Ohio | Department of Education

Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) Initiatives Description

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Sources: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Sections 6201 through 6234; Draft USDOE Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) Guidance, June 2003
Key Words Title VI Rural
Summary: Title VI-B Rural Education Achievement Program addresses the unique needs of rural school districts. This document gives an overview of the program's initiatives.

What are the Rural Education Initiatives?

Title VI-B Rural Education Achievement Program of the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) includes three initiatives. These initiatives are designed to help rural districts that lack the personnel and resources to compete effectively for federal competitive grants and receive grant allocations in amounts that are too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes. The three initiatives are:

(1) Alternative Uses of Funds Authority,
(2) Small, Rural School Achievement Program, and
(3) Rural and Low-Income School Program.

(1) Alternative Uses of Funds Authority -- Section 6211

The REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority provides local educational agencies (LEAs) with greater flexibility in using applicable funding, but not additional funding. This flexibility provision allows eligible LEAs to exercise its REAP-Flex authority by using specific federal formula funds (i.e., each LEA's "applicable funding") to more effectively support local activities under an array of federal programs. This "applicable funding" includes all funds allocated by formula to an eligible LEA under the following programs:

Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality,
Title II-D Educational Technology (entitlement, NOT competitive grant),
Title IV-A Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, and
Title V-A Innovative Programs.

A LEA with REAP-Flex authority may use all or part of its "applicable funding" for local activities authorized under one or more of the following ESEA programs:

Title I-A Improving the Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Children,
Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality,
Title II-D Education Technology (entitlement, NOT competitive grant),
Title IV-A Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, and
Title V-A Innovative Programs.

Under section 6211, Alternative Uses of Funds Authority, for example, an eligible LEA could use funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program for activities authorized under Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality.

Which LEAs are eligible to take advantage of the flexibility offered under the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority?

LEAs that meet the following conditions are eligible to utilize the flexibility offered under the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority:

- The total average daily attendance in the schools served by the LEA is fewer than 600, OR
- Each county in which a school served by the LEA is located has a population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile, AND
- All schools served by the LEA have a school locale code of 7 or 8, unless the LEA's request for a waiver of the locale code requirement is granted. The USDOE Secretary may grant the waiver if the LEA demonstrates, with the concurrence of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), that the LEA is located in an area defined as rural by a governmental agency of the state. (The locale codes of schools are listed on the website of the USDOE National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at http://www.nces.ed.gov.)

What steps must an eligible LEA take to use the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds flexibility?

Eligible Small Rural School Achievement LEAs can transfer up to 100 percent of the applicable funds using the ODE Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) Consolidated Funding Application, Allocations page. See the Help screen on the Allocations page in the CCIP.

What accountability requirements apply to participating LEAs?

Participating LEAs must administer an assessment that is consistent with Section 1111(b)(3) of Title I. After an LEA's third year of participation in the program (and on the basis on the results of the assessments), ODE must determine whether the LEA has made district adequate yearly progress (AYP). Those LEAs that fail to make district AYP may continue to participate only if they use the applicable funding to carry out the requirements of section 1116 (Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement).

(2) Small, Rural School Achievement Program – Section 6212

The Small, Rural School Achievement Program authorizes the USDOE Secretary to award formula grants directly to eligible LEAs (i.e., those eligible under the alternative uses of funds program described above) to carry out activities authorized under one or more of the following federal programs:

Title I-A Improving the Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Children,
Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality,
Title II-D Education Technology (entitlement not competitive grant),
Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students,
Title IV-A Safe and Drug-Free Schools,
Title IV-B 21st Century Community Learning Center,
Title V-A Innovative Programs.

How much funding will an eligible LEA receive?
The USDOE Secretary will determine an eligible LEA's grant amount pursuant to the formula in section 6212(b). For each eligible LEA, the Secretary calculates an initial allocation that is equal to $20,000, plus $100 for each child in average daily attendance above 50, with no initial allocation exceeding $60,000. An LEA's final allocation is equal to the initial allocation minus the total amount of funding that the LEA received during the preceding fiscal year for Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality, Title II-D Education Technology (entitlement not competitive grant), Title IV-A Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, and Title V-A Innovative Programs. The USDOE Secretary will ratably reduce LEA awards if insufficient funds are available to pay the full amounts LEAs are eligible to receive.

