

Guidance on Operating a Title I After School Program in a Targeted Assistance School

Increasing the instructional time for students through an extended-day program is one approach that many schools are implementing to help them meet the challenging goals of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act.

This guidance is intended to provide clarification on issues that need to be reviewed by all districts offering an after school program paid with Title I funds in targeted assistance schools.

■ **Eligibility/Student Selection**

There are two ways that schools can determine which students are eligible to participate in a Title I after school program. First, the school could decide that all students who were eligible for Title I services during the regular school day are eligible for a Title I after school program since these students were already found to be eligible through a student selection process. A second option would be to set alternate criteria that students must meet in order to be eligible for a Title I after school program. The student selection process for both the regular school day and any alternate process chosen for an after program would need to include multiple criteria that are objective and educationally related. In a targeted assistance program, all students who participate in the after school program would need to meet the selection criteria that have been established by the local school district.

■ **Parent Permission**

Parents of all eligible students selected to participate must be informed that their child is eligible and parents must be given the opportunity to decline participation in the after school program.

■ **Caseload**

The caseload requirements for a Title I after school program should follow the same requirements for a Title I program operating during the regular school day. The average caseload for a Title I teacher during the regular school year is 25-35 students. However, that number is based on a full-day, full-week program, so adjustments should be made accordingly. It is strongly recommended that group sizes be kept small to have the greatest impact for students.

■ **Staff Requirements**

There is a little more flexibility regarding staff requirements in Title I after school and extended day programs because we realize it is often difficult to find staff willing to accept these positions in addition to their regular duties.

✓ **Teachers**

Districts/schools have two options available to them in hiring teachers for a Title I after school program:

1. A Title I after school program could be taught by personnel teaching within their area of licensure (i.e., the grade levels specified on the teaching license) which would not require the teacher to hold a Title I credential;
- or
2. A Title I after school program could be taught by personnel teaching within their Title I credential grade span. This option allows an elementary certified teacher (grades 1-6 or 1-8) to include kindergarten students through their elementary reading or math credential.

Unfortunately, the K-12 Substitute Teaching license does not qualify an individual to teach Title I

during the regular year, after school, or during a summer school program. The requirements for a K-12 Substitute Teaching license do not meet the highly qualified teacher definition and only allow an individual to substitute teach.

- ✓ **Aides/Paraprofessionals** – All aides/paraprofessionals hired for a Title I after school program must meet the Title I requirements as specified in the NCLB Act by holding a valid Title I aide/paraprofessional certificate of completion. An after school program staffed only by aides/paraprofessionals is not allowed. The school district must ensure that all aides/paraprofessionals are under the direct supervision of certified teachers and that their role is to provide instructional support. Two aide/paraprofessionals per every licensed teacher may be hired to work in a Title I after school program; a ratio higher than 1:2 does not support the concept of aides/paraprofessionals as instructional support only.
- **Approval Process**
School districts that intend to use their Title I funds for a Title I after school program must describe in detail their plans on the Federal Title Programs Consolidated Application. Districts that decide in the middle of a school year to offer a Title I after school program would need to do a budget revision and submit a description of their proposed program.
- **How to Get Reimbursed for After School Expenditures**
School districts claim reimbursement for after school expenditures in the same manner as regular Title I expenditures. All funds claimed must be on a reimbursement basis. Districts must submit a Request for Funds form (SFN 14660) to claim reimbursement.
- **Allowable Expenditures**
The guidelines on allowable expenditures for a Title I after school program follow the same regulations as the regular Title I program. A list of all allowable expenditures for a targeted assistance program can be accessed as part of the directions for completing the Consolidated Application for Federal Title programs at www.dpi.state.nd.us/forms/instr50847.pdf.
- **What Should Title I After School Services Look Like?**
Naturally, a Title I after school program is going to look different in each district. However, the following components should be a part of all Title I-funded programs:
 - ✓ The program’s main focus should be to raise the academic achievement of participating students.
 - ✓ Teachers should employ research-proven strategies (i.e., use different modes and methods of instruction, provide an environment rich in print, provide exposure to a variety of texts).
 - ✓ Group sizes should be kept small. The smaller the group size, the bigger impact Title I services will have on each student.
 - ✓ Services for students should be individualized as much as possible.
 - ✓ Research shows that parent involvement plays a huge part in the success of a child in school. Parent involvement should be a component of the after school program.
 - ✓ Student assessment and reporting the results of these assessments, including identifying the progress of the child in the program to parents should be included in the after school program.
- **Duration of Program**
The State Title I office does not have any requirements regarding the duration of a Title I after school program. It is a local decision as to how many weeks or hours per day the program entails.
- **Supplement/Supplant**
School districts must be careful not to violate the supplement/supplant regulation when planning Title I after school programs. Title I students must always be offered more or additional services than what are provided to the general population of students. Therefore, school districts cannot use Title I funds to provide an after

school program for Title I students and general funds or local funds to provide an after school program for non-Title I students, as that would be supplanting.

What a school district could do is offer an after school program for all students, Title I included. Then Title I funds could be used to add additional time for Title I students. For example, if the general funded after school program was offered for all students (including Title I) on Mondays and Wednesdays, Title I funds could be used to provide after school services to Title I eligible students on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well. Through this method it is very evident that Title I students are getting more instruction.

The main point to keep in mind in planning an after school program to be paid with Title I funds is that Title I students must always have access to the same services as all students, and then receive additional services not provided to non-Title I students.