

****Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program and School for Rigor Intervention Implementation in****

**DMPS Elementary (Early Literacy) and Middle (Literacy and Math) Schools:**

**Evaluation Plan**

This document describes purpose and questions for a proposed evaluation of the Title I, Part A of the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* Schoolwide Program implementation in elementary and middle schools in the Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS). The evaluation’s contexts include the Title I Schoolwide Program and Schools for Rigor (SfR) initiative implementation with the focus on (a) early literacy, as the primary emphasis and mathematics in elementary and (b) both literacy and mathematics (math) as primary subject areas in middle school level settings.

DMPS has a total of 39 elementary and 10 middle schools. As illustrated in Figure 1 twenty-eight DMPS elementary schools (72%) receive Title I funds; out of those 13 are both Title I and SfR schools and 15 – Title I only.

**Figure 1. Depiction of the targeted Title I elementary school population**



As it relates to the middle school settings, this evaluation’s targeted school population is depicted in Figure 2. Specifically, there are eight (80%) out of ten DMPS middle schools that receive Title I support. Four middle schools are Title I schools only and four are both Title I and SfR schools.

**Figure 2. Depiction of the targeted Title I middle school population**

****

Title I, Part A is designed to provide “all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps” (ESSA, December 2015). Further, the Schoolwide Program requirements delineated in ESSA focus on increased support for low-achieving students to ensure that all students meet challenging state academic standards. All DMPS Title I schools are Schoolwide Programs. That is, in a Schoolwide Program, Title I funds could be used “to implement reforms to upgrade the entire education2al program of the school” (U.S. Department of Education, September 2016; <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaswpguidance9192016.pdf>). An Academic Interventionist (Title I) Teacher (also referred to as an Interventionist) position is one of the programmatic areas of the Title I comprehensive support for schools to (1) ensure equitable access to education for and (2) improve academic achievement in students. It is paramount that the Title I, Part A funds are used effectively and efficiently. In addition, understanding of how Title I funds are being used facilitates learning about local school decision-making processes aimprovements. Of a particular interest (as required by ESSA) is the use of instructional strategies based on scientifically based research (i.e., evidence based strategies/practices [EBP]) and parental involvement activities.

# Evaluation

## Evaluation Purpose.

To that end, the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program proposed evaluation purpose is to gain an in-depth understanding of:

1. how the work of an Interventionist is organized within the two contexts (or groups), i.e., the Title I only and Title I and SfR in the elementary (early literacy, as the primary focus and math) and middle (literacy and math) school settings;
2. how Title I funds are spent and the impact of those expenditures on teacher development and student achievement within each school’s setting and contexts (i.e., what the effect of Title I funds is on the identified students and what the effect of Title I funds is on school as a whole), and
3. what the effect of SfR is on the context of the Title I program services and Interventionist’s work, specifically (i.e., to examine how the Title I Schoolwide Program implementation context intersects with the SfR intervention).

The proposed evaluation will consist of the two linked phases. The first phase (Phase I) will be conducted during the spring semester 2018 and focus on understanding the context(s) within which Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services are implemented. Hence, it will employ a process-based approach to evaluation. The findings from this first phase will be utilized to (1) create a system (template) in Infinite Campus that will enable schools to collect achievement data for students receiving Title I services during the fall semester 2018 and (2) inform the design of the second phase (Phase II) aimed at assessing the impact of the Title I services on student academic performance. The evaluation Phase II will be conceived as outcome-based and implemented in the fall semester 2018. The relationships between the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program Evaluation Phases I and II are depicted in Figure 3 (see an attachment). Students who are failing, or at-risk of failing, to meet the challenging State Academic Standards in DMPS Title I elementary and middle schools, as defined by ESSA, will comprise this evaluation study’s target population of students.

