TITLE I NON-COMPETITIVE, SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT

GRANT FUNDING GUIDANCE

This document serves as guidance for districts and community schools implementing programming with Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds, which live within the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan’s (CCIP) Consolidated application. Districts and community schools receive these funds in a non-competitive manner.

INTRODUCTION

Federal Title I, Part A funds are awarded to local educational agencies (LEAs), which are traditional school districts and community schools in Ohio. In Section 1003 of the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), state education agencies are required to set aside 7 percent of the Title I, Part A award to support schools identified for improvement, known as Priority, Focus or Warning schools in Ohio.

ELIGIBILITY

To receive the Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds, the LEA must have at least one (1) Priority, Focus or Warning school based on the most current identifications at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2023. These identifications were released in school year 2018-2019 with updates in school year 2019-2020.

INTENT AND PURPOSE

School Improvement formula funds are intended to support high-quality, sustainable school improvement activities that increase student achievement and address the needs of identified schools.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 CALCULATION

Allocations are based on the identification of the buildings within a LEA. Priority, Warning and Focus buildings receive a tiered allocation amount. The allocations are awarded in increasing amounts from Focus, Warning to Priority. The table below outlines the anticipated allocations amounts for each school identification. The funds allocated in the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) application are composed of State Award Year 2023 and State Award Year 2022 funds and the table identifies the estimated amount per award year. Please remember that the federal allocations are preliminary estimates and local educational agencies (LEAs) may need to make revisions throughout the year.

The total district amount is calculated based on the number of Priority, Warning and/or Focus buildings within the district. The total allocation amount is awarded at the district level. The district can budget funds amongst their identified buildings. If a LEA has carryover from FY22 into FY23, the carryover funds should continue to support the buildings to which the funds were originally allocated.
For example, if a LEA has one Priority, one Warning and one Focus building, the total allocation for the LEA is $172,506.29. This is the sum of each award amount in the table above for State Award Year '22 and '23 funds. The LEA can then distribute the funds to the identified buildings with the greatest need and require more funds to accomplish activities aligned to their School Improvement Plans. NOTE: If a LEA decides to not allocate funds to an identified building, the CCIP application will require an explanation as to why the LEA determined that the building does not require the funds.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) prioritizes a focused approach to improvement in rural, low-income areas. As such, districts identified as “rural” per [Ohio’s district typology](#) receive an additional allocation of $10,000 per identified building.

**ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE USES**

The Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement application requires the completion of a budget. Budgeted activities must be consistent with the improvement planning embedded in the identified school’s One Plan. Grant funded activities must fall under the ESSA top three tiers of evidence (Levels 1, 2 and 3). ESSA Level 4 evidence-based strategies are not allowable. This grant can only fund activities, strategies or interventions that demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes. See page 5 for additional information on ESSA levels of evidence including resources for identifying ESSA levels of evidence.

All expenditures must be reasonable, allowable and necessary. Use good common sense when making expenditure and obligation decisions. The following charts contain examples of allowable and unallowable uses of funds. The activities listed below are not exhaustive, but serve as a list of ideas that may assist in school improvement planning. The allowable activities examples are not intended to be requirements or limit the uses of funds. Other uses of funds that are consistent with Title I Non-Competitive Supplemental School Improvement requirements are permissible. When exploring activities, begin with reviewing the goals, strategies and activities identified in the improvement plan of the school's One Plan and consider aligned and connected activities.

The Department recommends that LEAs and schools work with their State Support Team (SST) and Educational Service Centers (ESCs) to assist with improvement planning and identifying grant-related activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Category</th>
<th>Example(s) of Allowable Activities</th>
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| **Category 1: Professional Development** | • Purchased services for:  
  o Training  
  o Speakers  
  • Stipend(s) for professional development |
| **Category 2: Family and Community Engagement** | • Materials/supplies for meetings and activities  
  • Hiring a new Family and Community Engagement Coordinator |
| **Category 3: Student Achievement** | • Summer school activities, tutoring, supplemental instruction, counseling, etc. |
| Category 5: District-Level Supports and Initiatives | • Interventions to address learning loss such as tailored acceleration, high-quality intensive tutoring and summer bridge programs  
• **Note:** District-level initiatives must support the implementation of the improvement plans of identified buildings  
• District-level initiatives require Department pre-approval. Please reach out to the Department at School_Improvement@education.ohio.gov to request pre-approval.  
• Analysis of assessment data like a district-wide dashboard using assessment specialists  
• Leadership, resources and guidance  
• Building and maintaining a cadre of high-quality substitute teachers, including through partnerships with teacher preparation programs |

