

Questions and Answers

Q. What are *Federal Programs*?

- A. **Federal Programs** are those programs funded by federal dollars appropriated by the federal government for the expressed purpose of addressing high priority needs such as high poverty rates, limited opportunities for certain services, educational deficits in schools, etc.

Q. Which schools in the Madison County School District receive federal funds?

- A. All of them. All schools receive Title II-Highly Qualified Teachers and administrators and on-going professional development, and Title IV-Safe and Drug Free Schools, and Title V-Innovative Education Strategies. Not all schools receive Title I funds.

Q. Why don't all schools benefit from Title I appropriations?

- A. Title I funds are appropriated according to a poverty criteria, based on free- and reduced meals. The purpose of Title I is to provide extra resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools and to ensure that poor children have the same opportunities as other children to meet challenging state academic standards.

There must be 40% or more of the students eligible for free/reduced priced meals for a school to be eligible for Title I funds.

Programs in Title I schools are either **Targeted Assisted** (a school with at least the poverty rate of the district as a whole) or **Schoolwide** (40% or higher poverty rate at a particular school).

Q. Does a school automatically receive Title I funds and services once the poverty level reaches 40% percent or higher?

- A. No..... Funds are appropriated to the school district, not to individual schools. A school district is not **required** to serve a school that is below 75% poverty; therefore, rather than serving all schools that meet the eligibility requirement, a school district may choose to only serve the schools, in rank order, serving the schools with the highest percentages of poverty first.

Q. Currently, how many Title I eligible schools are there in the Madison County School District?

- A. Seven..... Listed in rank order from highest to lowest reported free- and reduced meal counts: Northeast Madison Middle School, Velma Jackson Elementary, Luther Branson Elementary School, East Flora Elementary School, Flora Middle School, Velma Jackson Magnet High School, and Ann Smith Elementary School.

Q. Are all of the 7 eligible schools receiving Title I funds and services?

- A. Yes.....The 7 schools identified above range from a high poverty rates of ninety-six percent and more to a low of forty-one percent.

The 2005-2006 school year was the first year for Ann Smith Elementary School to receive Title I assistance.

Q. What is the difference between *Targeted Assisted (TA) services* and *Schoolwide (SW) program services*?

- A. In a TA school with a poverty rate at least as low as the overall district, students are identified for services based on needs spelled out in a multi-criterion instrument. Title I funding is used to supplement services those targeted students as identified by the multi-criterion instrument. A SW program simply means a school may use its Title I funds to upgrade the entire instructional program of the school and all children in the school are eligible participants.

Q. Does receiving Title I or other federal funds reduce the amount of funding schools receive from other funding sources?

- A. No.....Title I and other federal funds are in addition, a supplement, to other state and local funds that districts/schools receive.

Q. What determines how much of the district's total Title I allocation goes to a particular school?

- A. The number of eligible students....Funds are allocated on a per-pupil basis, based on the number of students receiving free/reduced meals. Served schools are ranked in order from highest to lowest poverty.

A district may serve all schools at the same rate (i.e., \$250 per pupil), or the per-pupil rates may be ranked according to the schools' poverty rankings. For example, the per-pupil rate for a school with 90% poverty may be \$250 per pupil, while the rate for a school with 77% poverty may be \$200 per pupil.

Q. How may federal funds be used?

- A. Each program targets specific areas of need, and each program has guidelines for using funds. For the most part, however, funds may be used in any way that supplements the curriculum and meets the needs to be addressed by that particular program.

Q. If students from a Title I eligible school transfer to a non-Title I school, may funds be transferred also?

- A. No..... If the school is not Title I served, those students will not receive Title I services.

Note: If a Title I school falls into school improvement and the parents chooses to exercise Choice (See the Student/Parent Handbook.) and move their children from a Title I eligible school that has fallen into official school improvement status, Title I dollars will follow eligible students.

Q. What federal funded programs/practices and services are provided at my child's school?

- A. Those will vary from school to school. When you conference with your child's

teacher, ask him or her about services and practices being implemented in the school. The principal will also be able to answer that question.

Q. How do I find out how much Title I funds my child's school receives?

- A. Go to the principal of the school. The principal can also tell you how the funds are being used. That information should be made available to parents each year.

Also, look for announcements and/or invitations from your child's school to participate in the planning/decision-making process each spring.

Q. What is the purpose of Title V funds?

- A. The purpose of Title V is to provide funding to support reform efforts and to provide support for innovative programs and services designed to improve teaching and learning.

Q. Does my child's school provide drug education services?

- A. Yes..... Title IV funds are used to implement drug and violence prevention programs and activities. Each school has a plan and/or process for addressing and providing drug education activities for students. Visit the school and speak with the principal and/or school counselor about *how* and *what* drug education services are provided.

Q. Can students, teachers, and other education personnel in private schools within a public school district benefit from federal funds allocated to public school districts?

- A. Yes.... Private schools, including religiously affiliated schools, that have 501(c) (3) tax exemption status and can document compliance with non-discriminatory federal statutes are eligible participants of federal programs.

Q. How are services provided by the school district to private schools?

- A. Public school officials are required to provide timely consultation regarding planning for federal programs with private school officials each year. Each federal program has specific guidelines regarding the participation of private/non-public schools. Private/non-public schools do not receive funds directly from the federal government or the Mississippi Department of Education, but are served by the public school district. It is the public school district's responsibility to order and pay for the materials and services provided to private schools with federal funds.

Q. Are any of the private/non-public schools in the district currently participating in federal programs?

- A. Yes.

Q. Is Title II a new program?

- A. Not really! Title II-Highly Qualified *Teachers and Administrators Fund* broadens the scope of what you might remember as the *Eisenhower Math and Science Program*. The Title II initiative combines funding support for preparing, training, recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers with funding to hire teachers to reduce class size in schools with the largest class sizes and the greatest numbers of at-risk students.

Q. What is Title III?

A. Title III supports efforts and services to provide language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students.

Q. Are there English proficient students in the Madison County School District?

A. Yes.... Currently, the district serves 155 ELL students with a composite of over thirty (30) different languages.

For more information on the district's English Language Learner (ELL) program and services provided under Title III, contact the Office of Federal Programs, at (601) 879-3015.

Q. How can I get answers for future questions that I might have about federal programs?

A. There are several things you can do:

- (1) Schedule a conference with the principal of your child's school.
- (2) Contact Mrs. Kimberly Dowe-Davis, Parent Relations Coordinator, at (601) 879-3018.
- (3) You may also call the district office (601/879-3015) to speak with someone in the Office of Federal Programs.