

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT

U.S. Department of Education
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A National Problem

There are approximately 5,000 chronically underperforming schools in America, roughly 5 percent of all the schools in the country. About half are in big cities, about a third are in rural areas, and the rest are in suburbs and medium-sized towns. As Secretary Duncan has said, “This is a national problem—urban, rural, and suburban.”

--“Turning Around the Bottom Five Percent,” Speech by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, June 22, 2009

www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2009/06/06222009.html

Dropout Factories

In fact, there are some high schools that are little more than drop out factories:

- There are 2000 high schools that produce 50 percent of the nation's dropouts.*
- These schools alone produce 75 percent of the nation's Latino and African American dropouts.*
- Nearly 90 percent of high schools with low graduation rates educate mostly students growing up in poverty.

* Balfanz, R. & Legters, N. (2004). Locating the dropout crisis: Which high schools produce the nation's dropouts? Where are they located? Who attends them? Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University.

School Improvement Grants (SIG)

- \$3.5 billion to improve low-achieving schools nationally
 - \$3 billion appropriated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)
 - \$546 million appropriate through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2009
- Authorized under section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Students who attend these schools deserve better options and can't afford to wait
- Not quantity, but quality
- Need to build capacity and supports at all levels
- Not a one-year activity

WHICH SCHOOLS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SIG FUNDS?

Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools:

Tier I schools

Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that—

- Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State or the five lowest-achieving such schools (whichever number of schools is greater); or
- Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b) that is below 60 percent over a number of years.

Tier II schools

Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I, Part A funds that—

- Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the five lowest-achieving secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds; or
- Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b) that is below 60 percent over a number of years.

Other Schools:

Tier III Schools

- Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is not a Tier I school.

WHICH LEAS ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR SIG FUNDS?

An LEA is eligible to apply for SIG funds if it—

- Receives Title I, Part A funds **AND**
- Has one or more schools that are eligible to receive SIG funds as identified by the SEA

FOUR SIG SCHOOL INTERVENTION MODELS

Turnaround

Restart

Closure

Transformation

Turnaround Model Overview

Teachers and Leaders

- Replace principal
- Use locally adopted “turnaround” competencies to review and select staff for school (rehire no more than 50% of existing staff)
- Implement strategies to recruit, place, and retain staff

Instructional and Support Strategies

- Select and implement an instructional model based on student needs
- Provide job-embedded PD designed to build capacity and support staff
- Ensure continuous use of data to inform and differentiate instruction

Time and Support

- Provide *increased learning time*
 - Staff and students
- Social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports

Governance

- New governance structure
- Grant operating flexibility to school leader

May also implement any of the required or permissible strategies under the Transformation Model

Restart Model Overview

Restart model is one in which an LEA **converts a school or closes and reopens** a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected **through a rigorous review process**.

- A restart model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.
- A rigorous review process could take such things into consideration as an applicant's team, track record, instructional program, model's theory of action, sustainability.
- As part of this model, SEA must review the process an LEA will use/has used to select the partner.

School Closure Model Overview

School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are **higher achieving**.

- These other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.
- Office for Civil Rights Technical Assistance Module-- Struggling Schools and School Closure Issues: *An Overview of Civil Rights Considerations*.

Transformation Model Overview

Teachers and Leaders

- Replace principal
- Implement new evaluation system
 - Developed with staff
 - Uses student growth as a significant factor
- Identify and reward staff who are increasing student outcomes; support and then remove those who are not
- Implement strategies to recruit, place, and retain staff

Instructional and Support Strategies

- Select and implement an instructional model based on student needs
- Provide job-embedded professional development designed to build capacity and support staff
- Ensure continuous use of data to inform and differentiate instruction

Time and Support

- Provide *increased learning time*
 - Staff and students
- Provide ongoing mechanism for community and family engagement
- Partner to provide social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports

Governance

- Provide sufficient operating flexibility to implement reform
- Ensure ongoing technical assistance

An LEA with nine or more Tier I and Tier II schools may not implement the Transformation Model in more than 50% of those schools.

Tier I, II, and III Schools

- In the Tier I and Tier II schools an LEA commits to serve with SIG funds (*i.e.*, funds under section 1003(g) of the ESEA), the LEA *must* use one of these four school intervention models.
- In the Tier III schools an LEA commits to serve with SIG funds or in any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that an LEA serves with school improvement funds under section 1003(a) of the ESEA, the LEA *may* use the funds to implement one of the four school intervention models or *may* use the funds to conduct other school improvement activities.

	SEA	LEA
Eligible Schools	Identify list of eligible schools in the State (<i>i.e.</i> , Tier I, II, and III)	Applies to serve all or subset of eligible schools in its district
Review Criteria	Develops, disseminates, and implements criteria it will use to review and evaluate LEA applications	
4 models	Reviews and approves LEA's capacity to implement proposed model in each eligible school	Applies to implement one of the four required models in eligible Tier I and Tier II schools. LEA selects model after an analysis of local data, resources, and capacity.
Prioritization	<u>Must</u> give priority to LEAs that apply to serve Tier I or Tier II schools	Must serve Tier I schools it has the capacity to serve. May not apply to serve any Tier III school if it has not served at least one of its Tier I or II schools
Budget	Reviews, adjusts, and approves LEA budget by school	Submits 3 year budget for each school it applies to serve (\$50K-\$2m per year)
Goals	Approves and monitors LEA's achievement goals	Proposes achievement goals for each Tier I, II, and III school

WAIVERS

Through its SIG application, an SEA may request ED to grant a waiver of one or more of the following provisions:

- Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act to **extend the period of availability** of SIG funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2013.
- Section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Tier I schools that will implement a turnaround or restart model to **“start over” in the school improvement timeline**.
- Section 1114(a)(1) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to implement a **schoolwide program** in a Tier I school that does not meet the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold.

If an SEA does not request one or more of these waivers on behalf of its LEAs, an LEA may request a waiver.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Are SIG funds competitive?
- Who selects the appropriate intervention model?
- What is the “2 year rule”?
- Dose a district **have** to serve all of its PLA schools?
- May an LEA use SIG funds for general district-level improvement activities?
- Does an LEA have to implement all components of the selected intervention model?
- What is the definition of “staff” in the Turnaround and Transformation models?
- What costs under the closure model can SIG resources fund?
- What is the definition of “increased learning time”

Status of Applications

- **Submissions**
 - 51 Applications have been received
 - 1 State yet to submit
- **Review Process**
 - Each application has been reviewed by two reviewers
 - After review, ED contacts states and requests re-submission to provide feedback and address any questions/clarifications
 - Once all the points are clarified applications are cleared through, States notified of the approval, and their approved applications posted on the SIG website
- **Approvals**
 - 14 States have been approved (applications posted online)
 - 18 States that are close to approval
 - 15 States that need to resubmit
 - 5 States under their 1st Review
 - Additional States will be approved over the next few weeks

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>

- School Improvement Grant Guidance (FAQs)
- Final Requirements
- SEA Application
- Fact sheets/Examples
- State by State budget tables

http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T_ID=21

- “What Works Clearinghouse” – Resources for Turning Around Chronically Low Performing Schools

www.centerii.org

- Handbook on Effective Implementation of SIGs
- Six Recorded Webinars
- “What LEAs are Doing”
- Planning & Implementation Tools/Resources

www.massinsight.org/turnaround

- New Resource: “State Policies that can Support Turnaround” (coming soon)