## Evaluation Framework Informed by the DMPS Equity Vision.

This Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program evaluation is conceived within an integrated framework that focuses on documenting processes (Phase I) that mediate student learning outcomes in DMPS Title I elementary and middle schools (Phase II). That is, answering both process-oriented question (*about how things are, what is taking place, and what is being changed - Phase I)* and outcome-oriented questions (*about why things have changed – Phase II)* is equally important. The DMPS Equity Vision will serve as the evaluation’s theoretical lens. Specifically, the DMPS Equity Analysis Framework core areas (i.e., learning, thriving, and belonging) will constitute main constructs that will inform the development of measurements (e.g., a survey) and protocols (e.g., an interview guide). Further, the DMPS Equity Analysis Framework main questions will (a) guide data collection and data analysis procedures and (b) inform the interpretations of the results to generate findings and the development of recommendations.

## Evaluation Use and Value.

The evaluation’s value is in the use of its findings (Patton, 2008; 2011). It is envisaged that this evaluation Phase I, Phase II, and integrated findings will be used to inform decisions about:

(1) support that could be provided to interventionists to nurture their professional development and foster their effectiveness (district and school levels);

(2) improvements in and the district’s engagement with monitoring the ESSA requirements and school level expenditures of funds (district level);

(3) the development of a system to record data for students served by the Title I Interventionists (school and district levels);

(4) the existence of contextual factors associated with variations in the Interventionist’s outcomes and areas for improvement that include SfR (school and district levels), and

(5) the development of strategies grounded in evidence that facilitate teacher collaboration and effective instruction to improve student academic achievement in the DMPS Title I elementary and middle schools (district and school levels).

Within the above assertions pertaining to the use of the proposed Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program evaluation, its (this evaluation’s) potential value could be inferred for the District and schools and include:

* District:

By focusing on both process and outcomes, the evaluation will address District’s priorities by:

1. generating a rich description by determining not only *what works* as it relates to the Title I Interventionists’ efforts to improve instruction and accelerate student learning, but, equally important, *the process(es)* by which those efforts work, and how they might vary according to settings (i.e., elementary and middle school levels) and each setting’s contexts (i.e., Title I only and Title I and SfR in both elementary and middle schools), and
2. clarifying the effect of SfR on the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services, and
3. designing a system to measure the impact of Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services on student academic outcomes.

Further, the evaluation findings and recommendations could inform the District’s appropriate choices for decisions associated with:

1. monitoring the ESSA requirements and school level expenditures of funds, and
2. planning for and transitioning the remaining Title I elementary and middle schools to become SfR.

* Schools:

This evaluation’s intent is to facilitate learnings and improvements. As such, its potential contribution is in process use (Patton, 2004). That is, the Steering Committee members will be involved in the thinking process that the evaluation requires by providing input about the evaluation’s purpose, questions, design, findings, recommendations, and reporting (see Table 2 below). Further, the DMPS Problem Solving (Collaborative Inquiry) Process will be utilized to engage the Steering Committee members in making meaning of (i.e., interpreting) the results to (a) generate the evaluation’s findings, (b) determine potential new gaps (issues, problems) that might exist, and (c) recommend action(s).

The use of the DMPS Problem Solving (Collaborative Inquiry) Process facilitates learning about how to use data; understand problems; consider conditions, patterns, and inconsistencies; weigh evidence; articulate values; examine assumptions, and develop a plan, which, in turn, contributes to building evaluation capacity and evaluative thinking in decision making (Patton, 2004).

* Schools and District:

The evaluation findings could contribute to supporting the District and school efforts in generating evidence about effective strategies (i.e., evidence-based practices [EBP]) to improve instructions and student academic achievement in the context of the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program implementation.

## Evaluation Questions.

The evaluation’s overarching main questions include: (1) What conditions and factors affect the Interventionist’s work and efforts? (*context*), (2) How is the Interventionist’s daily work organized? (*implementation/ process*), and (3) What is the relationship between the Interventionist and (a) instruction, (b) student academic achievement? (*outcomes*). These questions will guide the implementation of the evaluation Phase I and Phase II. The primary emphasis of the evaluation Phase I will be on the context and implementation process; while the main emphasis of the evaluation Phase II will be on outcomes. The evaluation main questions and their corresponding sub-questions organized by the focus areas and school contexts are provided in Table I.

