



# The Title I Messenger!

*"Keeping YOU on Target!"*



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## In This Issue

- Month in Review
- Federal Update
- Comprehensive Success Review (CSR)
- Just Ask John
- Title I Toolkit

## Important Reminders

- Send Invitations to participate in Title I, Part A to private schools the LEA believes may have students attending who live within their feeder patterns
- Hold a second SES enrollment window if the LEA wants to request to reallocate unused funds.
- Periodically site visit SES providers
- Periodically site visit private school programs
- Ensure students participating in Choice and SES are tagged appropriately in eSchoolPlus

## Month in Review

- Thank you to those who attended our January technical assistance session focused on School Improvement and the critical role of LEAs. During the session we presented a variety of tools and resources that LEAs can use to effectively support the schools while they are under improvement. All of the materials from this session are posted on our [School Support Team Workshop Materials](#) website.
- We also want to thank those who attended the afternoon session on January 10 focused on Equitable Services. During the session we discussed stakeholder roles, funding issues, and best practices. All of the materials from this session are posted on our [Title I Coordinator's Meeting Materials](#) website.
- We are in the final stages of approving the last few 1003(a) School Improvement Grant applications. We want to thank all LEA staff that assisted eligible schools in preparing their applications and making any necessary revisions. School Principals with approved applications should have recently received their grant paperwork. Grantees receiving federal funds may re-code federal expenditures back to their grant submission date. Grantees with receiving state funds can re-code state expenditures back to July 1, 2011. LEAs should ensure the schools are using the funds throughout this school year as they were outlined in their grant submission.
- Title I Coordinators that were on-site monitored this fall by Title I staff should have received a follow up letter yesterday. If there are any issues of non-compliance, LEAs are asked to submit corrective actions by the end of February. Our team stands ready to provide answers to your questions or to provide additional technical assistance as needed. We are happy to report that most of our LEAs were in compliance in most areas monitored under Title I! If you were not part of this process this year and are interested in seeing what areas were monitored, we invite you to review the ESPES website where our Title I [on-site monitoring checklists](#) are posted. It is important that LEAs keep up with these requirements and maintain appropriate documentation/evidence at all times in the event of a future audit. We hope these checklists will help keep you on track!
- As you may remember from last year, we will be sending interim desk audit status reports early next month. This report summarizes all of the desk audits we have conducted so far during the 2011-2012 school year. If any findings remain, please

## Title I Calendar Updates

The Title I Annual Calendar has been updated with the following changes. A revised copy is available [here](#). Please print a new version.

- “Remind LEAs to submit Consolidated Application Final Report” added to LEA column in February

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submit appropriate corrective actions, if requested, by the due dates listed. Final desk audit compliance reports for the 2011-2012 school year will be completed and sent to you and your Superintendent or Board President (in the case of Charter schools) in July.

- We are working hard to prepare for the opening of the Consolidated Application for the 2012-2013 school year. Our goal is to have the grant open in March. A schedule of LEA Grant TA sessions will be provided shortly. We will also be offering additional regional Title I, Part A fiscal training sessions in April for Title I Coordinators and other appropriate LEA staff. Please see our [2011-2012 Monitoring and Technical Assistance Schedule](#) for more details. We will send an email in early March requesting RSVPs for the April sessions. Additional guidance will be provided at that time with regard to school improvement related requirements and the impact of our potential receipt of approval for our ESEA Flexibility application.
- In order to offer a third cohort of 1003(g) SIG grants, the state submitted an application to USDOE on January 9, 2012. Our timeline for opening the grant will depend on when or if our application is approved by USDOE. Our hope is to have the grant open in early March or within one month of receiving approval from USDOE. The list of eligible schools is available on our Accountability website [here](#). We will offer training for LEAs with eligible schools shortly before the grant is opened. Please stay tuned for more details.

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## Federal Update

- As most of you know, the Department intends to apply for ESEA Flexibility during the mid-February submission window. States that apply through this request may be granted flexibility in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. The ESEA Flexibility Request focuses on four principles for Improving Student Achievement and Increasing the Quality of Instruction. The principles are as follows: 1) College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students; 2) State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support; 3) Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership; and 4) Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden. Joanne Reihm and Susan Haberstroh have been assigned as Department leads on the development of our request. Drafts of the proposal and copies of the presentations given in town hall meetings in all three counties are available on the Department’s [ESEA Flexibility Website](#). If you have any comments or suggestions on any of the principles, please feel free to contact either Joanne Reihm [jreihm@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jreihm@doe.k12.de.us) or Susan Haberstroh [shaberstroh@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:shaberstroh@doe.k12.de.us).

