



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Arizona Department of Education

Elementary and Secondary Education Act
(ESEA) Title Programs Stakeholder
Engagement Guidance
June 2025

Academic Achievement – Title programs and ESEA Consolidated
programs

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Purpose

The purpose of this guidance document is to assist Local Education Agencies in understanding the role of meaningful collaboration with stakeholder groups. In Arizona, meaningful engagement and collaboration with stakeholders is mandated by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized in 2016 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This meaningful engagement necessitates the establishment of structures and processes that foster ongoing collaboration and input from a diverse range of stakeholders that reflect the demographics of local districts, schools, and programs. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized in 2016 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows State Educational Agencies (SEA) to define, require, or suggest specific stakeholders as needed to be reflective of the unique needs and landscapes of each state's communities. Arizona has determined a minimum group of stakeholders who shall be represented for each Title program within ESEA.

Stakeholders include families, students, educators, community members, and groups relevant to the community or state. This document aims to assist Arizona districts and schools in fulfilling federal and state requirements for stakeholder engagement, employing evidence-based principles for robust partnerships among families, schools, and communities. Organized according to ESEA Stakeholder Engagement Program Requirements (SE), this guidance outlines compliance mandates, provides examples of evidence, and offers resources and implementation strategies for districts receiving ESEA funding and participating in regular federal program monitoring and best practices for quality and meaningful collaboration with stakeholders. Essentially, engagement is the process of communicating to, learning from, and partnering with stakeholders that acknowledges the unique needs and strengths of the stakeholders involved. The Arizona Department of Education believes that stakeholder engagement should be meaningful: include all members, and be clear, effective, and ongoing to best support educational excellence.

Guidance

Who Should Use This Guidance?

This document intends to support and provide helpful guidance to local education agencies (LEAs)—including school districts, county offices of education, regional education offices, and charter schools—and school leaders as they engage with stakeholders to consider how ESSA can be best leveraged locally.

What is Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement?

ESSA's frequent and consistent call for stakeholder engagement provides a significant opportunity for local school districts to consider their contexts, needs, and priorities, and the voices and experiences of families, students, and communities in shaping the potential and efficacy of ESSA. In this context, Stakeholder Engagement is a process established by a Local Education Agency to guarantee continuous collaboration and input from a diverse array of stakeholders representing the district's demographics, including specific student groups such as economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, students with disabilities, and all others required by the State Education Agency (SEA). Local educational agencies (LEAs) must actively involve stakeholders, including all the necessary members, and other members determined at the LEA who need representation due to unique factors in the community, in formulating federal, state, and local education plans. This includes, but may not be limited to, participation in the ESEA Consolidated Application, Schoolwide Title I, Part A plans, and planning activities funded by ESEA Title.

Why is Stakeholder Engagement required for ESEA Title I Programs?

Stakeholder engagement is vital for ESEA Title programs because it ensures that federal education funding is utilized effectively, equitably, and in alignment with the needs of students, educators, families, and the broader community. Here are the key reasons ESEA requires stakeholder engagement:

- **Informed Decision-Making:** Engaging stakeholders allows for diverse perspectives and insights, leading to more informed decisions that reflect the community's real needs and priorities and ensuring all students have access to quality education.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Active stakeholder participation enhances accountability and transparency in the use of federal funds, fostering trust and confidence in the educational system.
- **Community Support, Empowerment, and Ownership:** The engagement of stakeholders helps build community support and ownership of educational initiatives, leading to more sustainable and successful outcomes.
- **Improved Outcomes:** Collaboration with stakeholders can lead to more effective strategies and interventions, ultimately improving student educational outcomes.

By prioritizing stakeholder engagement, ESEA Title programs can better address their communities' unique challenges and opportunities, leading to more impactful and meaningful educational experiences for all involved.

What is the Difference Between Stakeholder Committees and Consultation?