**Table 1. Evaluation Focus Areas and Main Questions1**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Context** | **Implementation/ Process** | **Outcomes** |
| **Elementary schools -- early literacy**  *The focus of the evaluation is on the use of Title I funds to support early literacy, as the primary emphasis and math interventions by examining their implementations within the (1) Title I only and (2) Title I and SfR contexts (or groups of elementary schools)* | **What conditions and factors affect the Interventionist’s work?**  What are the factors that determine/influence a school hiring decision?  What are qualifications and the variations in those for an interventionist providing early literacy, as the primary emphases and math intervention?  How many interventionists are currently providing early literacy and math interventions? How many of these are funded by Title I?  In what ways is an Interventionist integrated into the school’s culture?  *What are the barriers?*  *What specific support exists (is provided for interventionists)?*  How are Title I additional funds spent? What is the process?What input does an Interventionist have on how Title I additional funds are spent? | **How is the Interventionist’s daily work organized within a building?**  What opportunities does an Interventionist have to collaborate with other interventionists? With classroom teachers? How often and for how much time? What happens during collaboration?  How are students identified for services? How are student needs matched with interventions?  How does an Interventionist provide instruction to/work with a student? With how many students? How long? How is student progress assessed? | **What is the relationship between the Interventionist and**:   1. instruction, and 2. student academic achievement.   *What are potential unexpected outcomes?* |

**Table 1. (continued)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Context** | **Implementation/ Process** | **Outcomes** |
| **Middle schools – literacy and math**  *The focus of the evaluation is on the use of Title I funds to support intervention in literacy and math by examining the implementation processes within the (1) Title I only and (2) Title I and SfR contexts (or groups of middle schools)* | **What conditions and factors affect the Interventionist’s work?**  What are the factors that determine/influence a school hiring decision?  What are qualifications and the variations in those for an interventionist providing literacy and math intervention?  How many interventionists are currently providing (literacy and math) interventions? How many of these are funded by Title I?  In what ways is an Interventionist integrated into the school’s culture?  *What are the barriers?*  *What specific support exists (is provided for interventionists)?*  How are Title I additional funds spent? What is the process?What input does an Interventionist have on how Title I additional funds are spent? | **How is the Interventionist’s daily work organized within a building?**  What opportunities does an Interventionist have to collaborate with other interventionists? With classroom teachers? How often and for how much time? What happens during collaboration?  How are students identified for services? How are student needs matched with interventions?  How does an Interventionist provide instruction/work with a student? With how many students? How long? How is student progress assessed? | **What is the relationship between the Interventionist and**:   1. instruction, and 2. student academic achievement.   *What are potential unexpected outcomes?* |

1 The evaluation sub-questions are broad-based questions that this evaluation is designed to answer. These questions represent themes (or constructs) that will guide the development of the interview questions and survey instrument(s) (i.e., questions and items) to generate evidence in support of the evaluation purpose.

## Stakeholders: Steering Committee.

Steering Committee members represent key stakeholders who are engaged in planning for and implementing this evaluation. The Steering Committee members serve in a consultative role on all phases of the evaluation (i.e., planning, developing measurements/instruments, assisting with data collections by providing access to participants and/or documents, interpreting evidence, drawing conclusions and recommendations, and reviewing and approving final report(s)). The Steering Committee’s composition and members’ roles are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Steering Committee (Stakeholder) Assessment and Engagement Plan (\* indicates member of planning team)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Steering Committee Member Name** | **Interest or Perspective** | **Role in the Evaluation** |
| Elementary School:   * Susie Tallman * Wayne Knutson * Jill Burnett-Requist * Cindy Roerig * Madison Elementary:  1. Staci Kuehl (2nd grade) and 2. Danielle Marlowe (.5 TLC/.5 Intervention)  * Edmunds Elementary:  1. Melissa Osby (Coach) 2. Jackie Aguinga (Coach)  * Jamie O’Brien | Executive Director, Elementary  Elementary Director  Principal, Carver  Principal, Samuelson  Teachers, Instructional Coaches from Madison and Edmunds (2 teachers/school)  Elementary Coordinator | Reviewing and approving the evaluation plan; providing feedback about evaluation design and instruments; assisting with implementation of specific aspects of the evaluation, if needed; participating in result interpretation meetings.  Reviewing and providing feedback about a semifinal report; disseminating, utilizing, and promoting use of evaluation results. |
| Middle School:   * Tim Schott * Joy Linquist * Weeks Middle School:  1. Carman Romeo (teacher) 2. Beth Olkiewicz (coach)  * Jeremy Schwennen * Christi Donald | Executive Director, Secondary  Principal, Harding  Teachers, Instructional Coaches from Weeks Middle School (2 teachers)  Secondary Literacy Coordinator  Secondary Math Coordinator |  |
| David Roney, Program Evaluator, ADE | Program evaluation: process and outcomes |  |
| Margi Neve, Information System Specialist, ADE | Developing a system in Infinite Campus to (a) flag students who have received Title I assistance and (b) link these data to FAST and MAP student assessment results and demographic information |  |
| Kevin Oleson, Grants Program Manager | Monitoring the ESSA requirements and school level expenditures of funds |  |
| Scott Jensen, Sponsored Grants Program Accountant |  |  |

