

LEA Strategic Planning FAQ

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A. General Information

A1. Why are LEAs required to complete a strategic plan?

[The Education Accountability Act of 2019](#) (EAA) requires all LEAs to submit a strategic plan once in a three-year period to RIDE (LEA Strategic Plan). The LEA Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for LEAs to systematically work to improve student outcomes and schools. Further, the plan conveys the LEA's mission, vision, values, and goals to their community at large and provides an opportunity to gather community input and feedback on goals and initiatives.

A2. How were the LEA Strategic Plan requirements developed?

The LEA Strategic Plan was modeled after, [RIDE's Strategic Plan](#) and it includes all required elements under the EAA. This ensures vertical alignment between RIDE, LEAs, and schools, and horizontal coherence across LEAs. In addition, the LEA Strategic Plan requirements combine the three plans required under the EAA: LEA Strategic Plan, the Annual Action Plan, and the RICAS Success Plan.

A3. Our LEA already has an active strategic plan; do we need to modify our plan or create a new plan? How do we meet the requirements under the EAA?

In 2023, all RI LEAs submitted and were provided feedback (based on EAA requirements) on their strategic plans. The expectation was that LEAs revised their plans as informed by RIDE's feedback. Additionally, the EAA requires that, by December 31st of each year, LEAs must update their LEA Strategic Plan each year based on newly available data, progress monitoring results, and budget information. Per the EAA, LEA plans must be written and submitted at least every three years. LEAs are expected to submit a new LEA Strategic Plan to RIDE within the SPS by July 1st of the year when the previous plan ends.

A Help Desk system and resources can be found in the resources tab on the [Rhode Island Strategic Planning System](#); which can also be accessed through the RIDE Portal. Resources include the [RIDE SPS LEA User Guide](#), [LEA Sample Strategic Plan](#), and the [SPS Metric Wizard](#). RIDE has also developed the [LEA Strategic Plan Review Tool](#). This tool is used by RIDE to provide feedback on submitted plans. The tool outlines the required components of the EAA and suggests best practices. LEAs are encouraged to use these tools and resources to create or revise their existing strategic plan.

A4. What is a Resource Allocation Review (RAR)? Who is required to complete one?

A Resource Allocation Review (RAR) is a team-based inquiry process for LEAs and schools to understand the current state of how their educational resources are being utilized as part of the continuous improvement process. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires LEAs to ensure schools identified as CSI and/or schools with student subgroups identified for ATSI undertake a process to identify resource inequities and a plan to address them to be entered in the CSIP or SIP within the SPS for LEA approval. The RAR satisfies this ESSA requirement. Additional information on RAR can be found [here](#), then click *Resource Allocation Review*.

A5. What plans are required for a single-school LEA?

Single-school LEAs may write one LEA Strategic Plan that serves as both a school improvement plan and strategic plan. The stakeholders participating in development of the strategic plan must meet the EAA requirements of the School Improvement Team. The completion of annual updates, including those



required in the budget, progress monitoring, and action step components of the plan, will satisfy the annual submission of the School Improvement Plan. If a single-school LEA is identified as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), the additional requirements for a Comprehensive Support and Improvement Plan (CSIP) will be communicated by the Office of School and District Improvement (OSDI).

B. Development of an LEA Strategic Plan

B1. How does an LEA develop a strategic plan?

LEAs are required to assemble a team of diverse and representative stakeholders from the school system and the community that it serves. This team will then engage in assessing the LEA's needs, setting priorities, determining root causes, establishing goals, and articulating initiatives to achieve their goals. Further, an LEA must ensure that its plan is developed in accordance with local policies and collective bargaining agreements. Ultimately, the Superintendent of each LEA is charged with carrying out and overseeing these responsibilities. Once a LEA Strategic Plan is developed, it sets forth the framework for implementing annual requirements.

B2. Who should be involved in the development of the LEA Strategic Plan?

It is recommended that the plan is developed with timely and meaningful consultation with educational partners, i.e., teachers, principals, school leaders, community partners, School Board, and families. Note that families are specifically identified in the EAA as being critical partners and must have a means to provide input and feedback on the plan. As a reminder, if the strategic plan is also serving as the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the stakeholders participating in development of the strategic plan must meet the EAA requirements of the School Improvement Team. If a single school LEA is also using the plan as their Title-I school wide plan, then they must meet the specific stakeholder requirements as outlined by Title I-A. Finally, each LEA should have routine procedures in place that allow for public comment on their strategic plan.

B3. What supports does RIDE offer LEAs when writing or revising an LEA Strategic Plan?

RIDE offers several types of support to all LEAs to assist with the development of a robust and comprehensive strategic plan. RIDE offers a suite of resources that can be accessed on the [School and District Improvement | RI Department of Education](#) website. This includes the [SPS LEA User Guide](#), the [LEA Report Card Organizer](#), the [Resource Allocation Review Tool](#), and the [LEA Strategic Plan Review Tool](#). LEAs can also access resources on the [RI Strategic Planning System](#) website. LEAs can request additional support by contacting OSDI at OSDI@ride.ri.gov.

B4. How does an LEA determine when it should create a three-year LEA Strategic Plan?

Upon conclusion of the current LEA Strategic Plan, LEAs must submit a three-year strategic plan. Strategic plans should be considered "living" documents that are expected to be updated annually (progress monitoring, budget allocation revisions, etc.). At the conclusion of the next three-year cycle, LEAs must submit a new plan.

