



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG)

District Application

Due 5:00 p.m., Friday, March 5, 2010

INSTRUCTIONS FOR *SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS* FORM PACKAGE 519 or 520

Please carefully read the following information before responding to the questions in the *School Improvement Grant (SIG)* application for Form Package 519 or 520.

- To prepare districts for implementing school intervention models and improvement activities in the 2010-11 school year, a portion of *SIG* funds will be available in spring of the 2009-10 school year.
- Successful applicants may be eligible to renew their *SIG* grants for up to two additional one-year periods (2011-12 and 2012-13) of funding.
- Districts will be informed by OSPI regarding which form package to complete: either 519 or 520. The application on each form package is identical.
- Directions:
 - Refer to Form Package 519 to create a Word document corresponding to the *SIG* application; complete your responses on the Word document.
 - Once notified of the specific form package (i.e., 519 or 520), paste your responses from the Word document into the corresponding questions in the assigned form package.

PURPOSE of GRANT

A total of \$3.546 billion is available nation-wide for federal *School Improvement Grants (SIGs)* from the combined American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and Fiscal Year 2009 funds appropriated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The purpose of these funds is to turn around the lowest 5% of persistently low-achieving Title I schools and Title I-eligible secondary schools, so that these schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) and exit improvement status. More information may be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/applicant.html>.

Based on federal guidelines, *SIG* funds will be used in Washington State to:

- Provide financial resources to qualifying districts to implement selected intervention model(s) in identified Tier I and Tier II schools with strict fidelity, per federal regulations (see definitions of Tier I Schools and Tier II Schools below in *Criteria for Awarding SIGs to Districts*).
- Provide financial resources to qualifying districts to support activities and services in identified Tier III schools, per federal regulations (see definition of Tier III Schools below in *Criteria for Awarding SIGs to Districts*).

- Provide technical assistance and training to use an OSPI-specified online tool for posting intervention plans and providing ongoing evidence of implementation and impact of intervention efforts.
- Build school and district capacity to implement one of the four intervention models prescribed in federal guidelines (see *Criteria for Awarding SIGs to Districts* below for a description of the four intervention models).
- Develop effective structures and conditions in schools and districts essential to continuous improvement of teaching and learning and to sustain reforms after the funding period ends.

CRITERIA FOR AWARDING SIGs TO DISTRICTS

Based on federal guidelines, *School Improvement Grants (SIGs)* are available to districts which 1) demonstrate greatest need; and 2) provide evidence of strongest commitment to use *SIG* funds to raise substantially student achievement and, if applicable, graduation rates, and exhibit capacity to implement and sustain reforms over time. Definitions of *Persistently Lowest-achieving Schools*, *Greatest Need*, *Required Interventions*, and *Strongest Commitment* follow:

- *Persistently Lowest-achieving Schools*: Schools with three consecutive years of data in the lowest 5% in both reading and mathematics and secondary schools with a weighted average of graduation rates less than 60% over a three-year period.
 - Weighting is equal between reading and mathematics.
 - Weighting is equal between elementary and secondary schools.
 - Graduation rate weighted-average is based on the number of students for each year.
 - Graduation rate is calculated as required in Guidance on School Improvement Grants, January 21, 2010 consistent with C.F.R. § 200.19(b)
- *Greatest Need*: To determine greatest need, federal guidelines segment schools into three categories: Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. Districts must implement one of four required interventions in the Tier I and Tier II schools it commits to serve.
 - **Tier I Schools**: Final requirements under section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) specify that *SIGs* will be available to a State's lowest 5% of persistently lowest-achieving Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Title I high schools in improvement with graduation rates less than 60% over time are also included in this category. Additionally, new guidance enabled OSPI to include in this Tier those Title I eligible elementary schools that are 1) no higher-achieving than the highest-achieving school that is defined as a "persistently lowest-achieving school" in Tier I and 2) in the bottom 20% of all schools in the state based on proficiency rates or have not made AYP for two consecutive years in this Tier.
 - **Tier II Schools**: Federal requirements allow for *SIG* funds to be used in the State's lowest 5% of persistently lowest-achieving secondary schools that are eligible for but do not receive Title I, Part A funds. Tier II also includes Title I-eligible high schools with graduation rates less than 60% over time. Additionally, new guidance enabled OSPI to include in this Tier those Title I eligible secondary schools that are 1) no higher-achieving than the highest-achieving school that is defined as a "persistently lowest-achieving school" in Tier II and 2) in the bottom 20% of all schools in the state based on proficiency rates or have not made AYP for two consecutive years.

