

A. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

6. **School Conditions (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)):** Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to improve school conditions for student learning, including through reducing: (i) incidences of bullying and harassment; (ii) the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and (iii) the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety.

To provide well-rounded and supportive education for all students, school districts and buildings need to incorporate or expand improvement processes to address topics beyond academic supports alone. This requires a systemic approach to address all conditions for learning, including measures of school quality and student success such as safe and supportive school climate, positive behavioral interventions and supports, social and emotional learning, and family, school, and community partnerships. The intended outcome of Ohio's efforts is to actively support the social and emotional well-being and improve learning outcomes for all students. Decreasing incidents of bullying, harassment and intimidation; reductions in the use of discipline practices that remove students from classrooms; and reducing the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise the health and safety of children will serve as benchmarks, along with measures of student learning and school climate.

As the foundation for this work, the State Board of Education has adopted the [Ohio School Climate Guidelines](#) to encourage and promote the creation of school conditions that further continuous improvement and student success. The nine guidelines are as follows:

1. Operational principles for local schools that are grounded in best practices for academic achievement and are espoused by the community produce system effectiveness.
2. School-community partnerships enable the provision of comprehensive services for students and staff.
3. Regular, thorough assessment and evaluation (of school conditions) result in continuous improvement.
4. High-quality staff development and administrative support leads to effective program implementation.
5. Addressing real and perceived threats to safety and security enables students to focus on learning and teachers to focus on instruction.
6. A student's sense of "belonging" in the classroom encourages classroom participation, positive interactions and good study habits.
7. Engagement of parents and families in school-home learning partnerships maximizes the potential for effective instruction and student learning.
8. Youth engagement in forming school policy and procedures integrates an essential perspective into proposed solutions.
9. High-quality food service supports improvements in academic performance and behavior.

Each guideline is further defined by key benchmarks and suggested strategies for schools and districts. The department uses the guidelines as a framework supporting various technical assistance activities, professional development and information dissemination.

These guidelines will be updated as part of Ohio's participation in the Collaborating States Initiative (see discussion below). To support the continuing implementation of the climate guidelines, a portion of state,

47 Title IV, Part A funds will be used to pilot school climate surveys. These surveys will be used to inform
48 school improvement initiatives and may be included in future additional measures of school quality and
49 student success. The Committee of Practitioners will be consulted in developing plans for the use of Title
50 IV, Part A funds. See the discussion in Section F of this application.
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52 **(i) Reducing Incidences of Bullying and Harassment**

53 Ohio has enacted laws that require each district to have anti-harassment, anti-intimidation and anti-
54 bullying policies. The State Board of Education has defined a [model policy](#) to guide the development of
55 district policies. Each district policy must include the following:

- 56 • A statement prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying of any student on school property,
57 on a school bus or at school-sponsored events and expressly providing for the possibility of
58 suspension of a student found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an
59 electronic act;
- 60 • A definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying;
- 61 • A procedure for students, parents or guardians to report prohibited incidents to teachers and
62 school administrators;
- 63 • A requirement that school personnel report prohibited incidents they witness and/or receive
64 reports on from students to the school principal or other administrator designated by the principal;
- 65 • A procedure for documenting any prohibited incident that is reported;
- 66 • A procedure for responding to and investigating any reported incident including providing
67 intervention strategies for protecting a victim or other person from additional harassment,
68 intimidation or bullying and from retaliation following a report, including a means by which a
69 person may report an incident anonymously;
- 70 • A disciplinary procedure for any student guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying, which
71 shall not infringe on any student's rights under the first amendment of the Constitution of the
72 United States;
- 73 • A requirement that school administrators notify the custodial parent or guardian of any student
74 involved in a prohibited incident and provide access to any written reports pertaining to the
75 prohibited incident;
- 76 • A requirement that the district administrators semiannually provide the president of the district
77 board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the district website;
- 78 • Include the policy in any student handbooks and in any publications that set forth the
79 comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and students in the district.
80 The policy and an explanation of the seriousness of bullying by electronic means shall be made
81 available to students in the school district and to their custodial parents or guardians. Information
82 regarding the policy shall be incorporated into employee training materials; and
- 83 • A school district employee, student or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a
84 civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with a policy if that
85 person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in
86 compliance with the procedures specified in the policy.

87 In support of this policy and to encourage effective practices, Ohio publishes Anti-Bullying Guidance.
88 The document provides guidance for the identification, investigation and intervention in bullying
89 behaviors and provides direction to principals, parents and professionals when implementing Ohio's Anti-
90 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy. The guidance explains the role of the state department of
91 education and the local school district when addressing bullying behavior. Ohio provides a wide range of
92 training and technical assistance around the state's policy and guidance.

