



Frequently Asked Questions Title I, Part A Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver

1. Why is a Title I, Part A Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver necessary?

A Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver is required when the poverty rate of a Title I, Part A school that wishes to operate as a schoolwide program falls below 40 percent. The waiver is also needed should a non-Title I school with a poverty rate below 40 percent wishes to become a schoolwide school. The purpose of the waiver is to provide *flexibility* in a school or local education agency (LEA) without undermining the basic intent of the law.

2. What must an LEA consider when requesting a waiver for the schoolwide poverty threshold?

A school applying for a waiver must consider how a schoolwide program will best serve the needs of the students in the school served under Title I, Part A in improving academic achievement of the entire school. *ESSA Section 1114(b)(1); ESSA Section 1114(b)(3)*

3. What are the components of the Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver Application?

The components of the waiver include: (1) a rationale describing the need(s) that cannot be met without a schoolwide program and the rationale for serving the school in this capacity. (2) a Schoolwide Plan must be included with the waiver request application. The plan must have been produced using a full year of planning that included opportunities for parents and community stakeholders' input unless a shorter period has been previously authorized by the GaDOE. (3) The school and LEA must agree to the assurances outlined in the application. *ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)(A)(ii)*

4. What documents are required when requesting a waiver for the schoolwide poverty threshold?

Two documents are required when requesting a waiver for the schoolwide poverty threshold: (1) Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver application form that has been completed and signed by the principal of the school, Title I Director and the Superintendent. These signatures indicate acceptance of the assurances by the school and the LEA; (2) A current Schoolwide Program Plan (SWP) that will be implemented during the waiver year. The submitted SWP plan must have been produced using a full year of planning that included opportunities for parents and community stakeholders' input, unless a shorter period has been previously authorized by Title I, Part A of the GaDOE. *ESSA Section 1114(b)(2)*



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5. What is the process for submitting the application for the Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver?

Complete the Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver form to request a waiver of the 40 percent school poverty threshold requirement for Title I, Part A (schoolwide program eligibility). This waiver is required when the poverty rate of a Title I school that wishes to operate as a schoolwide program falls below 40 percent. The school must apply each school year the school's poverty level falls below 40%. Send the completed Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver application along with the Schoolwide Plan to:

Title I, Part A Senior Program Manager

Email: TitleI@doe.k12.ga.us

Copy the LEA's Title I Program Specialist

6. Will an LEA receive additional funding (allocation) if additional schools are served?

No. LEAs will not receive any additional Title I, Part A funds to serve more schools. The annual allocation is based on data from the Census Bureau and not the number of Title I schools within the LEA. The allocation will continue to be used for required set-asides and a per pupil allocation for each school being served. The LEA should keep in mind the needs identified in each of the schools to be served and ensure that adequate funds are allocated to meet those needs.

7. What if the F/R lunch percentage of a Title I school fell below 40% during October FTE, does the school need to apply for the Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver the first year?

Not necessarily. The LEA can provide services to a Title I school that is no longer Title I eligible for one year without applying for a waiver (Grandfathered in for one year). For the year that the school is "grandfathered," the LEA must attach a statement to the General Attachment Tab in the Consolidation Application explaining the reason for the school to be served. However, if the school remains below 40% in the subsequent year a waiver application would be required to continue to operate as a schoolwide school. Therefore, the LEA could opt to apply for the waiver following the grandfathered year.



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- 8. May a previously served schoolwide program school (that is currently not being served) with poverty percentage less than 40% for the next fiscal year apply for the waiver?**

Yes, all schools that fall below 40% poverty may apply for the Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver. The waiver application must include a schoolwide plan that has been produced using a full year of planning that included opportunities for parent and community stakeholder input, unless a shorter period has been previously authorized by Title I, Part A of the GaDOE.

- 9. Is the new threshold only for schools currently being served as schoolwide schools that fell below the 40% poverty rate?**

No, any school in the LEA may apply for a waiver of the 40% poverty requirement to become a schoolwide school. All requirements for the application must be followed for the waiver to be approved.

- 10. If an LEA waives poverty threshold with a poverty rate below 35% will the 125% rule still apply to the per pupil allocation for all Title I schools?**

Yes, the 125 percent rule applies if an LEA serves a school with a poverty threshold below 35 percent, even if the school receives a waiver under ESEA section 1114 to operate a schoolwide program. In other words, if an LEA serves any school below 35 percent poverty, section 1113(c)(2)(A) of the ESEA requires the LEA to allocate an amount for each low-income child in each participating Title I school that is at least 125 percent of the LEA's allocation per low-income child, except that the per-pupil amount for the served school with the lowest poverty rate may be less due to the amount of funds remaining.

- 11. Does the schoolwide poverty threshold apply to schools that have never been served as a Title I school?**

Any school in the LEA can apply for a waiver to the 40% poverty requirement to become a schoolwide school.

- 12. Could a Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver application to become schoolwide be accepted without the full year of planning (ESEA Section 1114)?**

A full year of planning is required unless the LEA determines, in consultation with the school, that less time is needed to develop and implement the schoolwide program. The LEA should contact the Title I, Part A Education Program Specialist to discuss this request for less time. *ESSA Section 1114(b)(1) 1114*

- 13. If a school that is not being served and does not have a Title I schoolwide plan but has a school improvement plan (SIP) that contains the required components of a schoolwide program (based on the Schoolwide Program Checklist) can the SIP be**



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used as the schoolwide plan?

GaDOE does not require a specific format for a schoolwide plan. The online SIP format via the SLDS platform or local strategic plan could serve as the school's plan. However, all required schoolwide components must be addressed. *ESSA Section 1114(b)(7)(A)(ii)*

14. How will the LEA be notified once the waiver application has been reviewed?

The Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver application and schoolwide plan will be reviewed by the Title I, Part A program staff. Once the application is approved by Title I, Part A Senior Program Manager, a notification of approval will be sent via email to the district. The email approval notification must be attached to the General Attachment Tab of the Consolidated Application when the Title I original budget is submitted.

15. Will a school need to request a Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver application each year?

Yes. A Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver is required each year when the poverty rate of a Title I, Part A school that wishes to operate as a schoolwide program falls below 40 percent.

16. Where can additional information about the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Poverty Threshold Waiver and Schoolwide Plan Checklist be found?

More information can be found in the Implementing Title I, Part A in Georgia Schools Handbook and on the Georgia Department of Education Title I Schoolwide Programs webpage. If you have additional questions, contact your Title I, Part A Education Program Specialist.