

NCLB-Title IA School Improvement Model

Maine's current system of support for Title IA CIPS promotes a continuous learning model of technical assistance and includes collaboration with various educational entities, such as the New England Comprehensive Center, the Western Maine Community Collaborative, and the Great Schools Partnership. This statewide support also includes regularly scheduled technical assistance workshops, webinar sessions, and personalized technical assistance visits. The Title IA school improvement coordinator works together with school improvement consultants to provide a directed model of ongoing support.

In the fall, Title IA school improvement team members, along with MDOE assessment staff, present regional workshops which provide an in-depth look at assessment and accountability reporting. Opportunities and strategies for data-driven decision making and analysis are also shared.

Maine's model for school improvement is a directed, personalized model which employs a currently a variety of strategies. Our work with each new priority school begins with a customized technical assistance approach. Title IA school improvement consultants work very closely with each identified LEA and their school improvement teams to complete a needs assessment and create a comprehensive plan for improvement that includes short and long term strategies. These plans frequently include customized professional development activities designed to change instructional practice and whenever possible, create partnerships.

This individualized model continues through subsequent years of priority status, and includes regular monitoring of plan implementation. In addition to assistance with school improvement planning, Title IA school improvement consultants also provide technical assistance with various communications, such as parent notification letters, ensuring that all required elements have been included and shared on a timely basis.

Maine's model for Title IA school improvement planning process includes a strong emphasis on coaching and support. One of the common challenges experienced by many of our priority schools is a lack of coherence with the planning process. Consultants may provide assistance relative to effective scheduling or by reviewing school improvement plans to insure that the decisions are data driven, that instructional needs of all students are being addressed and that all instructional staff members, such as Special Education staff, are participating in training opportunities.

In order to effectively provide directed, personalized technical assistance and to plan large scale improvement activities for Title IA CIPS schools, LEAs grant permission to the SEA to utilize school improvement funds on their behalf. This allows the SEA to aggregate the cost of consultant services and certain professional redevelopment offerings, with the LEAs each sharing a portion of the total costs. This strategy provides more effective, high quality, cost efficient planning and technical assistance, and removes some of the planning burden from the LEAs.