| Category 6: Graduation and Pathways | • Providing college and career pathways that integrate enrollment, support and success in rigorous academic coursework, career and technical education  
• Work-based learning and student support services |

| Category 7: Hiring New Positions | • Coaches or specialists to provide job-embedded training, classroom observations and embedded support or feedback designed to strengthen the implementation of sustainable improvement strategies  
• Additional staff to support implementation of new instructional models, students’ mental health needs and the implementation of whole child supports |

| Category 8: School-based Wellness Programs | • Establishing school-based wellness teams comprised of representatives from administration, teachers, counselors, nursing and support staff  
• Increasing availability of mental health services.  
• Creating a trauma-informed school environment that addresses needs of students and staff experiencing symptoms of traumatic stress  
• Leveraging tools that allow teachers to understand and cultivate students’ social and emotional development by measuring school climate, integrating trauma informed learning into instructional practices and design, providing whole child supports and reducing school exclusions |

| Category 9: Differentiated Learning | • Implementing an integrated multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework  
• Establishing early warning indicator (EWI) systems to promote targeted and timely engagement strategies in response to data  
• For example, a LEA may use these funds to implement interventions such as high-quality mentor programs, access to instructional coaches, and professional development opportunities to help educators and staff build more equitable and inclusive approaches to
discipline or content area supports in career and technical education (CTE), science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), special education, and bilingual education. Activities supported with these funds must be consistent with a school’s support and improvement plan.

Category 10: Other

- The Department can assist in evaluating the allowability of activities. Please email School_Improvement@education.ohio.gov for assistance.

Examples of Unallowable Activities

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Unallowable Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Supplanted activities</td>
<td>• Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Purchasing of incentives/prizes for students (outside of the Title I Guidelines)</td>
<td>• Capital expenses such as land for a building, building repair or renovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Using more than 30% of funds for supplies and capital outlay (total between the two categories)</td>
<td>• Vehicle purchases</td>
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ESSA LEVELS OF EVIDENCE

ESSA requires the use of evidence-based strategies to support students. There are four levels of evidence-based strategies, however, Title I Non-Competitive Supplemental School Improvement funds only allows Levels 1 through 3. Grant funded activities must fall under the ESSA top three tiers of evidence (Levels 1, 2 and 3).

The following chart defines the four ESSA tiers of evidence. When considering grant activities, ESSA evidence-based databases such as the What Works Clearinghouse and the Ohio Evidence-Based Clearinghouse may assist in identifying the ESSA evidence tier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSA Tier of Evidence</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Level 1: Strong Evidence | • Well designed and well implemented experimental study  
• Significant favorable effect on relevant outcome  
• No overriding negative effects from causal studies  
• Large, multisite sample*  
• Overlaps with population |
| Level 2: Moderate Evidence | • Well designed and well implemented quasi-experimental design (QED) or randomized controlled trials (RCT) with high attrition  
• Significant favorable effect on relevant outcome  
• No overriding negative effects from causal studies  
• Large, multisite sample  
• Overlaps with population |
| Level 3: Promising Evidence | • Well designed and well implemented correlational study or well-designed and implemented RCT or QED without a large/multisite sample  
• Statistical controls for selection bias  
• Significant favorable effect on relevant outcome  
• No overriding negative effects from causal studies. |
| Level 4: Demonstrates Rationale | • Well specified logic model  
• An effort to study the effects is or soon to be under way  
• Note: This level is unallowable for these funds |
A large sample is 350 or more students, or 50 or more groups with 10 or more students. A multisite sample is more than one site, and a site is a local education agency, locality, or state. Multiple studies can be combined to meet the large and multisite sample requirement as long as all studies meet the other requirements and examine the effects of an intervention on the same outcome domain.

