

Schoolwide Programs In General

A schoolwide program is a comprehensive reform strategy to improve the academic achievement of all students in the school, particularly the lowest-achieving students. Schoolwide programs grew out of research about what makes schools work for disadvantaged students. Repeated findings show that staff in highly successful high poverty schools develop and carry out comprehensive schoolwide reform strategies, establish safe environments that are conducive to learning, and support enriched instruction in an expanded core of subjects for all students. Over the years, researchers have documented that, when the entire school is the target of change, schools serving even the most academically challenged students can achieve success.

Section 1114 of Title I authorizes a school with a concentration of poverty of at least 40 percent to use funds under Title I, Part A, along with other Federal, State and local funds, to operate a schoolwide program and upgrade the entire educational program in the school in order to improve the academic achievement of all students, particularly the lowest-achieving students. This is in contrast to a Title I targeted assistance program, in which Part A funds may be used only for supplementary educational services for eligible children identified as being most at risk of not meeting State standards. The school operating a schoolwide program may also combine other Federal education funds (see the heading ‘‘Inclusion of Other Federal Education Program Funds’’).

There are three core elements of a schoolwide program.

1. A school operating as a schoolwide program must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school to determine the performance of its students in relation to the State’s challenging academic content and achievement standards.
2. Using data from its needs assessment, the school must then develop a comprehensive plan to improve teaching and learning in the school, particularly for those students farthest away from demonstrating proficiency on the State’s academic content and achievement standards. The comprehensive plan must:
 - a. Include schoolwide reform strategies that are research-based and designed to strengthen the core academic program so that all students attain proficient and advanced levels of achievement;
 - b. Provide for instruction by highly qualified teachers and contain strategies to attract them;
 - c. Provide high-quality and ongoing professional development for staff and parents;
 - d. Include strategies to increase parental environment;
 - e. Provide activities to ensure that students who experience difficulty attaining proficiency receive affective and timely additional assistance;
 - f. Include plans for assisting preschool students in the successful transition from early childhood programs to elementary schoolwide programs;

