

Appendix J: Request for Documents

**Study of Title I Schoolwide and Targeted
Assistance Programs**

**Request for Documents (RFD)
for Districts
2015-16 and 2016-17 School Years**

Fall 2016

Dear [NAME],

One or more schools in your district have been selected to participate in a study of Title I schools. The study is being funded by the U.S. Department of Education to increase understanding of the how Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide Title I schools allocate resources and how they make these resource allocation decisions. It is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

This study is collecting data and documentation on resource allocation, planning processes, and other relevant topics from 35 case study schools around the nation. This Request for Documents (RFD) is designed to request key information for this study from your district, about participating schools. We expect this request will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Next week, you will receive a follow-up phone call from an AIR data collector assigned to your district who will:

- identify members of your staff who can provide specific information and determine when and how they could most easily be submitted;
- review the data items that are being requested and identify the data format that is least burdensome for your district to provide; and
- clarify any concerns and answer any questions you may have regarding the study.

We will also be conducting interviews with key district officials over the 2016-17 school year, so the follow-up call may also be used to schedule this interview.

IMPORTANT: Please do not forward any data files or documents until you have spoken with the AIR data collector to clarify any questions surrounding those items requested below.

Please be aware that these data will be used to summarize findings in an aggregate manner (across districts and schools), or will be used to provide examples of Title I expenditures in a manner that does not associate responses with a specific school or district. In the report, pseudonyms will be used for each school and district. The study team may refer to the generic title of an individual (e.g. District Administrator or Principal) but neither site names nor individuals' names will be used. All efforts will be made to keep the description of the site general enough so that the reader would never be able to determine the identity of the site. The study team will make sure that access to all data with identifiable information, including these requested expenditure files, is limited to members of the study team. The study team will not provide information that associates responses or findings with an individual, school, or district to anyone outside of the study team, except as required by law.

Documents and Materials Requested

We are requesting the following documents and materials:

1. **Chart of Accounts.** Lists of the chart of accounts codes for your district for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years.

To interpret and analyze budgets we are requesting from schools in your district who are participating in the study, we would like to request the account codes used by your district (e.g., State Accounting Manual) and/or district—particularly the revenue and fund codes, object of expenditure codes, and function codes. If you follow the State Accounting Manual, we should be able to obtain this from a centralized source in your state. However, if you use any account codes that are specific to your district, we will need to know how to interpret those codes. If the codes from the 2015-16 fiscal year differ from the 2016-17 fiscal year, please provide a chart of accounts for both years.

2. **School Enrollments.** School enrollment figures each of the following schools for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years:

School X
School Y
School Z

The schools listed above from your district have been selected to be case study schools for this study. For these schools, we would like to know total student enrollment for these schools so that we can understand budgeted expenditures (being requested from schools directly) in per-pupil terms. Please provide this information in whatever format is most convenient.

3. **Materials describing the annual school-level budgeting/planning process.** We are interested in any documents you can share that explain how school budgets in your district are developed annually, who is involved, and how resource allocation decisions are made. Ideally, this information would include a description of the types of services and staff/non-personnel resources the central district office provides to Title I schools as part of their Schoolwide or Targeted Assistance programs versus those services and resources that are procured directly by schools using Title I and possibly other funding sources (i.e., those resources that would typically appear on annual school site budget plans).
4. **Title I Schoolwide Program Plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17 for the schools listed above.** Federal guidance indicates that schools with Schoolwide Programs should develop several documents on an annual basis in making decisions about how Title I funds are used to promote continuous improvement in student outcomes. If the following documents are collected and maintained by the central district office, we would like them for the schools listed under item 2, above, for most recent two school years (2015-16 and 2016-17):
 - a. The comprehensive schoolwide plan developed for your school (required)
 - b. Documentation of your school's needs assessment (if available), and
 - c. Annual monitoring reviews of the effectiveness of the schoolwide program (if available).
5. **Complete school-level budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17.** We are interested in understanding planned spending on Schoolwide programs in the schools listed under item 2, above. We therefore request school site budgets for these schools, including all available information on the types, quantities and corresponding spending on staff and non-personnel resources that are used and how they are supported by various funding sources.
6. **Any other written documentation.** It would also be useful for us to see any other written planning documentation, budget narratives, or funding applications related to Title I funding and resource allocation decisions that you can share, for the schools listed above.

Submission of data files/documents

Once you or members of your staff have gathered this requested information, please forward them to your data collector. We would prefer electronic files when possible, but please send us the information in whatever form it is available.

Option 1: *Electronic files*. Data can be in spreadsheet (e.g., Excel) or word processing files (e.g., MS Word). Please indicate the type of file and format (Windows/Macintosh). Data may be sent on a CD via mail or FedEx (see below), or by email as an attachment to kmanship@air.org. Larger files may be arranged to be sent through an FTP site if needed.

Option 2: *Pre-existing printed reports*. Hard copies may be sent via mail or FedEx; please contact Karen Manship at kmanship@air.org or 650-843-8198 if a pre-paid, addressed FedEx envelope is needed.

If returning materials to us by mail, please return to:

Study of Title I Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Programs
Attn: Karen Manship
American Institutes for Research (AIR)
2800 Campus Drive, Suite 200
San Mateo, CA 94403

Questions or concerns? Please call Karen Manship at 650-843-8198.

