



The Buzz

A consolidated federal programs newsletter

Issue 51

May 2008

Title IIA Clarifications and Highly Qualified Targets

The USDE has provided more guidance on its expectations for LEAs not meeting its highly qualified teacher targets. Every LEA is now expected to have 100 percent of its core content teachers (including special education teachers) meeting the highly qualified definition. The USDE will be conducting a Title IIA monitoring visit in Colorado during the 2008-09 school year.

- *LEAs not meeting HQ targets for two consecutive years.* LEAs are expected to ". . . develop an improvement plan that will enable the agency to meet . . . annual measurable objectives and that specifically addresses issues that prevented the agency from meeting such annual measurable objectives" (NCLB, section 2141(a)). In conversations with the USDE, the individual teacher plans submitted through the online HQ Plan system are not fully sufficient to meet this requirement. In the 08-09 consolidated application, all LEAs are expected to include their policy on hiring highly qualified teachers and to reach the 100 percent highly qualified target. This additional documentation should satisfy the requirement.

continued on page 2

REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE LETTERS

As many of you know, CDE recently received the findings from the USDE Title I monitoring visit. During their visit, they took a deeper look at Public School Choice by visiting 5 school districts. Among the issues identified were that choice letters were not sent prior to the start of the school year, not all students in the school were offered choice and the Spanish translation did not include the same information at the English version. Hence, we want to review the requirements in written form as well as host a webinar for districts that are required to offer choice and SES. The webinar will be on May 21st from 1:30-3:30. For more information contact Laura Hensinger at hensinger_l@cde.state.co.us.

An LEA is required to offer Public School Choice to all students enrolled in any Title I school identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Students must be given the option to attend a public school that is not identified for improvement or as "persistently dangerous" by the state not later than the first day of school. Schools entering into their first year of improvement must send a letter by the first day of school for the year that they are identified.

All students are eligible to transfer when a school is identified for improvement. The lowest performing students from poverty must have priority for transfer in schools where not all requests can be met. However, if only higher performing students request transfer, then these requests must be honored.

Parents must still be notified even when there are no schools to which students can transfer because (1) all schools at a grade level are in school improvement; (2) there is only 1 school in the district; or (3) the rural or isolated nature of the LEA prevents choice. The notification must

continued on page 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 | Title I Parent Meeting
- 2 | Raffle Winner!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 5 | NCLB School Improvement Plans



- *LEAs not meeting HQ targets and not meeting AYP for 3 consecutive years.* In 2007-08, 13 LEAs were identified under the NCLB 2141(c) provision. In addition to restricting Title I funds in creating new paraprofessional positions, these identified LEAs are expected to "...enter into an agreement with [the SEA] ... on the use of that agency's funds." The USDE has communicated that the individual teacher plans submitted through the online HQ Plan system are not fully sufficient to meet this requirement. Therefore, CDE will be contacting each of the identified LEAs to begin the "financial agreement" process over the next couple of weeks. CDE is expected to lay out its priorities for the use of Title IIA funds. Currently, the priorities are:
 - Work toward individual core content teachers becoming HQ
 - Needs assessments around professional development and hiring needs
 - Professional Development
 - Innovations related to recruitment and retention of teachers and principals

REMINDER ON ONLINE HQ PLAN SYSTEM

If a teacher's or Title I instructional paraprofessional's salary is paid for with NCLB funds, then they must be highly qualified. All other teachers and Title I instructional paraprofessionals must be highly qualified or at least have an approved plan before NCLB funds will be released. Additional information on the HQ data process and timeline can be found at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/NCLB/tiia_genres.asp.

Special Education Teachers: Administration Units that had finalized their Special Ed HR data in ADE should have received their passwords. Other AUs will receive their passwords as soon as ADE closes again (due May 2). The URL is www.cde.state.co.us/scriptscfpu/HQSpEd08/index.asp. HQ plans are due May 27th.

General Education Teachers: The system should be open this week. The URL is www.cde.state.co.us/scriptscfpu/HQT08/index.asp. HQ plans are due the week of May 27th.

Title I Paraprofessionals: The system should be open next week. The URL will be announced once it opens via e-mail to the HQ contacts. HQ plans are due the week of June 2nd.

Required Title I Parent Meeting

As part of the USDE monitoring of Colorado, the department identified that CDE has not consistently ensured that schools receiving Title I funds conduct an annual Title I meeting for parents. This annual meeting for parents is a basic requirement of Title I schools. The law requires that each Title I school:

- convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under this part and to explain the requirements of this part, and the right of the parents to be involved.