The distinction between a Stakeholder Committee and a Consultation within ESEA Title programs lies in their structure, purpose, and style of engagement. Depending on the specific ESEA Title program, varying levels of stakeholder involvement may be required:

Stakeholder Committee

This is a formal and ongoing group composed of diverse stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and other members as required by the State Educational Agency (SEA).

- The committee meets regularly to discuss, review, and provide feedback on the program's implementation, including program outcomes, transparency in budgeting to support programs, and program outcomes.

Stakeholder Consultation

This refers to an ongoing process aimed at maintaining continuous two-way communication. It often involves tools like surveys, which should encourage open discussions rather than merely gathering opinions.

- This approach is more flexible and informal than a committee.
- Consultation can take various forms, such as surveys, focus groups, public meetings, or direct outreach efforts.

When Should the Schools or Local Education Agency (LEA) Conduct Stakeholder Engagement?

Stakeholder engagement for ESEA Title funding is essential at various points throughout the school year to ensure meaningful contributions and compliance with federal regulations. Regular consultation with stakeholders guarantees that ESEA Title funds are utilized effectively to address student needs and enhance educational outcomes. This includes the school level and the district level. Below are some key periods for stakeholder consultation:

Planning and Needs Assessment (spring year prior to when planning for the opening of the funding season)

- Analyze data to identify student needs, program priorities, evidence-based research, and funding allocations.
- Engage stakeholders in ongoing, two-way communication to gather their insights on school improvement efforts. This dialogue should focus on fostering open discussions about the data rather than merely collecting opinions.

Drafting the ESEA Consolidated Application (Late Spring, Summer, or Fall)

- Involve stakeholders in developing the ESEA Consolidated Application to ensure alignment with identified needs. This includes the school-level programs and budgets, and the LEA program and budgets.
- Solicit feedback on proposed initiatives, interventions, and funding priorities.
- Submission of the ESEA Consolidated Application (Late Spring, Summer)
- Allow stakeholders to review and provide input on the final draft before submission.
- Promote transparency regarding funding decisions and planned activities.

Implementation and Progress Monitoring (Ongoing Throughout the Year)

- Conduct regular check-ins with stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of programs.
- Adjust strategies and funding allocations based on stakeholder feedback and student outcomes.

Mid-Year Review (Winter/Early Spring)

- Reassess progress toward goals and determine whether mid-year adjustments are necessary.
- Involve stakeholders in reviewing data, refining strategies and programs, and include transparency in budget changes and initiatives.

End-of-Year Evaluation (Late Spring/Summer)

- Collect stakeholder feedback on the impact of funded programs.
- Use this input to inform planning and continuous improvement efforts for the following year. Use in a cyclical process.

How Does the LEA Demonstrate Sufficient Evidence for a Stakeholder Committee or Consultation?

To effectively demonstrate sufficient evidence for a Stakeholder Committee and Consultation under ESEA Title programs, it is essential to provide clear documentation that complies with federal requirements. This documentation may include surveys, meeting minutes, agendas, PowerPoint presentations, email communications, newsletters, and more. This will be monitored by the State Education Agency (SEA) through a review of these documents and or interviews with any stakeholders.

What is the Evidence of Stakeholder Committee?

The evidence should illustrate that a formal, ongoing process is in place, actively involving stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of ESEA programs. Key components include:

- **Meeting Agendas & Minutes:** These documents should capture discussions, decisions made, and attendance records.
- **Sign-in Sheets or Virtual Attendance Records:** These should demonstrate the participation of a diverse group of stakeholders and must align with other materials like presentation materials and minutes.
- **Committee Membership Lists:** These lists should clearly identify parents, teachers, administrators, and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Bylaws or Operating Procedures:** These documents should define the committee's structure, roles, and responsibilities.
- **Reports & Recommendations:** These should illustrate how stakeholder input has influenced program decisions.
- **Communication Records:** Emails, newsletters, and meeting invitations should provide evidence of outreach to stakeholders.
- **Surveys & Feedback Forms:** These tools should be utilized to gather ongoing input from stakeholders, extending beyond formal meetings.

Evidence of Stakeholder Consultation:

This evidence should confirm that the required stakeholders were consulted before decision-making and budgeting and that their input was considered during program implementation. Key elements include:

Notices of Consultation Meetings: These may include invitations, emails, or public announcements sent to required stakeholders.

Meeting Agendas and Sign-in Sheets: These documents should reflect who attended the meetings and the topics discussed.

Written Correspondence: Letters or emails should document the efforts made to consult with stakeholders.

Surveys or Feedback Forms: These should be employed to collect stakeholder input before decisions are finalized.

Summary of Feedback and Decisions: Documents should outline how stakeholder input was integrated into planning processes. This should be in detail all feedback and comments and then how it was or not considered.

Public Hearing Records: If consultations occur through public forums, minutes or recordings should be maintained to document the proceedings.

What does a school or LEA do when they are not required to have a member or have a vacancy?

The Arizona Department of Education recognizes the complexities of quality and effective stakeholder engagement. As stakeholder engagement and the Integrated Action Planning process are cyclical, the Rule of Construction within ESEA provides guidance and protection for the Local Education Agency (LEA). In 20 U.S.C. § 1006 (6) states that the requirements of consultation and collaboration shall not interfere with the timely submission of an LEA's consolidated Integrated Action Plan. Local Education Agency's (LEAs) must work with their program specialist and upload an explanation document describing the reason for the absent member and other information that will assist the state agency in understanding the vacancy, plan for getting the vacancy filled, and the LEA plan for onboarding the member and making adjustment to the plan, goals, or grant application. The LEA's responsible for providing adequate information to the Arizona Department of Education through the grant platform to allow for proper state/LEA collaboration and assist program areas in grant application and approval.



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF **EDUCATION**

APPENDIX:

- I. Stakeholder Definitions pg. 8-10**
- II. Example Stakeholder Group by Category pg. 10- 14**
- III. Stakeholder Group Quick Reference Guide pg. 15**

Definitions Of Stakeholders:

Teachers

Teachers are essential stakeholders as they directly impact student learning and outcomes. Their insight into classroom needs, curriculum effectiveness, and student progress is invaluable for shaping educational policies and practices. These are the teaching staff and the school level.

Principals/School Administrators

Principals and school administrators oversee the implementation of educational programs and policies at the school level. Their leadership and management skills are crucial for ensuring that stakeholder engagement processes are effective and aligned with school goals. These staff members are at the school level and are responsible for leading the school.

Other School-Level Leaders

This group includes assistant principals, department heads, and other leaders within the school who contribute to decision-making processes and support the implementation of educational initiatives.

Parents/Family Members

Parents and family members provide unique perspectives on student needs and community priorities. Their involvement ensures that educational programs are responsive to the needs of students and families, fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment.

Students and Student Groups

Students are the primary beneficiaries of educational programs and policies. Their feedback and participation help ensure that initiatives are relevant and effective in meeting their needs and aspirations.

Support Staff/Paraprofessionals

Support staff and paraprofessionals assist in the day-to-day operations of schools and provide additional support to students and teachers. Their insights into school functioning and student needs are critical for comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel

This group includes counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other professionals who provide specialized support to students. Their expertise helps address diverse student needs and contributes to the development of effective educational strategies.

Other Administrators

Other administrators, such as district-level officials, play a key role in overseeing the implementation of educational policies and programs across multiple schools. Their strategic vision and management skills are vital for successful stakeholder engagement.

Non-public Schools

Non-public schools, including private and charter schools, offer alternative educational options. Their participation in stakeholder engagement ensures that diverse educational perspectives are considered in policy development.

Researchers

Researchers contribute evidence-based insights and data analysis to inform educational practices and policies. Their involvement helps ensure that decisions are grounded in research and best practices. In some cases, this overlaps with higher education and career groups. This should include groups that look at data in specific sub-groups and make recommendations or programs based on the data.

