




Tips for State Title II Coordinators

Preparing Your State Plan

All states are required to submit a plan describing their Title II reporting procedures to the U.S. Department of Education. The issues to be addressed in the plan are listed on pages 18 and 19 of the *Reference and Reporting Guide*. Because the structure of teacher education programs, routes to certification and/or licensure, and the environment in which states and institutions operate vary widely across the Nation, we expect variation among the state plans. States may prepare their plans in any format or style that they wish. They are also encouraged to include information that, while not required, would give the Department and members of the public a better understanding of how the Title II reporting system will work and of its relationship to any other statewide initiatives.

Several state Title II Coordinators have called the Technical Assistance Helpline asking if we had any sample or model state plans to share. Unfortunately we do not, so we have prepared these tips to help you think about the planning process and preparing your state plan.

General

-  **Adhere to the Due Date**—The state plans are due to the U.S. Department of Education no later than **October 7, 2000**. This date will not be extended. However, since October 7th falls on a Saturday and Monday October 9th is a Federal holiday, plans will be timely if we receive them by Tuesday October 10th.

Send your plan to:

Betty Abdullah
Office of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, NW, Room 8039
Washington, D.C. 20006

Alternatively, you may email your plan to the Title2 technical assistance email address—title2@westat.com—provided that your file is in a Word or portable document format (pdf). If you send your file electronically, please indicate the length of your plan (in pages) and whether it contains attachments so that we can be sure the entire document is downloaded correctly.

We will send you a letter and/or email notifying you that we have received your plan.



Write as Clearly and Concisely as Possible so That the Public Can Understand the Plan—The Title II reporting requirements are complex, and establishing comprehensive procedures to implement them may be challenging. The state plan is your public blueprint for how institutions and your agency will conduct the reporting Title II requires. Therefore, you will need to ensure that your higher education community and other members of the public can understand how the *Reference and Reporting Guide*'s definitions and reporting procedures will be tailored to fit the teacher preparation and licensing or certification system in your state.

Your plan need only address the required elements identified in the *Reference and Reporting Guide*, but consider including whatever information is necessary to give the public a more complete picture of how the reporting system will work. Where necessary or appropriate, feel free to use appendices. Consider whether information would be easier to understand if displayed in tabular or graphic format.



Allow Ample Time for Review—All of the early implementation states have built in time for one or two rounds of review of draft plans by institutions. You should also build in review and/or sign-off time for your office's director and/or agency chief.



Consider Setting the Context for Teacher Education and Certification—We know that the public's interest in greater state and institutional accountability for the quality of those who would teach in K-12 classrooms extends far beyond reporting on the very basic elements identified in the Title II statute and the *Reference and Reporting Guide*. Don't assume that the public now understands your state's teacher education and licensing or certification programs and their context. Although additional information is not required, the public may benefit from seeing in your plan a short overview of teacher education and licensing or certification in your state. Also valuable would be an explanation of what institutions of higher education and the state are doing to hold themselves accountable for the quality of the teachers they prepare or permit to teach.

Items that the public might find useful include:

- Teacher recruitment and retention issues (i.e., shortage areas);
- The number of institutions with teacher preparation programs and the total number of preparation programs (including alternative) in the state;

- The types of teacher licenses or certificates offered; and
- A description of state reforms or other efforts to improve teacher quality.



Keep in Mind That the Plans Are Public Documents—These plans are public documents and the Department intends to post them on the Title 2 website. By doing so, Congress, the public, state and local policymakers, educators, the media, and other interested parties can gain an early understanding of how states and institutions are addressing the key Title II reporting requirements and any related matters the state chooses to address.



The U.S. Department of Education Will Review the Plans—The U.S. Department of Education will review each state plan. The purpose of the review process is to help us and you make sure your state is on track for preparing both the April 2001 institutional report and the October 2001 state report. We will let you know of any aspects of your plan that do not meet the required elements in the *Reference and Reporting Guide* and may ask you to clarify what you have submitted. At this point, the Department is expecting to provide comments to states within three weeks of receiving a state's plan.

Required Information

The *Reference and Reporting Guide* lists seven topic areas that your state plan must address. (The seventh area—criteria for identifying and working with low-performing teacher preparation programs—must be addressed now only if your state has already established these criteria.) You may format the plan and your responses to these areas any way you wish. Just remember that the key to preparing a plan adequately addressing the required areas is making sure that members of the public can plainly understand how the state procedures will work.

For simplicity, each of the seven areas is discussed in the order presented in the Guide. We also include some suggestions for ensuring that the Department and the public will understand the state's responses in each area.



Section 1. Agency Responsible for Reporting—If you've been appointed the Title II coordinator for your state, then this should be your agency! In addition to the agency name, please provide the address, telephone number, and email address of the person responsible for

preparing the plan so that we can follow up with any questions. A fax number would also be helpful.



Section 2. Collaboration with Institutions of Higher Education—In this section you must address the processes you used to collaborate with the ***public and private institutions*** in your state. Specifically, the Guide states (on page 18):

"Describe the process the state has used to establish implementing procedures in collaboration with public and private institutions in the state and, as applicable, the testing company. Among other things, the state must include any necessary state-specific interpretations of the guide and describe the steps it has taken to provide all public and private institutions that have teacher training programs with the opportunity to participate in the development of these procedures."