A desk review to ensure compliance with this requirement will be conducted in the fall of 2008. Districts will be required to submit evidence (agenda, announcement, minutes) from each Title I school.

In a Title I Targeted Assistance program, the annual meeting must be for parents of Title I students, while in a Title I Schoolwide Program, all parents must be invited. It is not uncommon for schools to host this annual meeting in conjunction with a Back-to-School Night or other school kick-off event. For more information or questions, contact Trish Boland, (303) 866-6998 or boland_t@cde.state.co.us.

RAFFLE WINNER!!!

**Sandra Kern
Superintendent
Ouray School District R-1**

During the Consolidated Federal Programs Application trainings this spring, attendants were able to put their name in to win a SMART Board, an interactive whiteboard.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 6th and 8th

What Does It Take to Be Successful in Mathematics Workshops

Enroll online at

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/pdssp/cal.asp>.

May 12th

4th Annual Colorado Reading Summit

Adams Mark Hotel in Denver, 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.

For more information visit

www.cde.state.co.us/cde_readsum/index.htm.

May 23 – 25th

Parent and Youth Leadership Institute II

Hosted in Breckenridge by the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition

For more information visit

www.coparentcoalition.org or call Juan Sanchez at (720) 890-0123. Registration deadline is April 18th.

June 7th

Colorado Arts Education Summit

Auraria Campus, Denver

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

For information and registrations, visit

www.denvergov.org/artsedsummit.

June 22nd – 25th

Rocky Mountain Institute: Implement Response to Intervention (RtI), Keystone

For more information visit

www.bettereducator.com/event.aspx?EventID=173.

July 23rd – 25th

39th Annual CASE Convention

Global to Local – Bringing It Home, Breckenridge

For more information visit www.co-case.org.

September 16th – 17th

Save the Date for the NCLB Directors Meeting

October 24th – 25th

32nd Annual CoTESOL Fall Convention

Radisson S.E. Denver Hotel & Convention Center

For more information visit

www.colorado.edu/iec/cotesol.



- The 2008-2009 NCLB Allocations are now available on the CDE website: www.cde.state.co.us/cdefisgrant/NCLB_download.htm.
- Consolidated Federal Programs Application is now available on the CDE website: www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/consapp/index.asp. Every district must enter the system and accept/assign/relinquish funds.
- The 2008-2009 Consolidated Federal Programs Reference Manual which was developed to assist with the completion of the application, is available at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/consapp/index.asp.

Colorado Quiz

April's Question:

Following the discovery of gold in California in 1849, what prompted Colorado's "Pikes Peak or Bust", and in what year(s)?

The discovery of gold in California in 1849 touched off a search for gold in other regions including the Rocky Mountains and accounted for the first extensive settlement of Colorado. In July, 1858, William Green Russell, a Georgia miner, discovered several hundred dollars worth of gold at the mouth of Dry Creek in the present-day Denver suburb of Englewood. Russell's find started the "Pike's Peak or Bust" gold rush of 1858 – 1859. Historians estimate that approximately 50,000 people came to Colorado in search of gold in 1858-1859.

May's Question:

How did Denver get its name, and in what year?

For the answer to April's question read next month's Buzz and/or visit.

www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/pdssp/ss.asp.

SCHOOL-LEVEL PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

continued from previous column

NCLB requires that all schools receiving Title I funds adopt a policy on parent involvement and to jointly agree upon a school/parent compact. However, in Colorado, powers for policy-making reside with the local school board, as found in CRS 22-32-109. As such, schools must adopt a set of principles (policy) that conform with those parent involvement activities outlined in the district's Title I parent involvement policy. It is within this set of guiding principles that the school/parent compact is found. A sample school-level Title I parent involvement policy that includes the school/parent compact and can be found on CDE's website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/improvement/SuppServices.asp>. Title I schools can describe how particular, required activities will be accomplished within this document and thus personalize their work.

Like the district parent involvement policy, the school-level policy must contain some very specific language as to how the school will support and use parent involvement as a strategy for improving student academic performance. In addition, the law states that this school-level policy must be jointly developed with parents. Therefore, the sample policy can be used as a draft or starting point when meeting with parents. It is the school/parent compact that contains the major responsibilities of the school, staff, administration, and parents.

Finally, the school/parent compact does NOT need to be signed. The law requires that once the document has been agreed upon by the staff and parents who developed it, the compact must be shared with parents at a parent-teacher conference. The compact should be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement. For more information contact Trish Boland at (303) 866-6998 or boland_t@cde.state.co.us.

