

# ESSA LEA Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Created: April 24, 2018. Updated: May 10, 2018; June 25, 2018; *August 30, 2018. Most recent updates are in red, italic font.*

DPI provided the [LEA Plan Draft Template](#) to LEAs in November 2017. The questions in this document follow the format of the LEA Plan Draft Template.

## General Questions

### **What type of format is appropriate for the ESSA LEA plan?**

The ESSA LEA Plan is available in WISEgrants. Some questions will appear in the ESSA LEA Plan section of WISEgrants and other questions will appear in a specific grant application. It is important to note that some questions are required, some are optional, and some may not be applicable to your LEA. LEAs that have been working with the ESSA LEA Plan Draft template will be able to copy and paste text into WISEgrants. [The ESSA LEA Plan Road Map and Review Criteria](#) defines where the questions in LEA Plan Draft Template are located in WISEgrants.

The text fields in WISEgrants will allow for unlimited text, but LEAs should provide only the essential, most pertinent information to answer each question. Images may be included in the text fields. LEAs shall not include hyperlinks to other documents in text fields. When pasting text in the text field, the fonts from the originating document will appear. LEAs may edit and change fonts, as necessary, within each text field.

### **Why shall the LEA not include hyperlinks to other documents in the text fields?**

While DPI understands the benefits of including links, there are record retention and transparency issues with hyperlinks. The content of a URL can change after the LEA Plan is approved without DPI approval or the URL could be deactivated resulting in a broken link. These issues could lead to audit findings with possible financial consequences for LEAs.

If the information the LEA would like to include is text or an image/graphic, DPI encourages LEAs to copy and paste the text or image/graphic into the LEA Plan Narrative text fields. Alternately, the LEA can describe the information the website conveys.

### **How do we document our process? How much detail do you need?**

This will be done in a narrative. Provide enough detail to document the individuals involved, groups that met and plans that were made.

**Will there be a rubric to provide more guidance?**

There are review criteria to ensure that questions are answered completely and all requirements are met. DPI and CESAs have numerous resources to help guide your work. [The review criteria is available in the ESSA LEA Plan Road Map and Review Criteria document.](#)

**Do we need to review/revise the LEA plan every year? The law states LEAs need to periodically review and as necessary, revise – is DPI going to define “periodically”?**

The LEA will determine when to review and revise the ESSA LEA Plan. At this point in time, the United States Department of Education (USDE) has not defined a timeline. That could change in the future.

**Do we need to include the results of our comprehensive needs assessment?**

No, the LEA will describe the process that is used to address all the criteria listed. The data will change from year to year, but the process should be systemic.

**Why is DPI releasing the LEA Plan information and resources so late in the school year (April 2018)?**

DPI provided LEAs with an LEA Plan Template in November 2017. After the template was released, DPI needed time to program the questions into WISEgrants. DPI also needed to ensure the LEA Plan resources were aligned with WISEgrants as well as the State’s approved plan. The ESSA State Plan was approved in January 2018.

**What questions can be left blank? Is “not applicable” OK?**

The review criteria states when this response is allowed. If you have a question whether this would be appropriate for another question in the LEA Plan, please contact your [DPI Title I consultant](#).

**The draft template states that some information will be pulled from other sources.**

**What are those other sources?**

DPI will be relying on data submitted through other sections of WISEgrants as well as WISEdata to reduce the time and effort required of LEAs.

**Does the School Board or Charter School Authorizer need to approve the ESSA LEA plans?**

This is a local decision. School administrators will need to follow their internal policies and procedures to determine if their ESSA LEA plan will need to be approved by their School Board or Charter School Authorizer.

**Why were Questions 21-24 in WISEgrants not included in the DRAFT template?**

This was an oversight. When DPI found the questions were not included, DPI added them to the Road Map and Review Criteria as well as WISEgrants. If LEAs are not supporting the initiatives identified in Questions 21–24 with ESSA funds, then the LEA may type “not applicable” in the text field.

**Will LEAs be required to prove funding/staffing/etc. for the strategies identified in the plan? If so, is there a template?**

If an LEA uses federal funds to support the staff implementing strategies described in the ESSA plan, then the LEA will be required to maintain appropriate time and effort documentation, as required by the Federal Uniform Grant Guidance. Time and effort documentation is reviewed by auditors. Additionally, if an LEA is selected for ESEA consolidated monitoring, the LEA will be required to demonstrate appropriate funding/staffing. There is no template available.

## **Consultation Process**

**Is it required that we have face to face meetings with stakeholders?**

Consultation is required. LEAs may use alternative methods such as virtual meetings to seek feedback.