- **Tier III Schools:** Guidelines allow grants to Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not among the persistently lowest-achieving schools. New guidance enabled OSPI to also include in this Tier those Title I eligible schools that 1) do not meet the requirements to be a Tier I or Tier II school, and 2) are in the bottom 20% of all schools in the state based on proficiency rates or have not made AYP for two consecutive years.
- **Required Interventions:** SIGs will be awarded to eligible districts committing to implement one of the following four federally-defined school intervention models in their Tier I and Tier II schools. *Note:* Tier I and Tier III schools in which a Turnaround or Restart model is applied will “start over” in the school improvement timeline, if the United States Department of Education’s (ED) approves the State’s waiver for this specific option.
 - **Turnaround model**, which includes, among other actions, replacing the principal and rehiring up to 50% of the school’s staff, adopting a new governance structure, and implementing an instructional program that is research-based and vertically aligned from one grade to the next as well as aligned with the State’s academic standards. A turnaround model may also implement other strategies such as any of the required and permissible activities under the transformation model or a new school model (e.g., themed, dual language academy).
 - **Restart model**¹, in which a district converts the school or closes and reopens it under the management of an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
 - **School closure**, in which the district closes the school and enrolls the students who attended the school in other higher-achieving schools in the district.
 - **Transformation model**, which addresses four areas critical to transforming persistently low-achieving schools. These areas include: developing teacher and principal leader effectiveness, implementing comprehensive instructional reform strategies, extending learning time and creating community connections, and providing operating flexibility and sustained support.

Please see the attached table titled *Four Federal Intervention Models* for an overview of the required and permissible activities for the Turnaround and Transformation models.

- **Strongest Commitment:** In addition to *Greatest Need*, federal guidelines require States to look at *Strongest Commitment* and *Capacity* of the district to serve identified schools. The State must consider, at a minimum, the extent to which the application shows the district’s efforts and/or plans to:
 - Analyze school needs and match interventions to those needs.
 - Design interventions consistent with the four intervention model(s) described in *Criteria for Awarding SIGs to Districts* above.
 - Recruit, screen, and select external providers to ensure quality.
 - Embed interventions in longer-term plans to sustain gains in achievement.
 - Align other resources with the interventions.
 - Modify practices, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.
 - Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

FUNDING

¹ While Charter School Operators and Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) constitute a restart under the federal guidelines; these are not currently authorized by the Washington State Legislature.

Details for *SIG* funds include the following:

- Anticipated Amount of Awards for Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III Schools: Districts may apply for funding ranging from \$50,000 annually to \$2,000,000 annually for each **Tier I**, **Tier II** and **Tier III** school the district applies to serve (see *Sample Annual District Allocation Model* below). This higher limit, which was included by the Consolidated Appropriations Act on December 16, 2009 and published in the new School Improvement Grant *Interim* Final Requirements on January 15, 2010, permits OSPI to award directly the amount that may be necessary for successful implementation of one of the four intervention models described above in Tier I and Tier II schools. For example, a school of 500 students might require \$1 million and a large, comprehensive high school might require \$2 million to fully and effectively implement the intervention.
- Availability of Funds: *SIG* funds will be available in spring of the 2009-10 school year to support districts to create the conditions for implementing school intervention models and improvement activities/services in the 2010-11 school year.
- Priority: OSPI must give first priority to districts that apply to serve Tier I or Tier II schools. No funds may be awarded to any district for Tier III schools unless and until OSPI has awarded *SIG* funds to serve fully, throughout the period of availability of *SIG* funds, ALL Tier I and Tier II schools across the State that districts commit to serve and OSPI determines districts have the capacity to serve. A district with one or more Tier I schools may not receive funds to serve only its Tier III schools.
- District-level Activities: District may use *SIG* funds to conduct district-level activities designed to support implementation of the selected school intervention model(s) in the district's Tier I and Tier II schools and to support school improvement activities for each Tier III school identified in the district's application.
- As appropriate, State-level Technical Assistance: District will allow the State to holdback sufficient funds for required or requested and agreed-upon State-level technical assistance and other supportive services. Requested activities may be for implementing some of the required or permissible activities noted in the intervention models in Tier I and Tier II schools, improvement activities in Tier III schools, or associated district-level activities. Districts may also contact OSPI/DSIA regarding the use of external providers or other services which may be purchased through OSPI/DSIA.
- Renewal: Successful applicants may renew their *SIG* grants for up to two additional one-year periods of funding (2011-12 and 2012-13). To be eligible for renewal, districts will be accountable for ensuring 1) their Tier I and Tier II schools meet, or are on track to meet, annual student achievement goals for all students and for subgroups in reading and mathematics, as well as for making progress on the leading indicators; and 2) their Tier III schools are meeting annual goals (subject to approval by OSPI) outlined in their improvement plans.