- Department staff recently traveled to Seattle, Washington for the NASTID (National Association of State Title I Directors) meeting and attended a number of sessions covering such topics as SIG 1003(g), ESEA Flexibility, the status of Reauthorization efforts and Title I fiscal issues. One presentation by Rich Long is particularly worth noting. Some of you may be familiar with Rich from his role of tracking and reporting on Title I legislative and fiscal issues for NASTID. The key points from the presentation are summarized in the bullets below.
  - Since Title I and other education funding were largely protected from cuts in the recent economic downturn to the exclusion of other non-defense discretionary programs, it will likely not see immediate funding increases when the economy recovers. Funding will instead be directed to programs that were cut during the downturn to restore their funding first.
  - When the Super Committee (United States Congress Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction) failed to reach agreement on a long term deficit reduction plan, a deadline for sequestration was set. Sequestration is a mechanism through which automatic, across-the-board spending cuts will be made. If no further action is taken prior to the January 2, 2013 deadline, automatic cuts will take effect immediately during the middle of the 2012-13 school year. The cut for Title I is estimated to be between 8.5% and 9.5%. Other federal education programs would be similarly impacted. It would have an immediate impact of the funding available for staff salaries, instructional programs, professional development programs, etc. Rich indicated that it is possible that the issue might be addressed ahead of the deadline in the lame-duck session of Congress scheduled for November 15-December 14, 2012.
  - The debates regarding the continuation of the payroll tax reduction, the continuation of Bush-era tax cuts and changes in Medicare reimbursement rates for doctors, although not directly education issues could affect education funding. In short, any reduction in tax revenues will require off sets in spending to achieve deficit reduction.
  - There is a difference of opinion between the Obama Administration and the Republicans in Congress regarding federal education program funds. The Administration would like to continue to move further in the direction of competitive versus formula grants. They would also like to move a greater portion of the funds from K-12 education to early childhood education where they feel the return on the investment will be greater. The Republicans largely support keeping the formula-based structure arguing that is allows for more flexibility at the local level on how the funds are used.

## Comprehensive Success Review (CSR): Your Resource for Continuous Improvement

Creating effective change at any level can be a daunting process. It requires significant levels of leadership, aptitude, and resilience. We know that the more resources you have to support comprehensive reform, the more like you are to be an effective change leader in your LEA.

The Delaware Department of Education has been offering the Delaware Comprehensive Success Review (CSR) for a number of years as a tool to support districts and schools in their reform and improvement efforts. The CSR provides districts and schools research-based feedback for school success planning, and implementation of effective practices focused on improving outcomes for all students. This is accomplished through analysis and plan development based on a comprehensive review of student performance, school programming, and processes. The heart of the CSR process is the [rubric](#) that is used as an assessment tool to evaluate the school's strengths and opportunities for improvement. The rubric contains the following eight research-based elements:

- Leadership
- Budget and Resources
- Teacher and Student Class Assignment
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Assessment and Accountability
- Professional Development
- School Environment
- Parents and Community

The CSR process takes a commitment of two days of on-site reviews and scoring. During the first day, a team of trained state and LEA staff and outside experts review documents, conduct interviews with staff, parents and students, and conduct classroom observations using a variety of worksheets and written protocols. These documents are all available on the [CSR Website](#). During the second day, the team reviews and discusses evidence for each criterion under each research-based element. The team provides an assessment of where the school falls on the spectrum of continuous improvement under each criterion in the rubric. The team also provides comments outlining the school's strengths and challenges for each criterion and provides recommendations for improvement.

After all of the information has been compiled, the school's leadership is walked through all of the components of the report. Technical assistance is then provided to the school and the LEA to help them:

- Interpret the results;

- Prioritize their needs;
- Determine objectives, measures, and strategies;
- Develop project management maps, as appropriate;
- Analyzing their progress; and
- Connect the school to additional resources.

The success of the CSR process ultimately depends on how the school and the LEA commit to following up on the feedback they have received and the additional technical assistance that is offered. Below are quotes from school leaders who found significant value in the process and are seeing positive change as a result.

Nneka Jones, Principal of Carrie Downie Elementary School wrote, *“The Comprehensive Success Review (CSR) has been the turning point for Carrie Downie Elementary. The staff and I approached this process feeling vulnerable knowing that our school would soon be transparent; not knowing it would be the best thing that had ever happened to us. The CSR committee celebrated our successes and shared areas for growth in a positive manner. After, the School Leadership Team decided to choose the Top 5 areas of growth, trying to get the biggest bang. When working on our growth areas, we found that many of them were connected and we were able to accomplish much more, which drastically improved student achievement. If we had only had the CSR earlier... As an administrator, the CSR has me thinking outside of the box. I never assume. Data and documentation are my best friends. In addition, through this process I have learned to prioritize my daily duties and instruction is my top priority. Carrie Downie Elementary still has a long way to go, but the CSR has transformed our learning institution and our students are benefiting every day.”*

Jeff Menzer, Principal of William Penn High School wrote, *“The CSR Process provided the school leadership team with a comprehensive assessment of our practices, systems and culture for learning, that has served as the foundation for the improvement initiatives in our reform efforts.”*

DDOE is offering training for LEA staff that would like to be trained on conducting the CSR process. The next training is scheduled for the afternoon of February 16, 2012 at the Appoquinimink Training Center. **If you would like more information on this process or are interested in receiving training, please contact Brian Curtis at 302-857-3354 or at [bcurtis@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:bcurtis@doe.k12.de.us).**



**Just Ask John**

**Q:** Dear John,

I am interested in having a CSR conducted in some of my schools but I am afraid I won't have the money to do so. Do you have any idea how much it will cost?

- Thrifty in Sussex

**A:** Dear Thrifty,

The good news is the process isn't very costly. It does involve a time commitment on the part of your LEA staff. The actual cost will depend on how many outside experts you will need to support the process. Many LEAs have chosen to contract with the [Delaware Academy of School Leadership \(DASL\)](#) who has a number of staff trained in the CSR process. LEAs may use their Title I funds to pay for CSRs in their Title I schools, so you might want to consider setting aside some funds in your consolidated application next year.

- Just Ask John

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## Title I Toolkit – School Improvement

[Comprehensive Success Review website](#)

[Federal Non-regulatory Guidance on LEA and School Improvement](#)

[DDOE Website Resources for LEAs and Schools Under Improvement](#)

[Center on Innovation and Improvement](#)

[School Turnaround Learning Community](#)

[Doing What Works](#)

[National Center on Time and Learning](#)