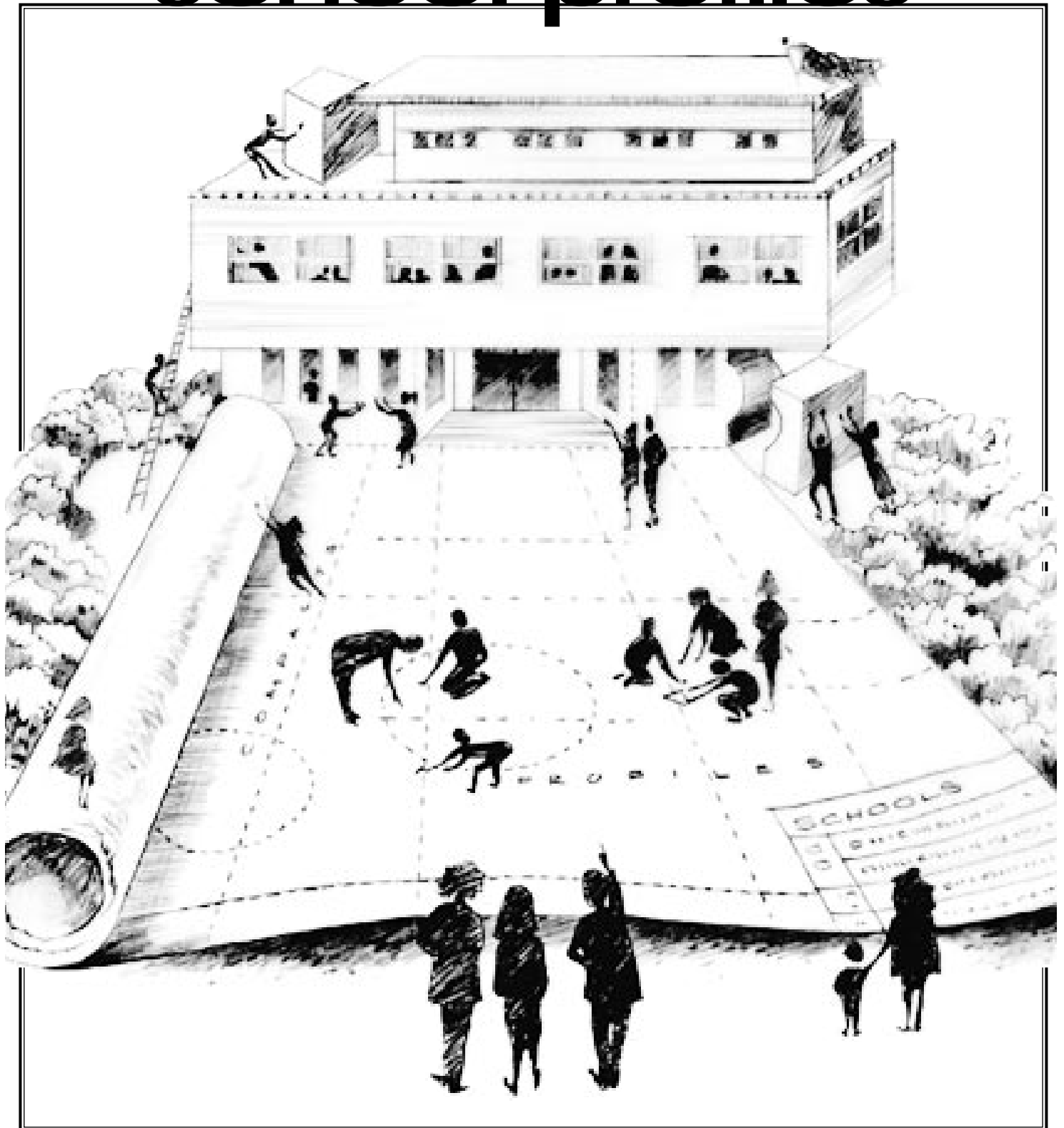


Parents ask about
school profiles



SCHOOL PROFILES: A REQUIREMENT OF TITLE I, IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS ACT OF 1994

Parents ask about

school profiles

What is a school profile?

For more on
Title I,
read the
brochure
*Parents Ask
About Title I*

A school profile is like a report card on your school. It gives some basic facts about the school and the students. It tells how the students are performing. And, it says what the school is doing to help all students achieve.

Every school that receives *Title I* money must provide a school profile every year. (Title I is a Federal aid program that provides extra educational services for children who are behind in school.) School profiles are a new requirement, so many schools are still putting their profiles together.

What kinds of facts can be in a school profile?

A school profile contains several facts about *the school*, such as:

- The number of students and teachers in each grade
- The student-teacher ratio
- The courses that are offered
- The number and kinds of students in each course
- Special programs offered through Title I or other resources
- The number and kinds of students served by these programs
- The educational background of teachers
- The school's computer and library resources
- The amount of money spent per student

The school profile also contains facts about *groups of students*, such as:

- How many are in the school
- The number and kinds of students in Title I programs
- Their race(s) and ethnic group(s)
- Their home language(s)
- The number of students who attended early childhood programs
- Special status, such as students who are disabled or migrant
- Test scores

Finally, the school profile may contain facts about *parent involvement*, such as:

- The number of hours that parents have volunteered at the school
- The number of parents who have attended workshops
- How parents are involved with homework
- How parents rate the school's communication with them

What kind of information about student performance is included in the school profile?

The school profile can include information on *student performance*, such as:

- Student achievement on district and state tests
- Other test results
- The number of students who made the honor roll
- The number of students suspended or expelled
- The number of students promoted to the next grade
- The number of students held back
- The number of students who graduate
- The number of students who drop out
- The number who continue with other schooling after graduation

Information on student performance is reported by *groups of students*, for example:

- Grade level
- Gender (male or female)
- Race and ethnic group
- Ability to speak English
- Family income
- Special status, such as students who are disabled or migrant

How are testing results explained?

School profiles explain testing results in terms of how well students meet *standards*. Standards are what students should be able to know and do at each grade level.



For
more on
standards,
read the
brochure
*Parents Ask
About
Standards*

Your school's profile may use special terms to describe how well students have met the standards. For example, a school profile may report that:

5 percent of all third grade students performed at a *basic* level on the math section of the state exam.

(This means they are just beginning to learn the skills expected of them for their grade level.)

10 percent performed at a *novice* level.

(This means they are gaining the skills.)

70 percent performed at a *proficient* level.

(This means they can perform the skills most of the time.)

15 percent performed at a *mastery* level.

(This means they have completely gained, or mastered, the skills.)

Your school may use terms like *basic*, *novice*, *proficient*, and *mastery* to describe student performance, or it may use other special terms. The school profile should define any terms it uses.

How do schools use the profile?

The school profile is one way to judge the quality of a school. Your school's principal and teachers may look at the profile to see how different groups of students within the school are doing. They also may use the profile to see how well their students are doing compared to similar students in other schools.

School staff may compare the current profile to profiles from years before, to see if any changes are taking place that might affect learning. For example, they might compare to see if more girls are becoming successful math students.

All of this information can help school staff make decisions to improve teaching and learning. It can be used to determine where resources are needed the most. And, it can be used to support requests for more funds.

How can I use the school profile?

You can use your school profile to get a quick picture of how your school is doing. From the profile, you can learn what your school's strengths and weaknesses are. It can give you information about Title I and other programs in the school that you might want to consider for your child. Use the school profile as a guide when asking questions about the school.

You can use the profile to compare your school with other schools that receive Title I money. Finally, you can find out whether your school is improving or not.

What else do I need to know?

Every school profile is different. Here are some questions you might want to ask to learn more about your school's profile:

Ask about putting the school profile together

- Does the school have a profile? If not, when will the profile be available?
- Who's in charge of developing the profile for our school?
- Who decides what information is put in?
- What does the state require our school to report?
- How is it decided which student groups to use for reporting purposes?

Ask about interpreting the profile

- How do I get a copy of the profile?
- What special terms will I need to know to understand the profile?
- What other information do I need to make sense of the profile?
- Who can help me understand the profile?
- Does the school have workshops to help parents understand the profile?
- How does the profile report student performance on district and state standards?
- What are the reasons for different performance between groups of students? What is being done about that?
- How has student achievement changed from previous years?

How is the Title I program affecting performance of those students who are furthest behind?

What can we expect to see in next year's profile?

How do I know if the profile is accurate?

How can I suggest ideas for the next profile?

Ask about how your school collects profile information

How often is student performance measured?

What kind of tests are used?

Are all students included in testing? If not, why? How is performance measured for the students who are not included?

Ask about how your school uses profile information

How does the school use the profile?

What programs does our school district have to improve student achievement?

Are these programs available in our school?

How do our school's Title I programs compare to those at other schools?

How do I get more information about these programs?

Who can answer these questions?

Your child's teacher can answer many of them. Or you can ask:

- The school principal
- The Title I director in the school
- The superintendent of schools
- Members of the school board
- Members of the parent-teacher organization
- The parent coordinator
- Staff members at the parent resource center
- Other parents



Parents Ask About Title I

Parents Ask About Standards

Parents Ask About Parent Involvement Policies

Parents Ask About Compacts

**The following are some sections from
“IMPROVING AMERICA’S SCHOOLS ACT OF 1994”
that relate to school profiles**

**Title I: Amendments to the Elementary and
Secondary Education Act of 1965**

“Sec.1118. Parental Involvement.

“(c) Policy Involvement. Each school served under this part shall-

“(4) provide parents of participating children-

“(B) school performance profiles required under section 1116(a)(3) and their child’s individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results, as required under section 1111(b)(3)(H);”

**“Sec. 1116. Assessment and Local Educational Agency
and School Improvement.**

“(a) Local Review-

“(3) publicize and disseminate to teachers and other staff, parents, students, and the community, the results of the annual review under paragraph (2) of all schools served under this part in **individual school performance profiles** that include statistically sound disaggregated results as required by section 1111(b)(3)(1);”

“Sec. 1111. State Plans.

“(b) Standards and Assessment-

“(3)(H) provide individual student interpretive and descriptive reports, which shall include scores, or other information on the attainment of student performance standards;

“(3)(I) enable results to be disaggregated within each State, local educational agency, and school by gender, by each major racial and ethnic group, by English proficiency status, by migrant status, by students with disabilities as compared to nondisabled students, and by economically disadvantaged students as compared to students who are not economically disadvantaged.”