Note: In their application, districts are required to include a timeline of activities for implementing intervention(s) in Tier I and Tier II schools and improvement activities in Tier III schools they are applying to serve. In their timeline, districts should include activities in Year 2 (2011-12) and Year 3 (2012-13) which are essential to sustaining reforms after the funding period ends. The three-year proposed budget which districts are required to provide in their applications should also reflect the expectation for building capacity for sustainability to avoid “funding cliffs” and to ensure reforms will continue into 2013-14 and beyond.

Sample Annual District Allocation Model: The table below provides a sample of how a district might plan to allocate funds in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for one year.

Tier	Total # of Schools in Each Tier	Total # of Schools District Applied to Serve	Possible Award	Proposed Budget	Total Proposed Budget
I	2	2	Between \$50,000 and \$2 million per school	School A: \$700,000 School B: \$500,000	\$1,200,000
II	1	1	Between \$50,000 and \$2 million per school	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
III	11	5	Between \$50,000 and \$2 million per school	\$200,000/school	\$1,000,000 (See “Priority” above regarding allocating funds for Tier III schools)
TOTAL	14	8			Up to \$3,200,000 (See “Priority” above regarding allocating funds for Tier III schools)

Districts will be required to renew their *SIG* application annually in order to receive continuous grant funding for Years 2 and 3. In their proposed budgets for Year 2 and Year 3, districts are expected to address issues related to building capacity to sustain reforms after the funding period ends.

In the event funding for the grants is reduced or eliminated, or if program requirements are changed, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will collaborate with districts to modify this application.

TIMELINE

The timeline for the *SIG Application* process follows:

- *SIG Solicitation of Interest Memorandum* and *SIG Initial Statement of Interest* were sent on **Thursday, January 7, 2010** to District Superintendents with Potential Tier I and Tier II Schools.
- *Statements of Interest* were due by **4:00 p.m., Friday, January 15, 2010**.
- OSPI sponsored external *School-level Needs Assessments* were scheduled for potentially identified Tier I and Tier II schools on **January 29, 2010** to be conducted throughout the **month of February, 2010** (See the section titled, *What Will Be Expected of the District?* below for more information on the external needs assessments).
- *SIG* Informational Webinar to provide details regarding the district application process and answer questions concerning *SIG* requirements was held on **Thursday, January 28, 2010**.
- District *SIG Application* and *Instructions* were published on iGrants on **Monday, February 01, 2010**; the *Scoring Guide for District SIG Applications* was included in the *Application*.
- Final list of schools in each tier will be published on the OSPI website in **February 2010**.
- Final District *SIG Application* is due by **5:00 p.m., Friday, March 5, 2010**.
- OSPI Review of District *SIG Applications* will be held **March 8-12, 2010**.
- OSPI Interviews with District *SIG* Potential Awardees will be held **March 17-19, 2010**.

- Successful District *SIG* Awardees will be notified by **Friday, March 26, 2010**.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Districts that submit applications must be willing to implement with fidelity one of the four specified intervention models in identified Tier I and Tier II schools, and provide improvement activities and services in identified Tier III schools. These districts must be willing to provide evidence of *Strongest Commitment* as defined in *Criteria for Awarding SIGs to Districts* above. Finally, districts must be willing to engage in assessment, data collection, evaluation, and other activities described in the *Assurances* in the *School Improvement Grant* application.

WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF THE DISTRICT?

In the Application Process:

Districts must submit their completed *School Improvement Grant Application* to OSPI on iGrants by **5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 5, 2010**. Districts are required to complete the following actions *prior* to submitting their application:

