# Title 1 Schools Explained article

**What Are Title 1 Schools**

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**[](https://www.studentdebtrelief.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/title-1-schools.jpg)**

**The Basics of Title 1 Schools**

This program, which is now the pillar of the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html) (ESEA), is our oldest and largest federally funded education program, according to the [U.S. Department of Education](https://www.ed.gov/). It dates from 1965 and its main purpose has been to help underprivileged children meet challenging state academic standards. In other words schools with a student base that are lower-income are provided with title 1 funding in order to help those who are behind or at risk of falling behind, aiming to bridge the gap between low-income students and other students.

The financial assistance is provided through state educational agencies (SEAs) to local educational agencies (LEAs) and public schools.

**The Purpose of Title 1 Schools**

There are thousands of title 1 schools nationwide and they provide students with extra instructional support beyond the regular classroom to help low-achieving children meet state standards in core academic subjects. They coordinate and integrate resources and services from federal, state, and local sources. To be considered for title 1 school funds, at least 40% of the students must be considered low-income.

The [fund provides over $14 billion a year](https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget18/summary/18summary.pdf) to school systems all over the country for struggling students (students who are at risk of failing or living at or near poverty) and it reaches over six million students, primarily in the elementary grades. LT

**The Two Available Title 1 School Programs**

There are two programs available for Title 1 Schools, the targeted assistance school program, and the schoolwide program.Both, targeted assistance school programs and schoolwide programs aim to improve teaching and learning to enable participating students to meet the learning standards. In accomplishing this goal, these requirements must be met:

* The Consolidated Application targeting process must identify eligible schools to receive Title 1 funds.
* Children participating in the program must show improved achievements
* Regular education program must be coordinated and supported
* Highly-qualified teachers must provide instructions
* Increase in parental involvement must be implemented.
* May provide services to children who are not older than age 21 who are entitled to a free public education through grade 12, and/or not yet at a grade level where the local educational agency (LEA) provides free public education

**Title 1 Targeted Assistance School Program**

The targeted assistance school program is available to schools which do not meet the 40% threshold of underprivileged kids for the Schoolwide program.  Title 1 teachers provide services only to selected children. The funds can only be used to provide services to selected children who have the greatest need for educational assistance.

* Staff uses multiple measures to determine which students are eligible to participate in the program.
* By using multiple educationally related objective criteria established by the LEA, for children in grade 3 and above.
* By using criteria such as teacher judgment, interviews with parents, and developmentally appropriate measures for children from preschool through grade 2
* The same selection is applied to children who are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, are migrants or have limited English proficiency.
* Funds are directed to employ staff who serves only those students who have been identified as eligible for participation by being the most at-risk of not meeting the learning standards.
* Records must be maintained documenting that Part A funds are spent on activities and services for only Part A eligible and participating students

Read more information on [targeted assistance schools](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1115).

**Title 1 Schoolwide Program**

A Title 1 schoolwide program is a comprehensive program used to upgrade the complete educational program in a Title 1 school thus raising academic achievement for all the students. The schoolwide program is available to schools with a student base where at least 40% come from low-income families. The primary goal is to ensure all students, particularly those who are low-achieving, demonstrate at least proficient levels of achievement.

There are no distinctions between staff members paid with Title I funds and the ones who are not. All school staff should work toward upgrading the entire educational program and improving the achievement of all students, particularly those who are low achieving. Within the [Every Student Succeeds Act](https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft) (ESSA) all school-wide programs that want to continue receiving funds must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and an appropriate plan, and conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of the program.

**Implementation of a Schoolwide Program**

* At least 40% of the students enrolled in the school must be from low-income families.
* The year planning period must have been completed.
* A comprehensive plan must have been developed in consultation with the LEA and the school support team for reforming the entire instructional program in the school. Parents and other community members, teachers, principals, administrators, technical assistance providers, school staff, and students must be involved in the plan development.

**A Schoolwide Program Benefits**

Schools operating schoolwide programs serve all students to improve student achievement.  The schools do not have to identify particular children as eligible for services because all students enrolled are eligible to receive the services provided with Title 1 including direct instruction from staff paid with Title 1 funds. Also, documentation to show that Part A funds are paying for services for those students that would otherwise not be eligible is not required. Every student is identified as a participant in Title 1 in schools operating Schoolwide programs. Schoolwide programs can use their Title 1 funds in various manners but they must engage in reform strategies that increase the amount and quality of learning time and provide a high-quality curriculum

You can read more about [schoolwide programs here](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html).

**Title 1 School Teachers**

All instructional staff in title 1 schools, including [paraprofessionals](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.pdf), must be highly qualified and experienced according to the criteria set by [ESSA](https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft).  A special procedure must be followed and placed in areas of greatest need.  Teachers provide instruction, while paraprofessional educators provide support to the student for that instruction. They assist teachers, supervise students and supplement regular classroom curriculum with additional activities for students or provide administrative support for teaching.

Teachers licensed in other subject areas and paraprofessionals may provide reinforcement for learning activities but not the actual instruction.  The parent involvement is a crucial and integral part of daily operations in a Title 1 school and the requirements for teachers are specific.

**Title 1 Teacher Requirements**

Title 1 teachers must be appropriately licensed for the grade and content at the time of hire whether it is a targeted assistance or a schoolwide program.

**Title I Paraprofessional Requirements**

All [paraprofessionals](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.pdf) who work in a Title I targeted assistance program as well as in a schoolwide program must meet [ESSA](https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft) criteria at the time of hire.

In order to be qualified, a paraprofessional must hold a high school diploma and two years of post-secondary education completed or an associate’s degree or have met a standard of quality and be able to demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics.