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## Important Reminders

- Submit Summative Progress Update (Was Due Nov 1)
- Submit [comparability calculations](#) and process documents (Due Nov 30, if applicable)
- LEAs new to improvement must update LEA Success Plan to ensure [LEA improvement components](#) are included (Due Dec 1)
- Ensure [Peer Review](#) is conducted for Title I schools new to School Improvement (Yr 1) (Complete by Jan 13)
- Ensure students participating in Choice and SES are [tagged appropriately in eSchoolPlus](#)

## Month in Review

- Our office has been busy for the better part of this month reviewing School Improvement Grant applications from schools Under Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring. This year we are distributing funds to 66 schools across the state, 35 of which are Title I schools. Schools generally have wide latitude in the use of these funds as long as the school can demonstrate that the funds will be used to support school improvement activities. If the school is a Title I school, they must also demonstrate that they have met the [10 requirements for Title I Schoolwide Schools](#) and the [10 requirements for Title I Schools Under Improvement](#). Many of our LEAs spent significant time working with these schools in the development of their plans and your efforts really do show. We hope to have the majority of the grants finalized by the end of the month. If your schools have grants in revision, please see what you can do to help them make the revisions as soon as possible!
- Our team has also been busy on-site monitoring LEAs for Title I compliance. As you may know, we are participating in the Department's three year cycle of federal grant program monitoring. As such, a third of all LEAs in the state were monitored this year for Title I and a variety of other federal programs. 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 an audit. We hope these checklists will help keep you on track! On-site monitoring not only helps us ensure compliance, but also give us the opportunity to provide one-on-one technical assistance to LEAs. We also use the results of the monitoring to shape our future statewide technical assistance. Those who were monitored this year should expect feedback from the Department shortly, so stay tuned!
- If your LEA has schools identified as Under Improvement, please mark your calendars and plan to attend our January 10, 2012 technical assistance session at the Collette Building in Dover. The session will be held in Conference Room A and will begin at 8:30



## 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.

- “Prepare distribution list for LEA Improvement letters” added to LEA column in October

## Contact Information

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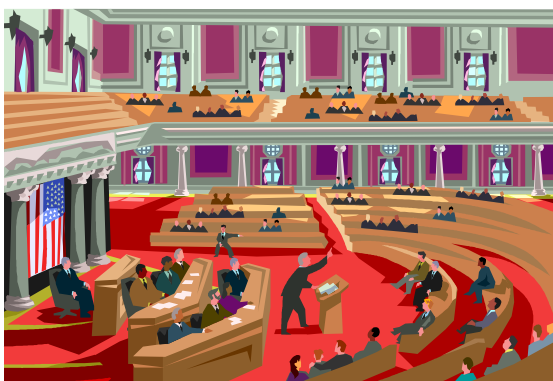
and end at 11:30. You are welcome to invite other appropriate LEA staff to attend this session as well. During this session we will focus on the critical role of LEAs. We will present a variety of tools and resources you can use to effectively support the schools while they are under improvement. Formal email invitations will be sent in early December.

- We are also preparing for a session the afternoon of January 10 at the Collette Center for Title I Coordinators in districts only. This session will focus on the Title I Coordinator’s role in managing the equitable services requirements under Title I, Part A. We will discuss stakeholder roles, funding issues, and best practices. The session will begin at 1:00 and end at 4:00. Formal email invitations will be sent in early December.

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## Federal Update

- As most of you know, the Department submitted its intent 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. They 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. The Department plans to share the Request draft with various statewide stakeholders groups. Opportunities to review the draft and request for comment will be coming out shortly. If you have any comments or suggestions on any of the principles or questions in the mean time, 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).



- We are also closely watching Congress and its efforts to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind law. There is much speculation regarding the potential of seeing anything passed before the next election. Right now we are watching a bill that was presented by Senator Harkin (D-Iowa) and Senator Enzi (R-WY) in mid-October. Their bill calls for significant changes in many areas such as state accountability systems, state

assessments, and the consolidation of many individual education grants, to name just a few. If you haven't done so already, we suggest subscribing to Education Week's "EdWeek Update: Daily News and Insights" a free e-newsletter that provides daily updates on this and many other important education stories. Visit [www.Edweek.org](http://www.Edweek.org) for more information. In addition, the National Title I Association continually updates a [Legislative & Policy Update](#) blog that you can visit or subscribe to for regular updates as the story unfolds.

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## Private school consultations complete. Now what?

After months of planning with private school officials, services for eligible private school students are finally underway. Now you can finally breathe a great big sigh of relief, right? You successfully navigated your way through calculating equitable services; your consolidated grant has officially been approved; you have had meaningful consultation meetings with private school officials to design a program that meet the needs of the participating students, teachers and families; and, services for students have officially begun. You *can* be thankful that the hardest parts are behind you!