- Identify Participating Schools: Only Title I schools and Title I-eligible secondary schools identified by OSPI as a Tier I, Tier II or Tier III school may be served by *SIG* funds. In its application, each district will identify school(s) it will apply to serve and demonstrate capacity to do so; the district may decide it can best impact student achievement by focusing on a subset of its eligible schools.
- Conduct External School-level Needs Assessments for Identified Tier I and Tier II Schools: Districts must arrange to have an OSPI-sponsored external *School-level Needs Assessment* completed in each Tier I and Tier II school the district is applying to serve. The *Needs Assessment* is intended to assist the district in identifying the intervention model appropriate to each school. *School-level Needs Assessments* will be scheduled during the month of February and will be completed in one day per school. The *Needs Assessment* will include a classroom observation study focusing on instructional practices within the school and a study of the alignment of school structures and practices with OSPI's *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools*. Other district-level practices and policies may be reviewed as part of the *School-level Needs Assessment* to identify potential barriers in district policy/practices that may impede the district's ability to implement a particular model in a Tier I or Tier II school. OSPI reserves the right to waive a *School-level Needs Assessment* requirement as part of a district's application if an OSPI external needs assessment has been conducted in the past 18 months.
- Engage Stakeholders: The iGrants application process also requires the engagement of relevant stakeholder groups, including employee associations. It will be essential to collaborate with local education associations on the matter of personnel evaluations and assignments within the specified intervention models.

Throughout the Duration of the Grant:

- Implement Intervention Models in Tier I and Tier II Schools: Participating districts must implement selected intervention model(s) with strict fidelity, per federal regulations. Federal intervention models include: Turnaround, Restart, School Closure, and Transformation. Detailed requirements for each of the four specific school intervention models are available on pages 65650-65655 of the *Final Notice* at: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/sif/applicant.html>.

- Support School Improvement in Tier III Schools: Districts must support school improvement activities and services identified in the *SIG* application at the school or district level for each participating Tier III school.
- Participate in On-going Assessment and Data Collection: Assurances require districts to use an OSPI-specified online tool for posting intervention plans and providing ongoing evidence of implementation and impact of intervention efforts. Data include, but are not limited to, findings from needs assessments and analyses, classroom walk-through summary data, student and classroom assessment data and interventions, and progress toward leading indicators and other measures of performance. Details regarding leading indicators are available on page 65656 of the *Final Notice* at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/sif/applicant.html>. Additionally, participating districts can expect on-site monitoring and technical assistance visits to verify successes and address challenges associated with implementation of the grant.
- Hold Tier I and Tier II Schools Accountable: Districts must hold their Tier I and Tier II schools served with *SIG* funds accountable each year for meeting, or being on track to meet, achievement goals in reading and mathematics with respect to all students and each subgroup of students, and for making progress on leading indicators.
- Hold Tier III Schools Accountable: Districts must hold their Tier III schools served with *SIG* funds accountable each year for meeting improvement goals (subject to approval by OSPI).
- Participate in Required Evaluations: Districts and participating schools are required to take part in any federally required evaluations of the *School Improvement Grant*.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FROM OSPI

As a support to districts choosing to apply for *SIG* funds, OSPI will offer an external *District-level Needs Assessment* and action planning process using an online tool for feedback on district practices associated with supporting schools to accelerate and substantially raise student achievement. The same tool will be used for posting school intervention plans and providing ongoing evidence of implementation and impact of intervention efforts. Tools for the *District-level Needs Assessment* are aligned with OSPI's *Characteristics of Improving Districts: Themes from Research*.

Additionally, OSPI's District and School Improvement and Accountability Division (DSIA) is able to serve as a partner in delivering supportive services and technical assistance. Over the last two years, the DSIA office has developed and field tested practices in such areas as:

- Identification of *essential* standards;
- Mathematics and reading program gap analyses;
- Mathematics benchmark assessment development;
- Use of online data management systems for inputting and analyzing ongoing results from formative and summative assessments; and
- Use of classroom walkthrough processes with online data collection/management, professional development, and coaching for instructional leaders in effective classroom practices.

Interest in technical assistance for these or other practices should be further explored by working directly with OSPI's District and School Improvement and Accountability Division. Please email inquiries to SIG@k12.wa.us.

POSSIBLE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

Please note that districts with eligible and invited Tier I and Tier II schools that decline to apply for this *School Improvement Grant (SIG)* may be subject to required action within our State. Washington's State Board of Education (SBE) proposed legislation in January, 2010, to *require districts* to intervene in their Tier I and Tier II schools if *SIGs* are not pursued and the school remains in the lowest 5% in the subsequent year. These districts will be responsible for intervening in these schools using one of the four federal intervention models for the 2011-12 school year, depending on available funds. For more information regarding the SBE's proposed legislation, go to: <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2010.01.04%20Final%20Accountability%20Memo.pdf>

Four Federal Intervention Models

**Adapted from the *Components of Four Federal Intervention Models*
developed by the Washington State Board of Education, January, 2010**

There are four intervention models defined in federal guidance for *School Improvement Grants*: **Turnaround, Transformation, Closure, and Restart**. A district must agree to implement fully and effectively one of these interventions in each Tier I and Tier II school that the district commits to serve.

