ED STEPS One Plan

COHORT ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Purpose and Expectations

As part of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's ED STEPS process, organizations within Ohio are being assigned to one of three One Plan cohorts. To learn more about ED STEPS, please visit the Department's ED STEPS webpage. These cohorts are the mechanism for the three-year planning cycle.

Each cohort is associated with a starting year. In each year, the organizations that are part of that cohort will begin three-year planning to include three school years. This will include identifying needs in a three-year format and writing three-year plans. Figure 1 outlines the cohort groups, starting year and school years that will be included in the three-year plan cycle. The organizations always will be able to update their One Needs Assessments and One Plans at any time to reflect their unique situations and changing needs. Organizations are not required to make changes before the end of the three-year period unless an update is needed because of a change in an applicable state or federal law or a change in accountability status.

The ED STEPS process includes the identification and consolidation of all the various needs assessments and programmatic planning requirements into a comprehensive planning process. This process has started but is not complete. Therefore, some of the cohorts still may be required to complete other Department planning requirements that reside outside of the first iteration of the One Needs Assessment and One Plan annually until the entire ED STEPS system is completed.

Every year, by June 30, organizations will submit funding applications aligned to their plans. Over time, a goal of the ED STEPS system is to streamline the funding applications.

Figure 1: Cohort planning cycles. The activities to be performed during the beginning of the cohort cycle include conducting a needs assessment and writing a three-year plan.

Starting in:	Cohort	School Years Included in Three-Year Plan				
January 2024 (FY 25)	Cohort 1	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027		
January 2025 (FY26)	Cohort 2		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	
January 2026 (FY27)	Cohort 3			2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029

The Department partnered with a group of 39 organizations to pilot three-year planning. This pilot group joined Cohort 3 in 2023 for its second round of three-year planning. The pilot included the concept of a Department cross-office review, which shifts the plan submission

timeline from the end of June — when the funding application is due — to the end of April. This shift allows time for Department review and communication with the organizations on their plans. Feedback and lessons learned from the pilot have been incorporated into the processes used by the cohort groups. Figure 2 summarizes the deadlines associated with planning and funding applications that fall within the three-year cycles.

Figure 2: Anticipated three-year cycle planning and funding application timeline.

Process Step	Deadline	Frequency
Identify three-years of needs in the One Needs Assessment system and submit the three-year plan in the One Plan system	April 30th	First year of three-year cycle
Department Plan Review and Support	April-June	First year of three-year cycle
Funding Application	June 30th	Annually

Cohort Assignment Methodology

As previously mentioned, members of the pilot were assigned to Cohort 3. Organizations that submitted completed Pilot Partnership Agreements but were not selected for the pilot were assigned to Cohort 1. The remaining organizations were randomly distributed across the three cohorts using identification criteria similar to the pilot selection and based on organization type. This random assignment methodology was used to achieve an even distribution of organizations between the three cohort groups as demonstrated in Figure 3.

For organization types outside of community schools and public districts, at this time only entities that currently complete consolidated applications have been assigned to cohorts. If other entities within these organization types become eligible, they will be added accordingly.

Figure 3: Organization type distribution by cohort group

Organization Type	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Public District	204	203	204
Community School	105	119	121
Development Disabilities Organization	17	18	18
Educational Service Center	13	13	13
STEM	2	3	2
State Supported Organization	1	1	1

The list of organizations and their assigned cohorts can be found here. If there are any questions regarding these cohorts, please email EDSTEPS@education.ohio.gov.