B5. How many goals are required in an LEA Strategic Plan?

There is no maximum number of goals, but there must be one goal per priority, and each goal must be supported by one or more initiatives. LEAs should consider what the appropriate number of goals is based upon their data and their local context. At a minimum, LEAs must include goals in ELA, Math, and Science whenever fewer than 80% of students are meeting expectations.



B6. Is there a particular format that an LEA should use to submit its strategic plan?

All LEA Strategic Plans must be submitted to RIDE through the Strategic Planning System (SPS). RIDE offers the [LEA Strategic Plan Review Tool](#) for LEAs to utilize prior to submitting their plan to RIDE. The SPS allows LEAs to create a PDF or Word version of their plan for public release once the plan is completed.

C. Meeting the Requirements Under the EAA

C1. What has RIDE established as required components of the LEA Strategic Plan?

Please see the [LEA Strategic Plan Review Tool](#) for the required components of the LEA Strategic Plan. All required elements are noted with an asterisk (*) or single caret (^). These are Federal requirements informed by the EAA. The tool also highlights best practices in developing a strategic plan.

C2. What data must an LEA use when developing their strategic plan?

LEAs are strongly encouraged to use the [Assessment Data Portal](#), [Report Card](#), [SurveyWorks](#), and local data at both the district and school level to conduct a needs assessment to drive the selection of priorities, goals, and initiatives. LEAs will be required to provide a summary of the results of their needs assessment in their strategic plan. Also, LEAs may need to use various forms of data when conducting their root cause analysis to support identifying possible root causes.

C3. What level of detail is required when listing the funding sources of initiatives?

The EAA requires LEAs to include the sources of funding for the initiatives in the LEA Strategic Plan. Broad categories (e.g., Title 1, Perkins, Local, etc.) of funding sources and total amounts from each category are sufficient to meet this requirement. At this time, RIDE does not expect detailed budgets to be entered into the SPS.

C4. What are the steps LEAs must take to set priorities and goals that meet the EAA requirement?

This should be accomplished through a *comprehensive needs assessment* conducted at the LEA level. A needs assessment is the process of identifying and determining how to bridge the gap between an LEA's current and desired state through a thorough examination of an LEA's data. This process should include an analysis of student and subgroup achievement gaps in core subject areas, academic and nonacademic needs, and community voice/partnership engagement. This analysis will outline the LEA's strengths, weaknesses, and priorities. Ultimately this will assist the LEA to identify three to five high priority needs that the LEA will address in their strategic plan. Each priority will have at least one goal.

Special attention should be paid to focus areas, low-performing student subgroups, and subgroups identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI). LEAs should then develop priorities and measurable goals that aim to improve overall performance and close gaps between subgroups. Also, during this needs assessment process the LEA must conduct an analysis of student and subgroup proficiency and growth on all state assessments where the LEA does not have more than 80% of students meeting expectations. As a reminder, a goal is required for core subject areas below 80%.

C5. How does an LEA meet the requirements of the Annual Action Plan?

The LEA Strategic Plan must include annual targets for each goal and identify the staff, financial resources, and annual action steps that will be established to reach each initiative. Additionally, LEAs will be required to document reflections on their progress towards their goals and completing their initiatives and actions steps at least once each year. At a minimum, this reflection should be conducted when new state

assessment and accountability data is released. The LEA Strategic Plan should be updated as needed based upon this data analysis and reflection.

C6. How does an LEA meet the requirements of the RICAS (Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System) Success Plan?

Unless an LEA has an 80% proficiency rate on a state assessment, the LEA must set goal(s) aimed at improving student proficiency on those assessments.

C7. What are the requirements for progress monitoring of the LEA Strategic Plan?

LEAs will be able to monitor the progress towards their three-year goals by setting annual targets in the SPS and through ongoing progress monitoring throughout each school year. Execution and completion of initiatives and action steps must be conducted at least once per year when the LEA reflects upon their progress and revises their plan as needed-

C8. How often must an LEA create a new plan and how long can a plan be?

Each year, LEAs are responsible for updating their current plan (see C7). In the final year of the plan, the LEA should reengage the strategic planning team to build the next three-year plan.

D. Submission Process and Maintenance

D1. When is the deadline to submit the LEA Strategic Plan to RIDE?

All LEAs currently have a Strategic Plan in the SPS. Following this initial submission year, LEAs are expected to update their strategic plans annually as previously noted. Each LEA must create a new strategic plan every three years per the EAA. New plans must be submitted by July 1st in the year that the previous plan will conclude.

D2. What is the Strategic Planning System?

RIDE has developed the SPS as an online platform to create, submit, and maintain LEA Strategic Plans and School Improvement Plans.

D3. Are LEAs required to make their strategic plan public?

All LEAs are required to post their plans, including revisions, on the LEA websites to inform the public of the goals and initiatives being prioritized each year. Additionally, communities should be regularly updated on the progress LEAs and schools are making toward their annual goals. Once a plan is submitted, a downloadable PDF or word version will be available.

D4. Can an LEA revise an existing plan?

By December 31 each year, LEAs must update their LEA Strategic Plan to meet the requirements of the Annual Action Plan (EAA) by updating progress monitoring and budget details. LEAs should continue to update their plan as necessary, so milestones and targets reflect the most current information and data, including the LEA Report Card, assessment results, and accountability information. If needed, the LEA can adjust its needs assessment, priorities, goals, or other components to ensure that its plan reflects a cycle of continuous improvement and current needs.

