



WASHINGTON STATE

Office of the Education Ombudsman

www.waparentslearn.org

Title I

What is Title I?

Title I is a section of federal education law that provides funding to elementary and secondary schools for programs and services to help disadvantaged students succeed. Title I is the largest federal aid program available to elementary and secondary schools. In some cases, Title I allows parents to get free tutoring and other supplemental educational services or to choose a different school when their student's academic needs are not being met by a low-performing school.

What is Title I supposed to do?

Title I is supposed to ensure that *all students* have an equal opportunity to reach state learning standards. Title I is intended to help close the gap in academic achievement between students in different ethnic and income groups. Title I is also designed to ensure that schools and school districts are accountable for good teaching, and provide families with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. See the official Title I purpose statement to learn more about the specific purpose of the law.

Where did Title I come from?

Title I is part of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act adopted in 1965.

It was renewed in the **No Child Left Behind Act of 2002.**

How does Title I work in Washington State?

The federal government sends Title I funds to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to distribute to school districts. School districts divide the funds among schools, based on the percentage of low-income students attending the school and the district's assessment of the school's need. School districts and schools are allowed to spend the funds where they expect to see the greatest benefits. For example, while a district's middle and high schools may enroll many low-income students, the district can choose to fund Title I programs only at the elementary level. In 2006-07, Washington State received \$176 million to provide services to 286 local school districts.

School wide vs. Targeted Assistance Programs

Schools are eligible to receive Title I funds based on the percentage of low-income students attending the school. Schools with fewer than 40 percent low-income students use a "targeted assistance program." Targeted assistance programs provide services to students who are identified as failing or are at risk of failing to meet academic standards. School districts use their own formulas to determine which students are failing or are at risk of failing to meet state learning standards. These formulas include multiple student tests, as well as teacher and parent input. Schools with 40 percent or more low-income students can choose to provide a "targeted assistance program" or a "school-wide program." School-wide programs allow all students in the school to participate in Title I funded programs and services.

How can I find out if my school receives Title I funds?

Contact your school principal or the Title I director at your school district office to find out whether or not your school receives Title I funds. You can view the list of Title I school districts and schools listed as "in need of improvement" on the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's website. You can also view the amount of Title I funds allotted for 2007.

What are schools supposed to do and how can my child benefit?

Schools and school districts that receive Title I funds are required by law to do specific things for students, families, and administrators. Here are some (but not all) of the things schools are supposed to do:

- Test students to determine if they are meeting state learning standards. Washington State's learning standards are measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).
- Identify students who need extra help to meet state learning standards.
- Set goals and develop plans for improving student learning.
- Involve families in students' education.
- Districts must report on students' test results in a way that is easy for parents to understand. Reports should be made in a parent's native language. You can view your school district's score report.

What are they supposed to do?

The goal is to help students meet state learning standards.

Where do they come from?

The U.S. Congress included these services in the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2002.

Students benefit from Title I by having access to extra help when they are struggling academically. Some common Title I funded activities are: before- and after-school programs, parent involvement programs, additional instructional materials, extra school staff, and specialized staff training.

What are "supplemental educational services"?

Supplemental educational services are extra help with schoolwork before or after school, on weekends or in the summer, often from a community group that is not part of the school. These services are free to parents. In most cases, transportation to and from services is not provided by the school and must be arranged by the family.

Who can get supplemental educational services?

There are qualifications for the student and for the school. The student must be considered low-income, or receive free or reduced lunch. The school must be designated as a Title I school and be on the state list of schools that are "in need improvement." If your child qualifies, the school district is required to notify you promptly. You can also ask your principal if your student is eligible for supplemental educational services.

How can I get supplemental educational services for my student?

If you are interested in supplemental educational services for your student, ask your principal or the district Title I director for the list of providers. The school district should give you a list of organizations so you can choose the one that is best for your student. You may be able to choose in-person tutoring or computer-based instruction at a school or community center. A supplemental educational services provider could be a private business, a public school or private school, a community center or club, or a church, synagogue or mosque. Once you select a provider, you will meet with that provider and school district staff. Together you will decide on goals for your child, schedule the services, and determine how to measure your child's progress.

When should I request supplemental educational services for my student?

Most school districts require parents to sign up for supplemental educational services in the first month of school. A small number of districts allow parents to sign up anytime during the school year. Ask your principal or the Title I director in your school district for the deadline.

Title I

What is public school choice?

When a public school consistently fails to prepare its students to meet challenging learning standards, the state will identify the school as "in need of improvement." When that happens, parents have the option to transfer their student to another school in their district.

Where does school choice come from?

School choice is an option provided by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. No Child Left Behind requires every school to make "adequate yearly progress" or "AYP" toward educational goals set by the state. When schools fail to make AYP for two years in a row, parents are allowed to choose another school for their child.

How does it work?

In Washington State, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) tracks and reports which schools and schools districts are meeting AYP. A school that fails to meet AYP for two years in a row is designated as "in need of improvement." School districts are required to notify parents when a school is identified as in need of improvement. If your child's school is on the list for school improvement, you may choose a different school that is not on the list. If possible, the new school must be in the same district.

The school district is required to provide you with a list of options of schools to transfer to, and must provide transportation to the new school. If your student's school has been identified as "in need of improvement," and you have not received a list of transfer options, contact the school district office for a list of transfer options.

If I transfer my student to a new school, how long can he or she stay?

The student may stay at the new school through the school's highest grade level. However, if the old school is removed from the school improvement list, the school district is no longer required to transport your child to the new school.

Where can I find out more?

- Contact the school principal or the Title I director in your school district.
- Contact the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Title I Program Staff at (360) 725-6100.

Office of the Education Ombudsman
Toll-free 1-866-297-2597

OEO Seattle | Northgate Executive Center 1, Bldg B | 155 NE 100th St., Ste 210 | Seattle, WA 98125
OEO Olympia | 1110 Capitol Way S, Ste 304 | PO Box 40004 | Olympia, WA 98504