



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

January 27, 2026

MEMORANDUM TO STATE TITLE I DIRECTORS

***Subject: Release of 2024 Census Data for Local Educational Agencies for Fiscal Year 2026
Title I, Part A Allocations***

Please find attached tables that show the 2024 population and poverty estimates for the local educational agencies (LEAs) in your State and the State-level estimates, which the United States Census Bureau (Census Bureau) released on January 27, 2026. These data are also available at: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html>.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) will use the 2024 Census data to calculate fiscal year 2026 (school year (SY) 2026–2027) allocations under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).¹ I am providing these data to enable your State educational agency (SEA) to:

- Review the Census data, verify the accuracy of the school district boundary survey on which the data are based, and share the data with LEAs in your State; and
- Estimate your LEAs' eligibility and allocations for the four Title I, Part A formulas.

Reviewing the Census data

The 2024 Census data estimates are based on a statistical model that incorporates information from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, administrative records taken from Federal income tax returns and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the 2020 decennial Census, updates to population estimates that the Census Bureau may have completed since the 2020 decennial census, data on Supplemental Security Income recipients, and economic data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Challenge Period Provided by the Census Bureau

Similar to prior years, the Census Bureau is providing a challenge period for SEAs and LEAs to review the 2024 LEA poverty and population data for certain non-statistical errors. These errors are those that the Census Bureau may have made in: (1) processing input data or running the estimation models/programs; or (2) in preparing or processing information to define geographic boundaries (e.g., school district boundaries).

¹ ED will also use the 2024 Census data to calculate fiscal year 2026 (SY 2026-2027) Title II, Part A (Title II) State allocations and States will use the data to calculate Title II LEA allocations.

This challenge period ends on ***March 27, 2026***. Based on the two factors outlined in the previous paragraph, an SEA or LEA official may contact the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Branch at the Census Bureau for further information about how to challenge these data.

To obtain information on the process an SEA or LEA needs to follow in order to challenge these data, please contact the SAIPE Branch at:

(301) 763-3193 or
E-mail: sehsd.saipe@census.gov

When sending an e-mail, please include your name, mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address, and organization affiliation. More information and guidance concerning the Census Bureau's challenge procedures is available at:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about/contact/challenges.html>

Information about the data sources and the methodology used to prepare these data is available at:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about.html>

List of LEAs

The list of LEAs used for the 2024 Census estimates is based on the SY 2024–2025 school district boundary survey conducted by the Census Bureau with the help of the district mapping coordinator in your State. The LEAs on this list include only “regular” LEAs that have geographic boundaries. The list does not include, for example, special school districts that a State recognizes as LEAs, such as charter schools or regional vocational education districts. These LEAs do not require “corrections” to the Census Bureau’s boundary survey data; rather, the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 200.72 require an SEA to adjust the SY 2026–2027 Title I, Part A LEA allocations that ED determines in order to accommodate new or special LEAs not included on the Census Bureau’s SY 2024–2025 list.

Estimating LEAs’ eligibility and allocations for Title I, Part A

The table attached to this memorandum—the estimated number of related children ages 5–17 in families in poverty, the estimated total ages 5 to 17 population, and the estimated total resident population for each LEA—will enable you to determine which LEAs on this list are potentially eligible for funds under the Basic, Concentration, Targeted, and Education Finance Incentive Grants allocation formulas.² The Census poverty data do not include the other children counted in the formula, such as foster children and children in facilities for neglected children.

² The ESEA stipulates that to be eligible for a Basic Grant, an LEA must have at least 10 children counted under the Title I formula **and** the number of formula children must exceed two percent of the LEA’s ages 5 to 17 population. To be eligible for a Concentration Grant, an LEA must generally meet the Basic Grants eligibility criteria and have more than 6,500 formula children **or** the number of formula children must exceed 15 percent of the LEA’s ages 5 to 17 population. To qualify for Targeted Grants and Education Finance Incentive Grants, an LEA must have at least 10 formula children **and** that number must equal or exceed 5 percent of its ages 5 to 17 population.

This information will help you determine which LEAs are potentially eligible and enable LEAs to begin planning for the coming school year, particularly during the time before ED releases preliminary SY 2026–2027 allocations. In addition, considering the Title I, Part A hold-harmless provisions of the ESEA can help eligible LEAs plan for the coming school year. Specifically, an LEA can generally expect that its SY 2026–2027 Title I, Part A allocation under each formula calculated by ED will be at least 85, 90, or 95 percent of the prior year’s amount.

Additional Information

To further support LEAs’ planning, ED encourages the SEA to inform its LEAs as soon as possible if, after meeting the consultation requirements in section 1003A(a)(1) of the ESEA, the SEA intends to reserve up to three percent of its Title I, Part A allocation for Direct Student Services (DSS). See Step 4c on page 9 of ED’s ESEA fiscal guidance for information on reserving funds for DSS [available at: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/02/essaguidance160477-1.pdf>].

The attached table also shows which LEAs in your State have a total resident population under 20,000. This will enable you to explore whether to use the flexibility provided in the ESEA to use alternative poverty data, which must be approved in advance by ED, to redistribute LEA allocations determined by ED for those school districts that, based on the 2024 Census Bureau estimates, have a resident population under 20,000. Please contact us if you have questions about this flexibility.

I strongly encourage you to share this memorandum and attached table with your LEAs. If you have questions about SY 2026–2027 Title I, Part A allocations, please contact Andrew Lindsay (Andrew.Lindsay@ed.gov), Victoria Rosenboom (Victoria.Rosenboom@ed.gov), Todd Stephenson (Todd.Stephenson@ed.gov), and OESE.titlei-a@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patrick Rooney".

Patrick Rooney
Director, School Support and Accountability

Attachments