Now it is time to turn your focus to some of the on-going responsibilities of managing equitable services. Whether your LEA delivers equitable services with LEA staff, or if the LEA contracts for the services, it is important to regularly monitor the delivery of services to ensure they are consistent with what was agreed upon in consultation. During the



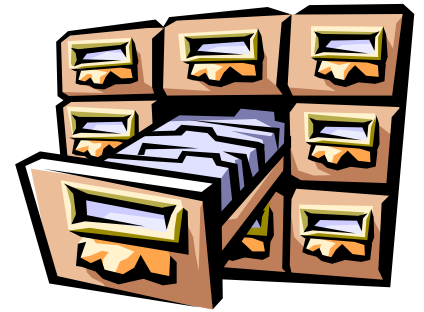
observation, you should ensure that the services are provided strictly to Title I students or their teachers of Title I students. You should ensure that any materials purchased with Title I funds are clearly marked as the property of the LEA and are being used only by Title I students and their teachers. You should also check the materials against your inventory records to make sure everything is accounted for. Finally, you should make general observations on the quality and effectiveness of the services being delivered and note any changes you would suggest in consultation as you prepare for the next school year. If you have concerns over the delivery of services or adherence to contractual terms (if applicable), you should provide feedback to the provider or vendor so the issue(s) can be addressed in a timely fashion. You should first consult with the private school officials if you determine that modifications to program design or contractual terms are necessary. During consultation for next year's program, notes from these observations will be important factors to consider in addition to the results of the annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the Title I program.

Before you can wrap up your program for the year you'll need to ensure that annual evaluation of the program(s) occurs. As you remember, during consultation with private

school officials you determined what assessments would be used to measure the effectiveness of the Title I program and the achievement of the Title I participants against agreed-upon standards. Once you have the results of the assessment, you should schedule a consultation meeting with private school officials to review the assessment results, and based on the agreed upon standards or benchmarks, determine the next steps to improve the program or to ensure the program's continued success.

Be sure to maintain documentation of all of your hard work! At a minimum, LEAs should maintain records of the following:

- Data on the number of public school low-income children by attendance area and the associated funds the low-income students generated;
- An offer of consultation to officials at private schools where eligible students attend;
- Written affirmations of consultation signed by the appropriate officials of each participating private school that the required consultation;
- Up-to-date property inventories;
- Copies of provider contracts (if applicable); and
- Copies of monitoring notes and assessment documents showing annual progress and modifications made to program design, if necessary.



## Just Ask John

**Q:** Dear John,

I have a few questions regarding the recent budget reductions. First, will we receive a new Title I, Part A grant award notification that reflects our new total? Second, where and when can I take the reductions? Third, how and when am I supposed to show where we took the reduction? Finally, since my district has to offer SES, will the per-pupil caps for SES in my district be re-calculated?

- Curious in Kent County

**A:** Dear Curious,

Just for the record, that is more than a "few" questions! We will let that slide this time

since your questions are not only timely, but quite common! In all seriousness, I truly welcome this opportunity to clear up any confusion the mid-year reductions have caused!

- The answer to your first question is no. We will not be providing updated grant award notices that reflect the new totals.
- As for your second *two* questions, LEAs have options on where and when to take their reductions. Your first and cleanest option is to identify discretionary funds (administration) that you can take the reduction from. Your other option is to reduce all of your required set-asides (Parent Involvement, Professional Development, Choice and SES, as applicable) proportionally and take the balance from a discretionary pot (administration). You can decide which option works best for you now or you can wait until the end of the grant period once you know where you have unexpended funds. Either way, you'll need to make sure you've met your set-aside requirements based, at a minimum, on the new totals that you adjust down proportionally.
- As for your third *two* questions, we are asking LEAs to show us where the reductions were taken in your final reports that are due at the end of March 2013. You will simply need to explain why the totals differ from what was originally approved. A brief explanation of where the reductions were taken as a result of the federal grant reduction will suffice.
- And for your final question, no, we will not be adjusting SES per-pupil caps. The impact for most districts that have to offer SES accounted for less than one dollar per student, so we did not feel that this justified making official adjustments at the state level.

I hope this information helps clear up any confusion!

- Just Ask John

Ps. Please keep the questions coming!

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## Title I Toolkit – Equitable Services Resources


[US DOE Non-regulatory guidance on Title I Equitable Services](#)

This document contains USDOE's answers to your most frequently asked questions around equitable services.

[DDOE Title I website on Private School Programs](#)

This website provides a general overview of the LEA's responsibilities for equitable services and links to many of the resources listed here.

[Building Blocks Guidance Document](#)



This is a one page cheat sheet for the steps you should take to manage equitable services in your district.

[US DOE Ensuring Equitable Services to Private School Children Tool Kit](#)

This is an excellent resource for districts. It provides a general overview of each component of equitable services and a variety of tools to support your work during each stage of the process.

[Section 1120 of the ESEA](#)

This is the section of the Title I law that specifically outlines the equitable services requirements.