

Comparability of Services

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Comparability?

Comparability is a fiscal requirement intended to demonstrate how a local school system is using Title I funds to supplement, and not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for authorized activities under Title I, Part A.

If all of the schools in a grade span are Title I schools, meeting Comparability means that the district provides services in the higher poverty Title I schools that are at least comparable to the services the district provides in the lower poverty Title I schools.

A district is comparable if it implements a district-wide salary schedule and has procedures that ensure equivalence among schools in the allocation of staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies. A comparability study compares the distribution of state and local resources among the schools that include those grade spans providing Title I services.

How often does Comparability need to be determined?

School systems must implement procedures to comply with the Comparability requirements annually.

How is Comparability determined?

Comparisons are made between schools within grade spans that contain at least one Title I school. Comparability is determined by using the student/instructional staff ratio **or** instructional staff salary per student. School systems must demonstrate comparability by utilizing at least one of these computational methods.

Does every school system need to complete the Title I Comparability Application?

No. School systems with one school per grade span do not need to submit a Title I Comparability Report. Also, single-site LEAs (i.e., Type 2, 3, 3B, and 5 charters) are exempt from submitting the report.

How are schools compared in determining comparability?

For grade spans containing both Title I and non-Title I schools, each Title I school is compared to the non-Title I schools. For grade spans containing only Title I schools, each higher poverty school is compared to the lower poverty schools.

How is the criteria established?

Comparable is defined as being within a 10% variance. Therefore, the criteria for determining comparability using the *student/instructional staff ratio method* is 110% of the average student/instructional staff ratio across the comparison schools. The criteria for determining comparability using the *instructional staff salary per student method* is 90% of the average instructional staff salary per student across the comparison schools. The Title I Comparability report automatically calculates the criteria values.

What does a school system need to do if Comparability is not met?

If Comparability cannot be demonstrated, the school system must make adjustments immediately in staffing to become comparable.

What happens if a school system fails to make the adjustments necessary to achieve Comparability?

The consequence of noncompliance with Comparability is the loss of a portion of Title I funds from the beginning of non-comparability.