

Assessing the Non-Public School Title I Program

Section 1120 (b)(1)(D) of Title I requires that the local education agency (LEA) officials consult with non-public school officials on how Title I services will be academically assessed annually and how the results of that assessment will be used to improve services. Under Title I, public school students who participate in Title I programs must be held to the same challenging state content and student achievement standards that are expected of all public school students. Non-public school students who participate in Title I should also be held to the same high standard.

Assessing the non-public school's program is a four-step process. *In consultation with non-public school officials*, an LEA must on an annual basis:

1. **Identify an appropriate standard against which to measure student progress.** This standard or achievement level, may be adapted from the state's existing standards, or it could be developed from the non-public schools own curriculum or standards. A standard could consist of a specific test score, a percentile rating on the chosen assessment, or a specific set of skills that participating students will be expected to master.
2. **Identify or create an assessment aligned with that standard.** If the state assessment is not an appropriate assessment, an LEA may use data from the non-public school's assessment system, use an alternative testing instrument, or create one that is aligned to the instruction offered by the Title I program. The assessment should be an appropriate grade-level measure of the subject (e.g., reading or math) in which the participating students are being instructed. For students in second grade or below, the assessment could be an informal, teacher-administered checklist or observation of skills.
3. **Define expected "adequate progress" for students participating in the program.** In the most frequently overlooked step in the assessment process, the LEA and non-public school official must determine, on an annual basis, the goals of the Title I program, as defined by the identified standard and assessment. For example, officials could specify a steadily increasing percentage of participating students who must meet the targeted proficiency level. In measuring progress, The U.S Department of Education's guidance says an LEA may "group children by instructional method, grade level, school, or other appropriate basis." The LEA should then summarize and analyze the data and determine whether the "adequate progress" goal was reached.
4. **Use the results of the assessments to make needed modifications to the Title I program.** If the Title I program fails to meet the agreed-upon objectives, the LEA must review the results with the non-public school officials and identify ways to improve instructional strategies to better meet the students' educational needs. Modifications could include changing the targeted grade levels, changing the instructional materials or program, or examining the alignment of the services with the performance standard. The LEA and non-public school officials also could collaborate on what strategies used by the Title I teacher were found to be effective and which were not.

The parents of Title I participants can provide valuable information about their children's Title I program. This information should include the parent's perception of the program and how they

see their children responding. Surveys provide an easy format for reporting key information. End-of-Year Surveys for non-public school teachers are another method for gathering information that public and non-public school officials can use to examine and modify Title I services, determine professional development needs and for planning the next year's Title I program.

This information was adapted from the U.S. Department of Education's publication, "Ensuring Equitable Services to Private School Children: A Title I Resource Tool Kit".