As we discussed in the *Getting Started* guide, how the state collaborates with its institutions, the testing agency, and other stakeholders is a state matter. When the U.S. Department of Education reviews the plans, it will be looking at whether:

- The planning process was collaborative.
- The process was meaningful to all parties.
- All parties, especially institutions, had an opportunity to participate in the planning process. For example, if your state is using a smaller working group of institutions to help develop the procedures for implementing the Title II reporting system, does this group represent all types of institutions in the state? Are all institutions informed of what this working group is doing and provided an opportunity to comment?
- Institutions and other stakeholders had the opportunity to review and comment on the state plan.

You may want to include in this part of your state plan such information as the following:

- The types (statewide, regional, advisory, etc.) and frequency of any meetings you held with your institutions. You may want to attach lists of participants and the institutions they represented for each meeting in an appendix;
- A summary of other types of communication you have had with institutions (email, listservs, fax, etc.);
- What types of supplemental information, if any, your state and institutions have decided to include in the state and institutional reports;
- Comments or concerns about the Title II reporting system raised by institutions and others within the education community. A summary or

verbatim listings of these comments would be useful for the reviewers to see; and

- Your process for addressing institutional concerns.



Section 3. Describe the Key Components of Your State's Title II Reporting System—Given the focus of the Title II legislation on accountability, your state's education community as well as the public at large will need to have confidence in the validity of the data that institutions and your state report. In this section, you need to describe the procedures that your state has developed, including how your state will ensure that—

(1) **Institutions** and other reporting agencies are using the definitions in the Guide. The key definitions, which can be found on page 5 of the Guide, are those for:

- Teacher preparation program
- Program completer
- Alternative route to certification or licensure
- Regular teacher preparation program
- Waiver

(2) The information reported by institutions and the state, including pass rates, is complete and accurate. This description should include the quality control procedures that will be used (e.g., the state or a third party will randomly check and monitor, or conduct a follow-up review of, the data).

You may want to provide copies of correspondence or materials you have prepared to disseminate instructions about reporting definitions and procedures to your institutions. For example, we know of one state that prepared its own guidance for institutions using terms they were familiar with and understood. Such materials could be placed in an appendix and referred to in the body of the state plan.



Section 4. Pass Rates—In this section, describe the major steps your state and institutions will follow in preparing, calculating, verifying, and reporting pass rates. Items in this section you may want to discuss include:

- The timeline and the responsible agent for each step of the process;
- A description of the process for calculating the pass rates for alternative routes;

- A summary of how the testing agency or state agency plans to match test results with the names of program completers provided by the institutions; and
- The agency or entity responsible for calculating the pass rates (state, testing agency, or institution),



Section 5. Pass Rates (continued)—In this section you will need to confirm that your state has established:

- A list of subject areas in which program completers may receive certification or licensure and the relevant certification or licensure assessment(s) for each area of specialization;
- Cut (passing) scores for each assessment taken by the cohort of program completers;
- A common format for institutions to use in sending the names of their program completers and their areas of specialization to the state or testing agency, as appropriate; and
- A common format for the state or testing agency, as appropriate, to use in sending test scores of program completers back to the institutions.

To help the U.S. Department of Education and the public understand the process and procedures your state and institutions will be following, you may want to provide a chart of the data flow from the institution to the testing agency or state agency and then on to the office preparing the state report. The guide provides several examples of institutional and state flowcharts that you may want to adapt to your state's process. See pages 21, 22, and 28 of the Guide for more information.



Section 6. Miscellaneous Required Information—So that the Department and the public can quickly understand how the reporting process will work, your state's plan needs to include a few pieces of specific information, including:

- The academic year and test closure date (date of last test to be used in pass rate calculations) for each cohort of program completers;
- The date by which institutions must submit to the state or testing agency, as applicable, their list of regular program completers and their areas of specialization;
- The process and dates by which institutions will receive data to verify the list of their program completers matched by the testing agency or state agency and the pass rates on certification or licensure assessments their program completers have taken in their areas of specialization;

- Information institutions will receive to enable them to verify pass rates, including explanations for any limitations in the data provided; and
- The components of the resolution process that will be available to institutions should they disagree with the state or testing agency regarding matches of program completers or pass rate calculations.

To help the reader, you may want to consider including a table to display your state's schedule and timeline for key milestones.



Section 7. Low-Performing Institutions—Finally, if your state has already developed them, your state plan must describe the state's procedures for:

- Identifying low-performing teacher preparation programs within institutions of higher education and programs at institutions at risk of being considered low-performing; and
- Providing technical assistance to low-performing institutions.

These are requirements in section 208 of Title II. Section 208 says that each state must report this information by the same date that the state's report was originally due—October 7, 2000. However, because of the time needed to complete the *Reference and Reporting Guide*, and the law's assumption that states would want to complete work on the first annual state report before they began using these criteria, states do not have to provide this information—unless they already have it—until their first annual reports are due on October 7, 2001.

Getting Additional Help

We hope you have found these tips for writing your state plan useful. If you have any questions about preparing your plan, please do not hesitate to contact the Title II technical assistance and support center. Again, our contact information is:

- Email—**title2@westat.com**
- Toll-free telephone hotline—**(877) 684-8532**
- Toll-free fax—**(800) 805-6627**

The technical assistance staff would be glad to review early outlines or drafts if you would find it useful.

Please let us know what we can do to help you with Title II.....