

Title I Comparability

General Information

Only districts that have grade spans that contain more than one school and at least one Title I school are required to complete the Title I Comparability Application. There are approximately 200 districts in the state that meet this criterion. The following are questions and answers regarding general information about Title I Comparability.

Q1: What is comparability?

A1: Comparability is one indication that a local school district is using Title I funds to supplement and not supplant other funding sources. Meeting comparability means that the district provides services in the Title I schools that are at least comparable to that which the district provides in the non-Title schools. If all of the schools in a grade span are Title I schools, meeting comparability means that the district provides services in the higher poverty Title I schools that are at least comparable to that which the district provides in the lower poverty Title I schools. A district is comparable if it implements a district-wide salary schedule and has procedures that ensure equivalence among schools in the allocation of staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies. A comparability study compares the distribution of state and local resources among the schools that include those grade spans providing Title I services.

Q2: How often does comparability need to be determined?

A2: Districts must implement procedures to comply with the comparability requirements annually. Districts must also maintain records that are updated biennially documenting their compliance with the comparability requirements.

Q3: How is comparability determined?

A3: The Title I Comparability Application is available within the Michigan Electronic Grants System (MEGS). Comparisons are made between schools within grade spans that contain at least one Title I school. Comparability is determined using either the *student/ instructional staff ratio* method or the *instructional staff salary per student* method. Districts must demonstrate comparability by at least one of these computational methods.

Q4: Does every district need to complete the Title I Comparability Application?

A4: No. A district that has only one school per grade span, with no overlapping grades between schools, does not need to complete a comparability application. Only grade spans that contain more than one

school and at least one Title I school need to have comparability computed.

Q5: When should the Title I Comparability Application be done?

A5: It is expected that the Title I Comparability Application will be available in MEGS on November 1, 2008. This submission deadline is December 8, 2008.

Q6: How are schools compared in determining comparability?

A6: For grade spans containing both Title I and non-Title I schools, each Title I school is compared to a criterion that is computed across the non-Title I schools. For grade spans containing Title I schools, each higher poverty school is compared to a criterion that is computed across the lower poverty schools. If all the schools in the grade span are Title schools, no more than half of the schools may be used to establish the criterion. MEGS automatically performs these comparisons within the Title I Comparability Application.

Q7: How is the criterion established?

A7: "At least comparable" is defined as being within a 10% variance. Therefore, the criterion for determining comparability using the *student/instructional staff ratio* method is 90% of the average *student/instructional staff ratio* across the comparison schools. The criterion for determining comparability using the *instructional staff salary per student* method is 110% of the average *instructional staff salary per student* across the comparison schools. MEGS automatically calculates the criterion values within the Title I Comparability Application.

Q8: What does a district need to do if comparability is not met?

A8: If comparability cannot be demonstrated, the district must make adjustments in staffing to become comparable. These changes must be made no later than the beginning of the second semester of the school year that comparability was not met.

Q9: What happens if a district fails to make the adjustments necessary to achieve comparability?

A9: The consequence of non-compliance with comparability is the loss of a portion of Title I funds from the beginning of non-comparability. The portion is the amount that the district would have to contribute to achieve comparability.