by grade span. In other words, an LEA may serve high schools with 50 percent or more poverty before it serves any elementary or middle schools with a poverty rate of 75 percent or less. However, if an LEA chooses to use the 50 percent rule for high schools, all high schools above 50 percent poverty must be served before moving to schools below 75 percent poverty.

LEAs may, but are not required to, allocate the same per pupil allocation (PPA) to each school. However, if the PPA varies at each school, the LEA must allocate a higher PPA to schools with higher poverty rates than it allocates to schools with lower poverty rates. The PPA is calculated by dividing the school allocation (minus any required set-aside funds, such as Parent Activities) by the number of low income students in the school.

An LEA that opts to serve schools below 75 percent poverty using grade span groupings may determine different per-child amounts for different grade spans so long as those amounts do not exceed the amount allocated to any area or school above 75 percent poverty. Per-child amounts within grade spans also may vary, as long as the LEA allocates higher per-child amounts to schools with higher poverty rates than it allocates to those with lower poverty rates.



Process to Determine Initial Allocations within Rank Order

Step	Description	Considerations
1	Determine the poverty measure to be used for determining low income in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The poverty measure chosen must be consistent across the district.
2	<p>Determine amount available to be allocated to schools.</p> <p>Begin with the total allocation, then determine the amount of set asides to be deducted. The amount remaining is the amount available to be allocated to schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May use estimated allocation for early planning. Allocations are prepopulated in the ARAC section of the ESEA Consolidated Application when available.
3	Rank order all schools in the district by percentage of low-income students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FRL and FL are automatically calculated in the ESEA Consolidated Application. Locations are sorted in rank order on the School Profiles page. CEP, TANF, Medicaid, and US Census poverty data will need to be manually entered by the LEA in the school profiles section of the ESEA Consolidated Application.
4	<p>Determine the amount of funding for each school served.</p> <p>An LEA may determine a baseline PPA by dividing the total available Title I funds (after set-asides) by the total number of low-income students in the LEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PPA amount for a higher poverty school must be more than or equal to that of a lower poverty school. If an LEA has selected grade span grouping as the method for serving schools, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools in the prioritized grade span that are below 75% poverty can all receive the same PPA. The LEA can choose to fund grade spans at different PPAs. If a school whose poverty rate is below 35% is served, all schools being served must receive a PPA that is equal to or greater than 125% of the PPA the LEA receives. This amount can be determined using the following formula: $(\text{LEA allocation} / \text{total number of low-income students}) * 1.25$.
5	Allocate to schools with over 75% poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This includes high schools over 50% if the LEA is utilizing the new 50% rule under ESSA.
6	After schools with 75% poverty or above are served, determine whether to group the remaining schools into grade span groupings or the district as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to considerations in Step 4.
7	<p>Check your work. Calculate the PPA that has been awarded to each school.</p> <p>The PPA is determined by dividing the school allocation (minus any required set-aside funds, such as Parent Activities) by the number of low income students in the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be automatically calculated in the Consolidated Application for ESEA Funds after funds are budgeted to the school. The per-pupil amount, not the total school allocation, is the determinant of the rank order of the school.