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94 Ohio law requires training every five years in the areas of behavioral health and substance abuse; suicide
95 ideation; anti-harassment, intimidation, bullying and teen dating violence; and child abuse and human
96 trafficking. The Department also provides technical assistance to parents and schools, on a case-by-case
97 basis, to assist them in addressing reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

98 Ohio uses a variety of data sources to monitor outcomes and inform policy. Schools are required to report
99 to the Ohio Department of Education when a student is removed from the teaching environment as a
100 result of bullying behavior. This reporting requirement allows Ohio to track the most significant instance
101 of bullying. Additionally, two survey tools are used to monitor the broad impact of harassment,
102 intimidation and bullying within schools – the Center for Disease Control’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey
103 and the Ohio Healthy Youth Environments Survey (OH Yes!). The most recent Youth Risk Behavior
104 Survey data shows that approximately 20 percent of students report being bullied in school in the last 12
105 months. OH Yes! data shows comparable levels.

106 (ii) **Reducing the Overuse of Discipline Practices that Remove Students from the Classroom**

107 In December 2016, the Ohio General Assembly passed [House Bill 410](#) to encourage and support a
108 preventative approach to excessive absences and truancy. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year
109 several requirements become effective and a variety of tools and resources will be available.

110 The Department will release a model policy and implementation guidance to assist districts in using
111 discipline strategies ranging from preventative approaches to supportive interventions to address student
112 misbehavior and excessive absences. Ohio’s guidance will emphasize that suspension and expulsion
113 should only be used when other options have been exhausted, unless the student’s behavior poses a threat
114 to the safety of him/herself or others. Further, students will not be expelled or suspended out of school
115 due to excessive absences or truancy.

116 If a student’s suspension would extend beyond the end of the school year, the student cannot be required
117 to complete the suspension at the beginning of the next school year. However, the student may be
118 required to complete community service or receive an alternative consequence assigned by the district
119 superintendent to be completed during the summer. A student may be subject to school disciplinary
120 action, including suspension or expulsion for harassment, vandalism, physical abuse or other harmful or
121 disruptive behavior toward school personnel or school personnel’s property during non-school hours.

122 Ohio will continue to monitor instances of school discipline in the interest of gauging the success of these
123 policies and practices. The Department collects student-level data on discipline type, discipline reason
124 and discipline duration. District and building-level reports are available for public view on the report card
125 section of the Department’s website, where the user can choose to disaggregate this discipline data by
126 various categories including by gender, race/ethnicity, disability, poverty, grade level and others.

127 Discipline data also are included in each district's special education annual reports (special education
128 profiles), which are available to the public on the Department’s website. These reports compare discipline
129 rates for students with disabilities to non-disabled students and also examine discrepancies by race and
130 ethnicity.

131 Pursuant to amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations related to
132 significant disproportionality, Ohio will continue to review various discipline practices that remove
133 students with disabilities from academic instruction. Ohio’s Special Education Profiles currently include
134 data on disproportionality related to out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of students with
135 disabilities. The amended regulations will require the state and school districts to expand this review of
136 special education discipline data to include in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions and

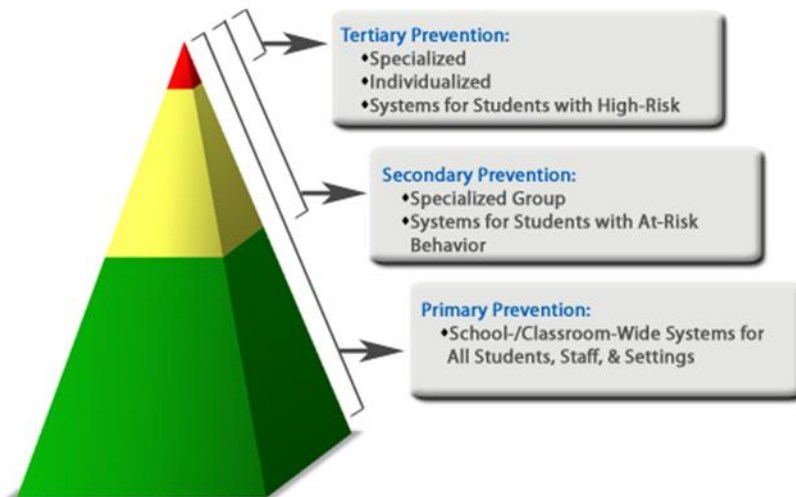
137 removals by school personnel and hearing officers, which will be reflected beginning in the 2017-2018
138 school year. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, districts will be accountable for addressing
139 significant disproportionalities in the new categories. To prepare for these changes, the Department will
140 convene stakeholder focus groups to offer feedback and help design policies, practices, procedures and
141 supports.