**Do we have to have another meeting with our private schools in addition to our spring consultation?**

No, consultation with private schools is required to determine eligible private school students’ needs and services. The consultation process required for the ESSA LEA Plan may include private school officials, but the purpose of the LEA Plan consultation is to discuss the needs of and services provided to the public school students.

**How do LEAs go about sharing the ESSA LEA Plan with stakeholders when sections of the plan have not yet been released?**

LEAs must provide opportunity to stakeholders to meaningfully and substantively contribute to their ESSA LEA Plan. Consultation must occur prior to submitting a plan or application. LEAs may choose to consult with stakeholders on an “on-going basis” as questions are released in the different sections of WISEgrants.

## **Do LEAs need to consult with American Indian Nations regarding their ESSA LEA Plan and Title VI plan?**

Yes, LEAs must consult with American Indian Nations regarding their ESSA LEA Plan as well as their Title VI plan.

## **Review and Approval Process**

**If our LEA Plan isn't approved, and I can't get a team together in July to fix it, will my allocation be held up? I'm concerned about the private schools being able to plan their program.**

LEAs will be able to complete their ESSA grant applications, but will not be able to claim funds until the LEA Plan is approved.

## **What criteria will DPI use to approve the plan?**

The review criteria the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) staff will use to review and approve LEA plans is available in the [ESSA LEA Plan Road Map and Review Criteria document](#).

## **Question 1.a.i**

**Describe how you will monitor student progress in meeting the state academic standards. In answering this question, please make sure to address the following elements:**

- **Development and implementation of a well-rounded program of instruction to meet the academic needs of all students.**
- **Identification of students who may be at risk for academic failure.**
- **Provision of additional educational assistance to individual students the local educational agency or school determines need help in meeting the challenging State academic standards.**
- **Identification and implementation of instructional and other strategies intended to strengthen academic programs and improve school conditions for student learning.**

## **What is "well-rounded" education?**

The term "well-rounded education" means courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the State or local educational

agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience. Section 8201(52)

**How do you define “improve school conditions”?**

This means what the LEA is doing to improve student learning specifically addressing the strengthening of academic programs.

**Is improving “school conditions” related to Wisconsin’s Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support (MLSS)?**

How the LEA is implementing MLSS would absolutely fit in response to this question.

**Question 1.a.ii**

**How will you identify and address any disparities that result in low-income and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers as defined in the state educator equity plan?**

**If a district hasn’t been identified for inequitable distribution of teachers, can they just answer “not applicable”?**

No, LEAs needs to identify how they would identify these inequities. If the LEA does not have any inequities, it does not need to explain how the inequities will be addressed.

**Where can LEAs find a list of schools that have been identified for inequitable distribution of teachers?**

It was sent in SAFE to districts, as described in [The DAC Digest, April 18, 2018](#).

### **Question 1.a.iv**

**Describe the nature of the programs to be conducted by Title I schoolwide and targeted assistance programs schools and, where applicable, educational services outside such schools for children living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children, and for neglected and delinquent children in community day school programs.**

#### **What does “Nature of the programs” mean?**

**Title I Schoolwide:** This question will only appear if the LEA is serving schools that are implementing Title I schoolwide programs. Provide a brief description of the design of your Title I schoolwide plan(s)

**Title I Targeted Assistance:** This question will only appear if the LEA is serving schools that are implementing Title I targeted assistance programs. Provide a brief description of the design of your Title I targeted assistance program(s).

**Neglected and Delinquent:** If the LEA does not have children living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children, or for neglected and delinquent children in community day school programs, the LEA should simply state that as the answer.

### **Question 1.a.v.**

**Describe the services you will provide homeless children and youths to support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youths, in coordination with the services the local educational agency is providing under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11301 et seq.). The McKinney Vento Requirements include:**

- **Public and Staff Awareness**
- **Community Coordination and Collaboration**
- **Identification and Referral**
- **Policy and Procedure Review/Revision**
- **Transportation to and from School of Origin (including preschool)**
- **Immediate Enrollment**
- **Dispute Resolution**

**How much detail is an LEA required to provide for the Homeless/McKinney-Vento section of the LEA Plan?**

LEAs should provide information on how they are meeting the requirements, including the LEA specific processes or procedures used.

**Can an LEA choose to copy their district policy as one way to demonstrate meeting the requirements?**

The LEA policy might include this information and be one way to demonstrate this requirement.