What steps must an LEA take in order to receive its grant award?
The legislation requires LEAs seeking funding to submit to the USDOE Secretary, not later than March 1 of each year, their average daily attendance (ADA) calculations (as determined under section 6231). The USDOE Secretary requests that LEAs submit the ADA data first to ODE. ODE's Office of Federal Programs will then submit the ADA data to the USDOE on behalf of all eligible LEAs not later than March 1. ODE can retrieve the ADA data through the Education Management Information System (EMIS), so the LEA is not required to do any additional reporting of ADA.

What accountability requirements apply to LEAs participating in the Small, Rural School Grant Program?
Participating LEAs must administer an assessment that is consistent with Section 1111(b)(3) of Title I. After the third year that a LEA participates in the program, and on the basis on the results of the assessments, ODE must determine whether the LEA has made district AYP. Those LEAs that fail to make district AYP may continue to participate only if they use the applicable funding to carry out the requirements of section 1116 (Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement).

(3) Rural and Low-Income School Program (RLIS) – Sections 6221 through Section 6224
The Rural and Low-Income School Program addresses the needs of rural, low-income schools. In this program, the USDOE Secretary awards formula grants to state educational agencies, which in turn award sub grants to eligible LEAs, either competitively or on a formula basis.

How much funding will be allotted to each state educational agency?
A state educational agency allotment will be determined on the basis of the number of students in average daily attendance served by eligible LEAs in the state compared to the number of students served by eligible LEAs in all states.

Which LEAs are eligible to participate in the Rural and Low-Income School Program?
An LEA is eligible to receive a grant under this program if:

- Twenty percent or more of the children ages 5 through 17 served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line;
- All the schools served by the LEA have a school locale code of 6, 7, or 8 (locale codes of schools are listed on the website of the USDOE National Center for Educational Statistics at http://www.nces.ed.gov); and
- The LEA is not eligible to receive the Small, Rural School Achievement grant under Section 6212.

How does the Ohio Department of Education award funds to eligible LEAs?
ODE uses a formula based on the number of students in average daily attendance served by the eligible LEA as stated in Section 6221(b)(2).

What purposes may the grant funds be used for?
Funds under this program may be used for the following purposes:
- Teacher recruitment and retention,
- Teacher professional development,
- Educational technology as described in Title II-D parental involvement activities,
- Activities authorized under Title IV-A Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities,
- Activities authorized under Title I-A Improving the Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Children,
- Activities authorized under Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students.

When must ADA data for eligible LEAs be submitted to the USDOE?
For the USDOE Secretary to calculate the amount of each state's allotment on a timely basis, the legislation requires that ADA data for eligible LEAs be submitted to the USDOE not later than March 1 of each year. ODE is able to retrieve the ADA data through EMIS to meet this requirement. Therefore, the LEA is not required to do any additional reporting of ADA.

Which accountability requirements apply to LEAs participating in the Rural and Low-Income School Program?
Participating LEAs must administer an assessment that is consistent with Section 1111(b)(3) of Title I. After the third year that a LEA participates in the program, and on the basis on the results of the assessments, ODE must determine whether the LEA has made district AYP. Those LEAs that failed to make district AYP may continue to participate only if they use the applicable funding to carry out the requirements of section 1116 (Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement).

What are the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Local Codes?
6 - Small town—A place not within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and with a population of between 2,500 and 25,000 people;
7 - Rural, outside MSA--A place with less than 2,500 people that is coded as rural and outside an MSA by the Census Bureau;

8 - Rural, inside MSA--A place with less than 2,500 people and coded rural and inside an MSA by the Census Bureau.

NCES locale codes are based on each school's street address and data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Building street addresses are provided by ODE to USDOE based on data received from LEAs through the Ohio Education Directory System (OEDS). The number and street name are now required in the directory address information. Use of a post office box number is not recommended as a primary address in order to prevent assignment of an incorrect locale code. If a post office box is required for correct U.S. mail delivery, it may be included after the street address, separating it with a comma.

ODE Contacts for NCES Locale Codes:
Gary Waugh, ODE Data Analyst, CCD Coordinator, 614-995-9943
Anthony Powell, Ohio Education Directory System, 614-752-8690

Supplement, Not Supplant
Funds shall be used to supplement, not supplant, any other federal, state, or local education funds.