The **Closure model** does not require any of the components below, but does require that students are sent to other higher-achieving schools in the district.

The **Restart model** requires the district to convert the low-achieving school, or closes and reopen the school, under a charter organization (currently not authorized in Washington) or education management organization (EMO), which is a non-profit or for-profit organization that provides whole school operation services to a district (permissible in Washington). An EMO must be selected through a rigorous review process. A restarted school must enroll, within grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.

Highlights of Required Activities and Permissible Activities for the **Turnaround model** and **Transformation model** are described below. A **Turnaround model** may implement any of the Required Activities or Permissible Activities described in the **Transformation model**.

X = Required O = Permissible		
	Turnaround	Transformation
Teachers and Leaders		
Replace the principal.	X	X Note: Principal is not required to be replaced if he/she has been involved in recent whole school improvement
Use locally adopted competencies to measure effectiveness of staff who can work in turnaround environment; use to screen existing staff and select new staff.	X	
Screen all existing staff, rehiring no more than 50%.	X	
Implement such strategies as financial incentives and career ladders for recruiting, placing, and retaining effective teachers.	X	X
Implement rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals which are developed with staff and use student growth as a significant factor.	O	X
Identify and reward school leaders and teachers who have increased student achievement and graduation rates; identify and remove those who, after ample opportunities to improve professional practice, have not done so.	O	X
Provide additional incentives to attract and retain staff with skills necessary to meet the needs of the students (e.g., bonus to a cohort of high-performing teachers placed in a low-achieving school.)	O	O
Ensure school is not required to accept a teacher without mutual consent of teacher and principal, regardless of teacher's seniority.	O	O

X = Required O = Permissible		
	Turnaround	Transformation
Instructional and Support Strategies		
Use data to select and implement an instructional program that is research-based and vertically aligned to each grade and state standards.	X	X
Provide staff ongoing, high quality, job-embedded professional development aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff.	X	X
Ensure continuous use of data (e.g., formative, interim, and summative assessments) to inform and differentiate instruction to meet the academic needs of individual students.	X	X
Institute a system for measuring changes in instructional practices resulting from professional development.	O	O
Conduct periodic reviews to ensure the curriculum is implemented with fidelity, having intended impact on student achievement, and modified if ineffective.	O	O
Implement a school-wide "response to intervention" model.	O	O
Provide additional supports and professional development to teachers to support students with disabilities and limited English proficient students.	O	O
Use and integrate technology-based supports and interventions as part of the instructional program.	O	O
Secondary Schools: Increase graduation rates through strategies such as credit recovery programs, smaller learning communities, etc.	O	O
Secondary Schools: Increase rigor in coursework, offer opportunities for advanced courses, and provide supports designed to ensure low-achieving students can take advantage of these programs and coursework.	O	O
Secondary Schools: Improve student transition from middle to high school.	O	O
Secondary Schools: Establish early warning systems.	O	O
Learning Time and Support		
Establish schedules and strategies that provide increased learning time. Increased learning time includes longer school day, week, or year to increase total number of school hours.	X	X
Provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and support for students.	X	O Note: Guidelines indicate school may partner with parents and community organizations to provide these services
Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.	O	X
Extend or restructure the school day to add time for such strategies as advisories to build relationships.	O	O
Implement approaches to improve school climate and discipline.	O	O
Expand program to offer pre-kindergarten or full day kindergarten.	O	O

X = Required O = Permissible		
	Turnaround	Transformation
Governance		
Adopt a new governance structure to address turnaround of school(s); the district may hire a chief turnaround officer to report directly to the superintendent.	X	O
Grant sufficient operational flexibility (e.g., staffing, calendar, and budget) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement and increase high school graduation rates.	X Note: Guidelines indicate <i>Principal</i> is granted operating flexibility.	X Note: Guidelines indicate <i>School</i> is granted operating flexibility.
Ensure school receives intensive ongoing technical support from district, state, or external partners.	O	X
Allow the school to be run under a new governance agreement, such as a turnaround division within the district or state.	O	O
Implement a per-pupil school based budget formula that is weighted based on student needs.	O	O

NOTE: Examples of new schools which may be implemented in **Turnaround model** or **Restart model** include theme-based academies, such as STEM or dual language.