### **Question 1.a.vi.**

**Describe the strategy you will use to implement effective parent and family engagement under section 1116 of ESSA.**

**How do you define effective (meaningful) parent and family engagement?**

ESSA requires LEAs to describe the strategy they use to implement effective parent and family engagement under Title I, Part A, Section 1116 of ESSA. The requirements include the following: Written LEA and School Family Engagements Policies; required reservations for LEAs with an allocation greater than \$500,000; annual family engagement meetings; school-parent compacts; building capacity of parent and families; and regular, two-way meaningful communication between families and schools. ESSA does not define the term “effective parent and family engagement.”

In the ESSA LEA Plan, LEAs should describe the parent and family engagement strategies they have found effective in the past and/or identify new strategies they plan to implement ensure families are engaged in their children’s education. It is important for LEAs to provide outreach and multiple opportunities for parent and family participation. LEAs are encouraged to document and evaluate their efforts throughout the year.

**Should the parent and family engagement policy be linked?**

No, LEAs should not provide a link to their policy. LEAs need to describe the effective strategies they are implementing to be in compliance with Title I, Part A, Section 1116.

### **Question 1.a.vii.**

**Describe how you will implement strategies to facilitate effective transitions for students from**

- early childhood education programs to elementary school programs, and
- middle grades to high school.

**Please note that this includes, for elementary schools, support, coordination, and integration of services provided under Title I, Part A with early childhood education programs at the LEA or individual school level.**

**If we are not using Title dollars to support transition from early childhood to elementary school programs or transition from middle to high schools, do we need to address it in our LEA Plan?**

Yes, regardless of funding source, transition support is critical to student success and should be included.

**Why isn't transition from elementary school to middle school included in the template?**

It is not included as this transition is not explicitly required under ESSA. However, LEAs are certainly encouraged to include this in their LEA Plan.

**Do LEAs need to answer the questions about transitions if they don't use ESSA funds to support transitions?**

Yes, these are required questions as supportive transitions are critical to student success.

### **Question 2.a.i**

**Describe how you will support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom.**

**How is "remove students from the classroom" defined?**

This means the student is not present in his/her regularly scheduled classroom. The student may be out-of-school suspended, in-school suspended, expelled or placed in some other location in the building.



### Question 2.b.iii

**Describe how you will prioritize Title II funds to schools served that are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities and targeted support and improvement activities under section 1111(d) and have the highest percentage of children counted for Title I, Part A purposes. *This question will only appear if the LEA has schools that are identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement activities.***

**Is there a way to be proactive in the LEA plan if we think our school might be identified as targeted supports and improvement (TSI) or comprehensive supports and improvement (CSI)?**  
LEAs should be proactive in identifying strategies for supporting students and increasing academic achievement. Those strategies will not need to be included in the LEA plan until and unless a district school or schools is identified for TSI or CSI.

### Question 2.b.iv

**Describe how you will use data and ongoing consultation to continually update and improve activities supported under this part. Please note that consultation must include teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, charter school leaders (if you have a charter school in your LEA), parents, and community partners.**

**What type of data and ongoing consultation should be used to update and improve activities?**

The LEA should be looking at all available data that indicate strengths and weaknesses in professional learning as it relates to student achievement. Student data includes academic, behavioral, engagement, and attendance among others and can be found in state and local databases. The findings are then used to ensure that the professional learning occurring addresses those areas.

### Question 3.a.i

**Describe how you will implement strategies to facilitate effective transitions for students from high school to postsecondary education. Please note that this includes:**

- **coordination with institutions of higher education, employers, and other local partners**
- **increased student access to early college high school or dual or concurrent enrollment opportunities, or career counseling to identify student interests and skills.**

**Do we need to respond if we are not using Title I to support our high school(s)?**

Yes, regardless of funding source, transition support should be included in your ESSA LEA plan. This would also include the transition to a consolidated high school if the LEA ends at grade 8.

**Does this focus only on the high school?**

Yes, this section only applies to high schools. Questions regarding other transitions are covered earlier in the LEA Plan.

**What are some examples of local partners?**

Salvation Army, YMCA, YWCA, homeless shelters, churches, clubs and other organizations which could support students as they transition from high school to postsecondary education.

**“Increased student access...” does this imply that student access must increase?**

This requires that the LEA analyze their data to identify a baseline and determine the strategies they need to implement to support student success after graduation.

**Is access to early college credit required?**

Wisconsin Act 59 requires LEAs to comply with student requests for college courses as long as specific requirements are met. Please refer to Wis. Stat. § 118.55(2)(a) for more information.

**Does a K-8 district need to answer the post-secondary transition question?**

The LEA may state, “The district only serves students in grades K - 8” in the text field.