142 (iii) **Reducing the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and**
143 **safety**

144 In 2013, the State Board of Education adopted a [Policy on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support,](#)
145 [and Restraint and Seclusion](#). The state policy requires that each school district develop, publish and
146 implement written policies to govern the use of emergency safety interventions (physical restraint and
147 seclusion) in all of its schools. Districts must make their written policies on the use of emergency safety
148 interventions available to parents annually, and school districts must post their policies on their websites.

149 The goal of the state policy is to promote the use of non-aversive, effective behavioral systems to create
150 learning environments that promote the use of evidence-based interventions, thereby enhancing academic
151 and social behavioral outcomes for students. The Department is supporting the implementation of
152 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as the framework for improvement in the areas of
153 school climate and for defining a multi-tiered system of support for behavior. Applying a tiered model of
154 service delivery, schools are able to efficiently differentiate behavioral instruction and interventions to
155 match student need. The three-tiered delivery model includes: universal prevention that targets the entire
156 school population and is designed to promote and enhance pro-social behaviors, emotional well-being,
157 skill development, and positive mental health; secondary interventions that are designed for a smaller,
158 targeted group of students who need additional supports beyond (yet in combination with) universal-level
159 interventions; and tertiary interventions that are intensive, individualized interventions for students
160 demonstrating severe or persistent behavioral challenges.

Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support



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162 The PBIS framework capitalizes on existing leadership team structures established through the Ohio
163 Improvement Process (OIP). District, building and teacher teams are supported by the PBIS Network of
164 trainers and facilitators in the strategic process of analyzing data, determining areas of improvement, and
165 developing, implementing and monitoring a plan. Resources to support leadership team decisions are
166 being developed, professional learning is provided to school district staff, information is shared with

167 families and the design is specific to district and school prioritized needs. With a focus on establishing
168 positive school climate, teaching is the focus of the PBIS tiers of support.

169 The following additional components and activities support Ohio’s PBIS implementation activity:

- 170 • **PBIS Network:** The Ohio PBIS Network was initiated to develop materials, resources and
171 training to support the scaling up of PBIS in Ohio schools. The Ohio PBIS Network is primarily
172 composed of professionals from each of the 16 Ohio state support teams and the Office for
173 Exceptional Children. The PBIS Network is a critical partner in the ongoing development,
174 evaluation of effectiveness and capacity-building within the state.
- 175 • **Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF):** The Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)
176 connects PBIS with community behavioral/mental health services. The framework provides a
177 system for developing district and schoolwide behavioral health policies and procedures. This
178 includes policies for teaching staff mental health awareness, trauma-informed school approaches,
179 as well as the creation of policies that outline clear and consistent procedures for community
180 behavioral health referrals and interventions from community agencies.
- 181 • **Annual Conference:** An annual conference is convened to showcase exemplar practices by
182 school teams that address the principles of PBIS and recognize school and district efforts to
183 integrate school climate, discipline practices and social, emotional and behavioral needs of all
184 students.
- 185 • **PBIS Recognition:** The Department has developed a recognition system to identify districts
186 implementing PBIS with fidelity. Schools showing exemplary implementation are recognized
187 with gold, silver and bronze awards at the annual conference.

188 **Other School Conditions Related Activities**

189 Beyond the various policies and initiatives described above, Ohio also has developed, or is participating
190 in, the following in support of creating high-quality school conditions:

- 191 • **Social-Emotional Learning Standards**
192 Ohio is committed to maximizing student success by preparing young children in all areas of
193 school readiness, including social and emotional development. In 2012, the State Board of
194 Education adopted Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards in all domains of school
195 readiness to reflect the comprehensive development of children birth to kindergarten entry. The
196 standards include social and emotional development (available here:
197 [http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Birth-
198 Through-Pre_K-Learning-and-Development-Stand](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Birth-Through-Pre_K-Learning-and-Development-Stand)).

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200 Then in 2014, Ohio expanded these standards up to grade 3 (available here:
201 [http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Ohios-
202 Kindergarten-Through-Grade-3-Learning-and-D](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Ohios-Kindergarten-Through-Grade-3-Learning-and-D)). The development of these standards
203 represented a collaboration between state agencies serving young children including the Ohio
204 Departments of Education, Job and Family Services, Health, Mental Health and Addiction
205 Services, Developmental Disabilities, and the Governor’s Office of Health Transformation.

