

Needs Assessment Procedure

Districts are required to conduct annual needs assessments for each Title I school (both schoolwide and targeted assistance programs) that include data on student achievement relative to state standards, and input from parents and educators. The needs assessment procedure briefly describes how the district and schools conduct their needs assessments in order to establish priorities for action and make appropriate decisions about the allocation of resources (e.g., people, materials, time, and fiscal, including all funds under ESEA). This includes a description of the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed, who is involved in the analysis, how priority needs are determined, and how school improvement plans and other documentation relate to this process.

This sample is not an official Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education document. It is provided only as an example.

Needs Assessment Procedure

Step One: Data Teams

Each Title I school has a data team which meets monthly to evaluate assessment data by grade level and subject area. These data are to include such assessments as MCAS, BAS, SRI, SMI, ACCESS for ELLs, and other common assessments in that school, such as district math or district writing prompts. Behavioral data are also included in the evaluations conducted by data teams.

The members of the data team, in collaboration with the building principal, will make recommendations regarding changes in curriculum, assessment, student programming, and professional development needs based on this analysis. Their work also helps to identify Best Practices to be utilized in the school.

Step Two: District Improvement Planning Committee

The District Planning Committee meets in early spring each year. The committee meets in the evening and is comprised of all administrators, community partners, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, members of the business community, and town officials.

In small groups, the committee works to analyze assessment and survey data, as well as data regarding graduation rates, college attendance, nursery school enrollment, and tiered instruction statistics. Groups assess the district's strengths and areas of need in the following categories: Curriculum, School Leadership, Professional Development, Technology, Tiered Support, Family and Community Engagement, Budget and Resources, and Culture and Climate.

From the District Improvement Planning Committee notes, the team identifies two to four priority areas and develops an action plan.

Step Three: School Improvement Planning Committee

The schools follow the same process in developing school improvement plans in the fall. First, the superintendent shares the finalized district improvement plan with all staff. Then, in collaboration with teachers, parents, administrators, business partners, and school committee, the school improvement councils create their school improvement plans based on the broad goals of the district improvement plan and the specific needs of their school community.

Step Four: The Budget Process

The District Improvement Plan and School Improvement Plans are used to inform the budget process (January to March), the district professional development plan, the Title I plan and grant application, the school professional development plans, and the Title IIA grant application, as well as the special education grant and funding decisions. The budget process is as follows:

- 1) Superintendent seeks budget suggestions through an e-mail sent to all school personnel
- 2) Administrators provide input regarding the needs of their schools as determined by data teams, and school improvement goals.
- 3) A budget subcommittee works to create a budget that meets district needs and town parameters. The subcommittee is comprised of the superintendent, administrators, finance committee members, and a school committee representative.

Funding sources used include:

- Local budget
- Federal and State Grants: Title I, Title IIA, 632 grant, special education and early childhood grants (240, 274, 262)
- Other foundation support, when available

Step Five: Needs Assessment Template

With the budget in place and the needs determined, the administrative team finalizes decisions for professional development and grant applications using the Needs Assessment template.