## Question 21

**If determined appropriate by the LEA, describe how you will support programs that coordinate and integrate academic, career, and technical education content through coordinated instructional strategies that may incorporate experiential learning opportunities and promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations or industries in the State.**

### **Is this question required?**

If LEAs are not supporting programs that coordinate and integrate academic, career, and technical education content through coordinated instructional strategies with ESSA funds, then the LEA may type “not applicable” in the text field.

Note: [Wisconsin Administrative Code PI-26.01](#) requires school districts to have academic career plans (ACPs).

## Question 22

**If determined appropriate by the LEA, describe how you will support programs that coordinate and integrate work-based learning opportunities that provide students in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit.**

### **Is this question required?**

If LEAs are not supporting programs that coordinate and integrate academic, career, and technical education content through coordinated instructional strategies with ESSA funds, then the LEA may type “not applicable” in the text field.

Note: [Wisconsin Administrative Code PI-26.01](#) requires school districts to have academic career plans (ACPs).

## Question 23

**If determined appropriate by the LEA, describe how you will use ESSA funds to assist schools in identifying and serving gifted and talented students.**

### **Is this question required?**

If LEAs are not using ESSA funds to assist schools in identifying and serving gifted and talented students, then the LEA may type “not applicable” in the text field.

Note: Wisconsin Statute [118.35\(3\)](#) requires school districts to ensure all gifted and talented pupils enrolled in the school district have access to a program for gifted and talented pupils.

## Question 24

If determined appropriate by the LEA, describe how you will assist schools in developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement.

### Is this question required?

If LEAs are not using ESSA funds to assist schools in developing effective school library programs to develop students' digital literacy skills, then the LEA may type "not applicable" in the text field.

Note: [Wisconsin Administrative Code PI-8.01\(2\)\(H\)1](#) requires schools district to have a long-range plan for library services.

## Documentation of Consultation with American Indian Nations and Tribal Communities

*To ensure timely and meaningful consultation on issues affecting American Indian and Alaska Native students, an affected local educational agency shall consult with appropriate officials from Indian tribes or tribal organizations approved by the tribes located in the area served by the local educational agency prior to the affected local educational agency's submission of a required plan or application for a covered program under this chapter or for a program under subchapter VI of this chapter.*

*Each affected LEA shall maintain in the agency's records and provide to DPI a written affirmation signed by the appropriate officials of the participating tribes or tribal organizations approved by the tribes that the consultation required by this section has occurred. If such officials do not provide such affirmation within a reasonable period of time, the affected local educational agency shall forward documentation that such consultation has taken place to the DPI (20 U.S.C. 7918).*

### Who is considered an "appropriate official"?

The term "appropriate officials" means:

(A) tribal officials who are elected; or

(B) appointed tribal leaders or officials designated in writing by an Indian tribe for the specific consultation purpose under this section (20 U.S.C. 7918 (c)(2)).

### Would consultation with parents as required under Title VI suffice?

*Including parents from local American Indian nations and tribal communities is essential and they should be included as part of the LEA's stakeholder consultation process with all parents. However, to meet this requirement under this section the law, a parent would either need to be the elected tribal official or the appointed designee.*

**What if an LEA is not located in a tribal jurisdiction?**

*LEAs should set up a consultation with a tribal nation(s) within a 50-mile radius (20 U.S.C. 7424 (c)(3)(C)).*

**May an LEA combine this consultation with other requirements regarding tribal or parent involvement?**

*Yes, an LEA may coordinate or consolidate the required ESEA consultation with the parent activities required under the Indian Education formula grant program, the Impact Aid program, and the Johnson O'Malley program. An LEA may only do so, however, if the consultation meets all of the requirements of each program and the appropriate official(s) from the tribal nation(s) are present (USDE Dear Colleague Letter, September 26, 2016).*

**If an LEA has multiple tribes in the geographic area it serves, or if there is one tribe and multiple LEAs, must there be separate consultations with each tribe or LEA?**

*Where there are multiple tribes and a single LEA, the LEA may hold a consultation that includes all affected local tribes. Similarly, where there are multiple LEAs and one tribe, there is no federal prohibition against a joint consultation held by several LEAs. In both cases, the LEA must ensure that the tribe or tribes have a meaningful and timely opportunity to give input into an LEA's plans or applications (USDE Dear Colleague Letter, September 26, 2016).*

**Can a local American Indian nation decline the invitation for consultation?**

*Yes, the American Indian nation may decline the invitation if they so choose. The LEA must submit to DPI written documentation from a tribal leader (such as an email) of the decision.*

**Do you have a question that is not included in this document?**

**Please send new questions to [DPI.ESEAapplication@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:DPI.ESEAapplication@dpi.wi.gov)**

**Be sure to identify the question number that needs clarity.**