Community Partners

Community partners, such as local businesses, non-profits, and community organizations, provide additional resources and support to schools. Their collaboration enhances the overall educational experience and fosters community involvement.

Other Programs

This category includes stakeholders involved in specific programs that are within the school or LEA in which students feed into, such as:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Perkins Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Their expertise ensures that specialized programs are effectively integrated into the broader educational framework.

Early Childhood Education Programs

Early childhood education programs focus on the development and learning of young children. Stakeholders from these programs provide insights into early learning needs and help shape policies that support early childhood education.

Institutions of Higher Learning

Institutions of higher learning, including colleges and universities, contribute to preparing future educators and developing advanced educational strategies. Their involvement ensures that K-12 education is aligned with higher education goals. These may sometimes overlap research roles, but are not focused on sub-group populations like in the research groups. In the case of lower elementary or middle schools, colleges and trade schools might still be appropriate, but in this case, so would the next school grade, higher. Such as a middle school or junior high school for elementary schools, and a high school representative for middle schools and junior high schools.

Local Government Representatives

Local government representatives, such as law enforcement agencies, juvenile courts, child welfare agencies, and public housing agencies, provide school support and resources. Their collaboration helps address broader community issues that impact education.

Other Stakeholders/Organizations with Relevant Experience

This group includes public or private entities with expertise in education, community development, or related fields. Their participation ensures that diverse perspectives and experiences are incorporated into educational planning and decision-making.

Indian Tribes or Tribal Organizations

Indian tribes or tribal organizations represent the interests of Native American communities. Their involvement ensures that educational programs are culturally responsive and address the unique needs of Native American students.

These definitions highlight the diverse range of stakeholders involved in ESSA's engagement processes, ensuring that educational policies and practices are inclusive, effective, and responsive to the needs of all community members.

Sample Stakeholder Group by Category for Integrated Action Plan (IAP).

Each community is unique, and finding stakeholders can sometimes be tricky. Researching different places and surrounding areas can be helpful. While no guide can give a complete, comprehensive list, the most relevant examples found in Arizona are listed below. In many cases, some examples below might also fit and serve in multiple stakeholder roles.

Teachers/Educators

Classroom teachers	Special education teachers	EL Teachers
Elective Teachers	Teachers on Assignment	Classroom facilitators
Classroom management groups, leaders, and experts	Alternative education experts	Out of school time teachers and staff
School resource officers		

Principals/School Leaders

School Principals	Heads of School	Headmaster
Any school-level leader who works with operations and instruction at the school level		

Other School Level Leadership

Assistant Principal	Vice Principal	Deans
Department Heads	Instructional Coaches	School Counselors
Head of Operations	Business Managers	Instructional Specialists

District Level Leaders

Charter Management Operators (CMO)	Alternative & Transitional Education Providers	Local Union/Association Chapters
Any District/LEA leadership position not named above		

Students & Youth

Not all are valid for Title IV, which must be a current student

Students/scholars	Student mentors – student groups	Alumni Associations
Juvenile Justice programs	Youth Groups (Boys & Girls Club or other faith-based organization)	Student sub-group with specific needs or assets (EL, students with IEP, Native students, opportunity youth)

Parents, Families, and other guardian groups

Biological parents	Step-parents	Grandparents
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Adult brothers and sisters	Adult Aunts and Uncles	Family and community organizations
Local parents/family advocacy groups	Faith-based organization	Parents of sub-group populations
Indian Parent Advisory Councils	Home school parents	Homeschool groups
Family or advocates for students in foster care or youth experiencing homelessness	Families or advocates of refugee children and youth	

Government or elected officials

Tribal Leaders	Regional Offices of Education	County Superintendents
School Board Members	Mayors	City/County Council Members
Reps from Tribes/First Nations Housing, Health Services	Charter Management (CMOs)	Public Service agencies
Chamber of Commerce	Homeless shelter staff	Department of Health and Human Services
Foster Care Services (DES)	Law Enforcement	Military Groups (VFW, American Legion, VA)
Phoenix Indian Center	Native Health	Navajo Nation Division of Child Support Services
Inter-Tribal Council of AZ	Native American Veterans Association	Office of Self-Governance
Native Americans for Community Action (NACA)	Tucson Indian Center	National Indian Child Welfare Assoc. (NICWA)
National Congress of American Indians	Native American Rights Fund	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Walking on Common Ground	Native American Connections	