RTI AND CFP UPDATE

As a follow-up to the Rocky Mountain Institute RtI Training last summer, Consolidated Federal Programs (CFP) staff visited 15 schools during the first 3 months of the year. The purpose of the visits was to identify strengths and areas of need related to implementation of RtI.

Many strengths were identified. Most school staff demonstrated understanding of RtI procedures. Schools have RtI teams with broad membership.

Teachers are using student data to make decisions about next steps in instruction and are creatively identifying interventions to address needs.

The greatest RtI implementation needs are additional resources and professional development. Resource needs include supplemental and intervention programs in reading and math and progress monitoring assessments, especially in mathematics. Smaller schools struggle to find highly qualified personnel to deliver programs. Professional development needs include training in SBR instructional practices and use of assessment data for progress monitoring and instructional planning. In addition, teachers need to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between RtI and special education; professional development will help teachers realize that testing by special education specialists is part of a comprehensive RtI diagnostic process.

Next year, we will be working with district RtI contacts whom you have identified. We encourage you to send district teams (as opposed to school teams) to the Rocky Mountain Institute RtI training from June 22-25. CDE plans to support the district RtI contacts to form regional cadres that will identify resources and determine how professional development can best be delivered. More information about this plan will be available soon.

Involving Parents in Use of Set Aside Funds

Districts that receive in excess of \$500,000 in Title I, Part A funds, must set aside a minimum of 1 percent of their allocation for parent involvement activities. Ninety-five percent of this 1 percent must flow to the Title I schools for school-level activities. The law requires that parents be involved in decisions regarding how the 1 percent set aside will be utilized. In a recent monitoring by the USDE, Colorado was found to be out of compliance in ensuring that districts and schools involve parents in this decision-making.

A desk review for this requirement will be conducted in the spring of 2009, which will entail each applicable district submitting evidence (meeting minutes, agenda, announcement) that parents were provided the opportunity to be part of the decision-making for use of the Title I parent involvement set aside. For more information, contact Trish Boland at (303) 866-6998 or boland_t@cde.state.co.us.

indicate that the school is identified for school improvement and that the child is eligible for choice, but that no choices are currently available. Such notification might also inform parents of other options including SES for those children who are eligible or cyber schools. In this situation, an LEA must, to the extent practicable, work with other districts in the area to establish a cooperative agreement that would allow inter-district choice.

The Public School Choice notification to parents must include:

- Explanation as to what the designation of “school improvement” means;
- How the “school-on-improvement” compares in terms of academic achievement to other elementary and secondary schools served by the district and provide overall percentages for state. This comparison should use CSAP scores not SAR information;
- Explanation of what the school and district are doing to help the school increase student achievement;
- Explanation of how parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that led to identification;
- Explanation of the parents’ option to transfer their child to another public school in the district that is not on improvement;
 - ✓ Explanation of transfer option must include, at a minimum, information on the performance of the school or schools to which the child may transfer; choice schools must make adequate yearly progress as defined by the state’s AYP formula;
 - ✓ Explanation may include other information such as a description of any special academic programs or facilities; the availability of before– and after-school programs; and the professional qualifications of teachers in the core academic subjects.
- Notification that the district will pay for transportation of transfer students to the choice school;
- If applicable, a description of specific corrective actions or restructuring plans, including opportunities for parental participation;
- In the case where choice is not available, indicate any other options available.

Sample letters are available at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/improvement/tia_psc.asp.

NCLB SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

The USDE cited the Colorado Department of Education for not adequately ensuring that schools on NCLB Improvement had evidence that the 9 requirements were contained in a school plan. As a result, CDE will develop a more detailed protocol for reviewing these plan requirements on a yearly basis. The following 9 requirements must be incorporated into a plan [NCLB Section 1116(a)(3)(A)];

- The incorporation of strategies based on scientifically based research that will strengthen the core academic subjects of reading and math;
- The adoption of policies and practices concerning the core academic subjects that have the greatest likelihood that all groups of students will meet the state’s proficient level of achievement on CSAP;
- How the school will provide its teachers and principals with high-quality professional development ;
- How the funds for professional development will be used to remove the school from school improvement status;
- The establishment of specific annual, measurable objectives for continuous and substantial progress toward meeting the state’s proficient level of achievement on CSAP;
- How the school will provide written notice about the identification to parents of each student enrolled in the school;
- The technical assistance provided to the school by the LEA, and the state serving the school under this plan;
- The strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school; and
- The incorporation of a teacher mentoring program.



Colorado Department of Education
Consolidated Federal Programs
1560 Broadway, Suite 1450
Denver, CO 80202-5149



407D3202