## Evaluation Design: Phase I.

The Title I Schoolwide Program’s evaluation’s overall (Phase I and II) intent is to describe and explore (*what, where, when, and how*) and explain (*why*). Consistent with this orientation and the overall process-outcome integrated framework as described in the section above, the evaluation is conceived as a multi-case study (Yin, 2009; see also Stake, 1995). This approach will enable us to generate a *rich (detailed)* description about the use of the Title I funds and the Interventionist’s work based on the evaluation Phase I findings, which, in turn, will inform the design of Phase II aimed at explaining the potential effects on improving student academic performance.

The evaluation Phase I will utilize multiple (1) sources of data (i.e., secondary – documents, student assessment data at school level and primary – school administrators, interventionists, teachers, coaches and, potentially, students and parents) and (2) approaches to data collections (i.e., interviews, observations, focus groups, documents, observations, and student assessment data at the school level) and analysis. The findings will be generated by integrating and interpreting the results employing the DMPS Problem Solving (Collaborative Inquiry) Process and Equity Analysis Framework. These findings, as noted above, will inform the development of the evaluation Phase II design to examine the impact of the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services on student academic performance.

## Evaluation Phase I Deliverables.

It is envisaged that the evaluation Phase I key deliverables informed by its findings will include:

* 1. a detailed description of the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program expenditure categories to depict/understand trends in relation to how the Title I funds are spent within each group of schools, i.e., elementary and middle schools.
  2. a set of fields (parameters) 1 that will be utilized to develop a system (a template) in Infinite Campus to allow the Title I interventionists to record student-level data during the fall semester 2018.
* The development of this system will allow (a) systematic collection of data for students with whom the Title I Interventionists will work during the fall semester 2018; (b) measurement of Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services impact on student academic outcomes using FAST and MAP assessment results within each school setting (i.e., elementary and middle) and contexts (i.e., literacy and math), and (c) determination of the potential effect of SfR on the context of the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Program services (i.e., to explore how Title I intersects with SfR).

*1Collecting implementation/process related data as described in Table 1 above interventionists will also be asked to provide IDs for students with whom they work. This information will be utilized to (a) create a template and (b) pilot on a small scale (using a combination of random and/or purposeful sampling procedures that will be finalized within the evaluation Phase I design) the utility of this template by tracking these students in Infinite Campus and looking at their FAST and MAP GROWTH test results to examine the potential effects of Title I funds on student academic outcomes. This process and preliminary results will contribute to the development of a final template, which then will be used by the Title I interventionists in the fall semester 2018 to record their students’ data as part of the evaluation Phase II main focus and implementation.*

*An example of potential fields or types of data to be recorded at student-level to create this Title I (student-level data) template in Infinite Campus could include:*

* + - * *an interventionist’s name;*
      * *types of instruction, e.g., small group, one-on-one;*
      * *duration (or length) of instruction [date started, date completed];*
      * *instructional minutes per week;*
      * *subject area (i.e., literacy and math);*
      * *types of instructional strategies.*

*Finally, determining these parameters during the Phase I process evaluation implementation will also be part of developing (a) a rationale for the need to track in Infinite Campus students who receive the Title I assistance on a consistent and systematic basis and (b) a definition of such students.*