206
207 Ohio created professional development modules about these standards as well as Implementation
208 Guides for the Early Learning and Development Standards (available here:
209 [http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Birth-
210 Through-Pre_K-Learning-and-Development-Stand/Birth-Through-Pre_K-Implementation-
211 Guides](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Birth-Through-Pre_K-Learning-and-Development-Stand/Birth-Through-Pre_K-Implementation-Guides)), which identify activities teachers can use to provide learning opportunities for the
212 specified skills, knowledge and behaviors across the domains of school readiness. These guides

213 provide examples for teachers of infants, younger and older toddlers, as well as for kindergarten-
214 age students.
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216 In 2015, Ohio updated its Ohio Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood
217 professionals and administrators to include Social and Emotional Development competencies.
218 The guide describes competencies across entry level, experienced and advanced early childhood
219 professionals for the following areas: child growth and development, family and community
220 relationships, health, safety and nutrition, professionalism, child observation and assessment, and
221 learning environments and experiences.
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223 • **Collaborating States Initiative with CASEL**

224 Ohio is a member of the Collaborating States Initiative sponsored by the Collaborative for
225 Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The goals of Ohio’s plan are threefold:

- 226 1. Promote the integration of Ohio’s existing kindergarten-grade 3 standards for social and
227 emotional learning into the regular instructional practices and supports provided by school
228 counselors, social workers, psychologists, educators, principals and administrators through
229 the development and delivery of professional learning and resources to support
230 implementation.
- 231 2. Evaluate whether Ohio should develop and implement social and emotional learning
232 standards in grades 4 through high school.
- 233 3. Update Ohio’s school climate guidelines, resources and professional development.

234 As a participant in the Collaborating States Initiative, the Department is further developing the
235 resources and tools needed for implementation of the multi-tiered system of support within the
236 PBIS framework.

237 • **Student Support Schools – Community Learning Centers**

238 A Student Support School works with community partners to provide comprehensive educational,
239 developmental, family and health services to students, families and community members during
240 and outside of school hours. One model schools can use to become a Student Support School is
241 the community learning center model authorized in Ohio law. Any district school or community
242 (charter) school is eligible to implement the community learning center model to become a
243 Student Support School. Each school can identify the services it wants to provide based on
244 student or community needs, such as school-based health centers, extended educational
245 opportunities, early childhood development, parent resources, and college and career planning.

246 • **Healthy Schools Communities Resource Team (HSCRT)**

247 The Ohio Department of Education is partnering together with the Ohio Department of Mental
248 Health and Addiction Services on three grant initiatives that specifically focus on the use of
249 collaborative efforts to create safe and secure schools and promote behavioral and mental
250 wellness among students. These grants are guided through an inter-agency and cross-agency state
251 management team known as the Healthy Schools and Communities Resource Team. The team
252 includes representatives from Ohio’s state agencies as well as local level stakeholders represented
253 from the six piloting grant communities (Cuyahoga County, Green County, Harrison Hills School
254 District, Warren County, Williams County and Wood County). The three grant initiatives are
255 outlined below:
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- 257 ▪ *Safe Schools – Healthy Students Federal Grant:* This program is funded by the Substance
258 Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and a partnership between the Ohio
259 Department of Education and Ohio Mental Health and Addictive Services. The goal of
260 Ohio’s Safe Schools—Healthy Students project is to improve access and availability of
261 wellness promotion practices, evidence-based prevention and mental health services with
262 school-based and community-wide strategies that prevent violence and promote the healthy
263 development of children and youth. Ohio’s plan coordinates prevention policies and
264 programs within the three levels of prevention and treatment services that are
265 developmentally appropriate across school and behavioral health settings for each of the
266 program elements.
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- 268 ▪ *Project AWARE Federal Grant:* Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
269 Administration, Project AWARE supports schools and communities in raising awareness of
270 the mental health needs of school-age youth, training adults to detect and respond to mental
271 health challenges and increasing access to mental health supports for children, youth and
272 families. Through this grant, statewide resources and trainings are available to school staff
273 and community partners. [http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/School-](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/School-Safety/Building-Better-Learning-Environments/PBIS-Resources/Project-AWARE-Ohio)
274 [Safety/Building-Better-Learning-Environments/PBIS-Resources/Project-AWARE-Ohio](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/School-Safety/Building-Better-Learning-Environments/PBIS-Resources/Project-AWARE-Ohio)
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- 276 ▪ *School Climate Transformation Grant:* Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the
277 School Climate Transformation Grant is designed to develop, enhance or expand systems of
278 support for, and technical assistance to, schools implementing an evidence-based behavioral
279 framework. Ohio has chosen to focus on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for
280 this grant. PBIS provides the framework needed to address behavioral and mental health and
281 thus serves as an important framework for Safe Schools—Healthy Students and Project
282 AWARE.

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