OTHER LEVELS OF EVIDENCE RESOURCES:

Ohio does not endorse or require the use of any specific evidence-based clearinghouse; districts may use the clearinghouses or stand-alone research reviews they find most useful in terms of content and usability. Existing clearinghouses and stand-alone research reviews include, but are not limited to the following list:

- REL Midwest
- Pennsylvania Evidence Resource Center
- Identifying Evidence-based Programs – Mississippi Department of Education
- Evidence for ESSA

ACTIONS REQUIRED

While the funding is allocated at the district level, these funds must be spent at the building level of the identified buildings or on district-wide initiatives (see Allowable Uses table for additional information). Districts and community schools must complete the Title I Non-Competitive Supplemental School Improvement application within the CCIP Consolidated Funding Application. The Title I Non-Competitive Supplemental School Improvement application includes a budget grid, budget details page and school allocations page. Budget revisions should be implemented in accordance with the Ohio Department of Education and Federal requirements.

TIMELINE

Districts are encouraged to submit their Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement applications and budgets in Authorized Representative Approved status within 30 calendar days of receipt of the award to establish a substantially approved date. The substantially approved date is the earliest date to which obligations can be charged to the grant for allowable expenses.

Unlike general funds, federal funds will expire if they are not obligated and liquidated within the period of availability. These Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds are provided for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23). They should be budgeted and obligated within the CCIP by June 30, 2023 and liquidated by September 30, 2023.

On July 1, 2023, grantees will have access to submit Final Expenditure Reports (FERs) in the CCIP.

The FER can be submitted once all outstanding obligations are finalized for an application. FERs are due no later than September 30, 2023. The Department encourages districts to spend the funds within the allocation year (FY23). Carryover of these funds into the subsequent year (FY24) is unlikely.

ASSURANCES

Each district that accepts Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds must complete and submit the required information in the program’s budget and budget details.
for FY23 in the CCIP.

Districts and schools relinquish the rights to Title-I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds for the remainder of the fiscal year for failing to meet these assurances. The district or community school must assure it will:

- Ensure that each school the Local Education Agency proposes to serve with this funding will receive all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of this funding (supplement, not supplant);
- Spend allocated funds at the appropriate school and on allowable expenses at that school;
- Implement the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP);
- Align Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement fund expenditures to the Building Needs Assessment;
- Ensure only evidence-based practices and properly licensed providers are used to support the action steps and strategies in the building’s school improvement plan;
- Ensure the providers have access to district- and building-level data as requested by the service provider and to teachers and other district/school personnel as needed;
- Expend funds in accordance with the school improvement components of the building plan and required interventions;
- Ensure Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds are used to build the capacity of the building staff and community to address identified needs and, if used for direct student services, the providers are properly licensed; and
- Understand Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds may be denied and/or the state may request the district reimburse the Title I Non-Competitive, Supplemental School Improvement funds for failing to meet the assurances.

**DOCUMENTATION**

All accounts, records and other supporting documentation pertaining to all costs incurred shall be maintained for three years after the grant funding ends. Supporting documentation for expenditures is required for all funding methods. Examples of such documentation include, but are not limited to, invoices with check numbers verifying payment and/or bank statements; time and effort logs for staff; and salary/benefits schedules for staff. All documentation must be made available upon request.

**MONITORING**

Districts and community schools will be monitored for program and fiscal compliance by the Ohio Department of Education. Districts and community schools are required to meet all reporting requirements. Districts and community schools will be required to work within the Monitoring application Consolidated ESEA Survey to provide ongoing evidence of implementation and progress, including adult indicators and student impact benchmarks. For more information please visit, the Office of Federal Program’s website.

If you have questions regarding these funds, please contact School_Improvement@education.ohio.gov.