

ARRA: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), commonly known as the Economic Stimulus Package, will make funds available to states and school districts to save teaching jobs, help states address budget deficits, improve student achievement and promote education reform.

The US Department of Education (ED) identifies priorities for ARRA:

- (1) adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments;
- (2) establishing data systems and using data for improvement;
- (3) increasing teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution of effective teachers; and
- (4) turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Title I Education for the Disadvantaged: The ARRA Title I, Part A fund of \$10 billion provides additional assistance to regular Title I school districts and schools in order to improve teaching and learning for students most at risk of failing to meet state academic achievement standards. Title I schools and districts have “high concentration of students from families that live in poverty.” The regular FY2009 allocation for Title I, Part A is \$14.5 billion.

ARRA Title I funds will be awarded to states in two grants (on April 1, 2009 and on or around September 1, 2009); states will distribute these funds to districts. Many school districts are waiting to decide how to spend their ARRA Title I allocations until further guidance on allowable uses of such funds from ED. Individual states have implemented the ARRA provisions based on state policies, regulations and laws, which vary considerably across states and some have required new Title I applications, thus creating local uncertainty as to appropriate use of the funds. Additionally, many districts are encountering budget uncertainties and may be holding back expenditures until they know more about local and state funding and ARRA funding flexibility.

Districts have been informed that ARRA Title I, Part A funds are, “to implement innovative strategies to improve education for academically at-risk students and to close the achievement gap in Title I schools.” The US Department of Education’s guidance adds that priority should be given to evidence-based products, programs or processes with special consideration to early childhood education and programs serving secondary schools. Measures have been revised to assess the effectiveness of the ARRA Title I, Part A. These measures (educational outcomes) provide a view into the goals that ED has for ARRA Title I, Part A grantees. The measures can be found at:

http://www.recovery.gov/?q=content%2Fprogram-plan&program_id=7664

ED Recommended Uses: Because there is an expectation that this is a onetime funding resource, ED recommends that districts invest the funds in ways that build their long-term capacity to improve teaching and learning. Recommended uses of the ARRA Title I, Part A include:

- launching a comprehensive literacy program. In an elementary school, purchase a new reading curriculum that focuses on improving students’ oral language competence and academic vocabulary so as to improve comprehension and address the fourth-grade reading drop off. providing an intensive two-year training program for all teachers and building principals. In a secondary school, train staff and purchase materials for literacy programs that identify students’ needs, support literacy development across content areas and provide interventions for struggling students.
- providing professional development to Title I educators to use data to identify specific help that students need to succeed and adjust classroom strategies for student success.
- providing professional development for teachers on evidence-based schoolwide strategies in reading and other subject areas.
- strengthening and expanding early childhood education programs.

Title I, Part A Allocations, Awards, and Timelines: Over the next two years, both regular and ARRA Title I, Part A funds will be awarded to school districts (LEAs) based on traditional formulas. Districts must obligate 85% percent of their total FY09 Title I, Part A funds and ARRA funds by September 30, 2010. Any remaining ARRA funds will be available through September 30, 2011. It is likely that services purchased by September 30, 2011 (and expended by December 31, 2012) will be available for delivery throughout the 2011-2012 school year.

| Funding Source | Funding Estimates | Timeline for Title I Release to States |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Regular FY 2009 Appropriation – Title I, Part A Funds | \$14.5 billion | <input type="checkbox"/> July 1, 2009 (\$3.65 billion) <input type="checkbox"/> October 1, 2009 (\$10.8 billion) |
| ARRA – Title I, Part A Funds | \$10 billion | <input type="checkbox"/> On April 1, 2009 (\$5 billion) <input type="checkbox"/> On or about September 1, 2009 (\$5 billion) (after states submit more detailed plans for meeting SFSF policy assurances) |

ARRA Title I, Part A allocations to individual states and districts can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/titlei/fy09recovery/index.html> or on the individual State Department of Education’s Recovery websites.

Title I Targeted Assistance and Title I Schoolwide Programs: Title I, Part A funds may be used by a school or a school district for:

- **Targeted Assistance Programs:** School districts may use their Title I, Part A funds for traditional targeted assistance programs. These programs provide supplementary services only to those children identified as having the greatest need for special assistance and are designed to meet the special educational needs of those children to meet the state’s student performance standards.
- **Schoolwide Programs:** A schoolwide program is a comprehensive reform strategy designed to upgrade the entire educational program in a Title I school; its primary goal is to ensure that all students, particularly those who are low-achieving, demonstrate proficient and advanced levels of achievement on State academic achievement standards. Schoolwide programs can be implemented in schools that meet the poverty threshold of 40%.

Special Considerations:

Supplement, not supplant: The principle of “supplement, not supplant”, applies to ARRA Title I, Part A funds. A school district may only use federal funds to supplement funds that would be made available from non-federal sources for the education of participating students. School districts may not use federal program funds, e.g., Title I, Part A, to supplant—take the place of—funds from non-federal sources.

Note, however, that in certain circumstances, including cases of severe budget shortfalls, an LEA may be able to establish compliance with the “supplement, not supplant” requirement.

Maintenance of Effort. Maintenance of Effort (MOE) is a federal requirement that school districts maintain a certain level of state/local fiscal effort to be eligible for full participation in Title I, Part A (and other federal grant programs). School districts not meeting MOE requirements could face the loss of a portion of their federal funds. MOE requires that the state/local expenditures for a program be maintained at no less than 90% of the preceding fiscal year expenditures.

With prior approval of the US Secretary of Education, a school district may treat ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) funds used for elementary or secondary education as non-federal funds for the purposes of determining whether or not the district has met the Title I, Part A MOE requirements.

For further information on Education programs included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, including Title I, Part A see: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/programs.html>
The ARRA Title I, Part A guidance and fact sheet can be viewed at the site.

Note: The Secretary of Education is inviting requests for Title I, Part A waivers that include permitting an LEA with one or more schools in improvement to offer SES, in addition to public school choice, to eligible students in Title I schools in the first year of school improvement. *Draft* guidance on these waivers can be viewed at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/title-i-waiver.doc>