Early Learning Leaders and organizations

Head start Providers	Local Early Childhood Collaboratives	Snap/WIC providers
Community & Faith-based Preschool providers	Home Visiting Programs	Montessori Programs
Cener-based childcare providers	Title I, Part C providers for migrant youth	Waldorf Schools
Home-based Child Care Providers	IDEA, Part C Early Intervention providers for infants and toddlers	Reggio Emilia Preschool

HighScope Preschool
Faith-Based Preschool
programs

Bank Street Preschool
Ascend Programs

Parent Co-ops
Home-based Preschools

Non-Public Schools

Private Schools

Home Schools

State Institution schools &
jails

Residential Treatment
Facilities

Medical treatment facilities

Emotional Disability –
Private Programs

Empowerment Scholarship
groups or families

Secondary Transition
Programs

Institutions of higher education/Organizations supporting and workforce Development (also can be the researcher)

Accreditation Institutions
for K-12 and Higher
Education

Teacher Prep and Cert.
programs, including
traditional & alternative
programs, TFA, and
fellowships

Students enrolled in
teacher prep programs

Faculty teaching in teacher
education preparation
programs

Local and state university
programs

Childhood development
experts

Post-secondary minority
institutions- Serving English
Language Learners,
Neglected Delinquent youth,
Foster youth, or homeless
youth

Community College
Systems

Faculty from University
education programs

Educational researchers:
conduct studies on
educational practices and
policy

University professors:
Provide expertise in specific
areas of education

Data Analysts: Analyze
educational data to inform
decision-making

Trade Schools

Professional workforce
internship providers

Workforce Development
Councils

Other Community Organizations and Local Business Leaders

Local Business Leaders

Non-profit Organization
Representatives

Community Advocates

Corporations, health &
social service providers
Greek Systems, social or
civil organizations

Private Industry Councils

GED & workforce programs

Libraries

Community Centers

First Responders (fire department)	Local, state, and national-level foundations with an interest in education	School-based support
Youth development organizations	Fair Housing organizations	Community-Based organizations
Early learning advocates	Organizations representing school-based personnel	Community coalitions focused on public education
Disability Advocate organizations	Homeless & foster care advocate organizations	



Arizona Department of Education
Federal Programs Stakeholder Groups
Quick Reference Guide

Stakeholders	Title I-A Citation: §1112(a)(1)(A), §1112(b)(7-10)	Title I-C § 1681	Title I-D §§ 6421- 6472.	Title II-A Citation: §2102(b)(3)(A) §2102(b)(2)(D)	Title III A Citation: §3116(b)(4)(C)	Title IV-A Citation: §4106(c)(1-2)	Title IV-B §620	McKinney Vento § 11431
Teachers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Principals/School Administrators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other school-level leaders	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parents/family members	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓
Support staff/paraprofessionals	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓
Specialized instructional support personnel	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓
Other administrators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Non-public schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Researchers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Community Partners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other programs -IDEA, Perkins Carl D. Perkins CTE McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early Childhood Education Programs	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓
Institutions of Higher Learning	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	✓
Local government representatives (which may include a local law enforcement agency, local juvenile court, local child welfare agency, or local public housing agency)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓
Other stakeholders/organizati ons with relevant experience – Including Public or Private Entities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indian tribes or tribal organizations	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓

****ADE recognizes that LEAs may experience missing members or have unique circumstances where it is not possible to get the required members. For any missing members or those who are not suitable for the LEA or school, the LEA will upload a rationale and/or timeline to explain the absence of these members. ** For grant assistance, contact your program specialist.**