***Thank you sincerely for your time and assistance
with this study!***

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

Policy and Program Studies Service, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development,
U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

**Study of Title I Schoolwide and Targeted
Assistance Programs**

**Request for Documents (RFD)
for Schools with Title I Schoolwide
Programs**

2015-16 and 2016-17 School Years

Fall 2016

Dear Principal,

A few weeks ago, you should have received a letter from our organization, explaining that your school has been selected to participate in a study of Title I schools. The study is being funded by the U.S. Department of Education to increase understanding of the how schools with Schoolwide or Targeted Assistance Title I programs allocate resources and how they make these resource allocation decisions. The study is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

As part of this study, we are conducting case studies of 35 schools across the country. To better understand Title I resource allocation in these 35 schools, we will be visiting your school to conduct interviews, as well as collecting document data. This Request for Documents (RFD) is designed to request key information for this study from your school. We expect this request will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Next week, you will receive a follow-up phone call from an AIR data collector assigned to your school who will:

- identify members of your staff who can provide the specific information and determine when and how they could most easily be submitted;
- review the data items that are being requested and identify the data format that is least burdensome for you to provide; and
- clarify any concerns and answer any questions you may have regarding the study.

We will also discuss possible times to visit your school to conduct interviews with the principal and other key staff.

IMPORTANT: Please do not forward any data files or documents until you have spoken with the AIR data collector to clarify any questions surrounding those items requested below.

Please be aware that these data will be used to summarize findings in an aggregate manner (across districts and schools), or will be used to provide examples of Title I expenditures in a manner that does not associate responses with a specific school or district. In the report, pseudonyms will be used for each school and district. The study team may refer to the generic title of an individual (e.g. District Administrator or Principal) but neither site names nor individuals' names will be used. All efforts will be made to keep the description of the site general enough so that the reader would never be able to determine the identity of the site. The study team will make sure that access to all data with identifiable information, including these requested expenditure files, is limited to members of the study team. The study team will not provide information that associates responses or findings with an individual, school, or district to anyone outside of the study team, except as required by law.

Documents and Materials Requested

We are requesting the following documents and materials:

1. **Materials describing the annual school-level budgeting/planning process.** We are interested in any documents you can share that explain how the school budget is developed annually, who is involved, and how resource allocation decisions are made. Ideally, this information would include a description of the types of services and staff/non-personnel resources provided to your school provided by the central district office that are part of your Schoolwide program versus those services and resources that are procured directly by your school (i.e., included in your annual budget plan) using Title I and possibly other funding sources (e.g., Title II, Title III, other state categorical funding streams).
2. **Title I Schoolwide Program Plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17.** Federal guidance indicates that schools with Schoolwide Programs should develop several documents on an annual basis in making decisions about how Title I funds are used to promote continuous improvement in student outcomes. We would like to request the following documents for the most recent two school years (2015-16 and 2016-17):
 - a. The comprehensive schoolwide plan developed for your school (required)
 - b. Documentation of your school's needs assessment (if available), and
 - c. Annual monitoring reviews of the effectiveness of the schoolwide program (if available).
3. **Complete school-level budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17.** We are interested in understanding planned spending on your school's Schoolwide program, including all available information on the types, quantities and corresponding spending on staff and non-personnel resources that are used and how they are supported by various funding sources.
4. **Minutes from meetings.** If available, we would like to see any minutes from meetings in 2015-16 or 2016-17 that involved school-level staff and/or parent councils where resource allocation decisions were made for the school.
5. **Any other written documentation.** It would also be useful for us to see any other written planning documentation, budget narratives, or funding applications related to Title I funding and resource allocation decisions that you can share.

Submission of data files/documents

Once you or members of your staff have gathered this requested information, please forward them to your data collector or give them to the site visitor who visits your school to conduct interviews. We would prefer electronic files when possible, but please send us the information in whatever form it is available.

Option 1: *Electronic files.* Data can be in spreadsheet (e.g., Excel) or word processing files (e.g., MS Word). Please indicate the type of file and format (Windows/Macintosh). Data may be sent on a CD via mail or FedEx (see below), or by email as an attachment to kmanship@air.org. Larger files may be arranged to be sent through an FTP site if needed.

Option 2: *Pre-existing printed reports.* We can collect hard copies of requested documents when we visit your school to conduct interviews. You may also mail copies if needed.

If returning materials to us by mail, please return to:

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American Institutes for Research (AIR)
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San Mateo, CA 94403

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**Study of Title I Schoolwide and Targeted
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**Request for Documents (RFD)
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Assistance Programs**

2015-16 and 2016-17 School Years

Fall 2016

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- clarify any concerns and answer any questions you may have regarding the study.

We will also discuss possible times to visit your school to conduct interviews with the principal and other key staff.

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- 2. Title I Spending and School Improvement Plans for 2015-16 and 2016-17.** We would like to request any Title I spending and/or school improvement plans your school has developed.
- 3. Complete school-level budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17.** We are interested in understanding planned spending on your school's Title I program, including all available information on the types, quantities and corresponding spending on staff and non-personnel resources that are used and how they are supported by various funding sources (i.e., how funding is coordinated between Title I and other sources to provide services that work with your Targeted Assistance program).
- 4. Minutes from meetings.** If available, we would like to see any minutes from meetings among school-level staff and/or parent councils where resource allocation decisions were made for the school, for 2015-16 and 2016-17.
- 5. Any other written documentation.** It would also be useful for us to see any other written planning documentation, budget narratives, or funding applications related to Title I funding and resource allocation decisions that you can share.

Submission of data files/documents

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