

APPLICATION COVER SHEET
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Legal Name of Applicant: Louisiana Department of Education	Applicant's Mailing Address Louisiana Department of Education P.O. Box 94064 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064
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State Contact for the School Improvement Grant

Name Sheila Guidry

Position and Office- Executive Director, District Support Office

Contact's Mailing Address:
Louisiana Department of Education
P.O. Box 94064
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Chief State School Officer (Printed Name) Mr. John C. White  Signature of the Chief State School Officer	Telephone: 225-342-3607 Date: January 18, 2013
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The State through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement Grants program, including the assurances contained herein and the conditions that apply to any waivers that the State receives through this application.

School Improvement Grants Application for FY 2012 New Awards Competition

Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Fiscal Year 2012

CFDA Number: 84.377A

State Name: Louisiana



U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

OMB Number:

Expiration Date:

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0682. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 100 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Purpose of the Program

School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools. Under the final requirements published in the *Federal Register* on October 28, 2010 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>), school improvement funds are to be focused on each State's "Priority" or "Tier I" and "Tier II" schools. Tier I schools are the lowest-achieving five percent of a State's Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, Title I secondary schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring with graduation rates below 60 percent over a number of years, and, if a State so chooses, certain Title I eligible (and participating) elementary schools that are as low achieving as the State's other Tier I schools ("newly eligible" Tier I schools). Tier II schools are the lowest-achieving five percent of a State's secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds, secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds with graduation rates below 60 percent over a number of years, and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible (participating and non-participating) secondary schools that are as low achieving as the State's other Tier II schools or that have had a graduation rate below 60 percent over a number of years ("newly eligible" Tier II schools). An LEA also may use school improvement funds in Tier III schools, which are Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not identified as Tier I or Tier II schools and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible (participating and non-participating) schools ("newly eligible" Tier III schools). (See Appendix B for a chart summarizing the schools included in each tier.) In the Priority or Tier I and Tier II schools an LEA chooses to serve, the LEA must implement one of four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model.

ESEA Flexibility

States that have received approval of their ESEA flexibility request will not be required to maintain a separate list of Tier I and Tier II schools. Under this flexibility, an LEA is eligible to apply for SIG funds to implement one of the four school intervention models defined in the SIG final requirements in a priority school even if that school is not in improvement and thus the LEA would not otherwise be eligible to receive SIG funds for the school. An SEA approved to implement this flexibility may award SIG funds above the amount needed for SIG continuation awards to an LEA with Priority schools according to the rules that apply to Tier I and Tier II schools under the SIG final requirements.

Availability of Funds

The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2012, provided \$535 million for School Improvement Grants in fiscal year (FY) 2012.

FY 2012 school improvement funds are available for obligation by SEAs and LEAs through September 30, 2013.

State and LEA Allocations

Each State (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas are eligible to apply to receive a School Improvement Grant. The Department will allocate FY 2012 school improvement funds in proportion to the funds received in FY 2012 by the States, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas under Parts A, C, and D of Title I of the ESEA. An SEA must allocate at least 95 percent of its school improvement funds directly to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>). The SEA may retain an amount not to exceed five percent of its allocation for State administration, evaluation, and technical assistance.

Consultation with the Committee of Practitioners

Before submitting its application for a SIG grant to the Department, an SEA must consult with its Committee of Practitioners established under section 1903(b) of the ESEA regarding the rules and policies contained therein. The Department recommends that the SEA also consult with other stakeholders, such as potential external providers, teachers' unions, and business, civil rights, and community leaders that have an interest in its application.

FY 2012 NEW AWARDS APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

This application is for use only by SEAs that will make new awards. New awards are defined as an award of SIG funds to an LEA for a school that the LEA was not previously approved to serve with SIG funds in the school year for which funds are being awarded—in this case, the 2012–2013 school year. New awards may be made with the FY 2012 funds or any remaining FY 2009, FY 2010 and FY 2011 funds not already committed to grants made in earlier competitions. The U.S. Department of Education will not require those SEAs that will use FY 2012 funds solely for continuation awards to submit a SIG application. Rather, such an SEA is required to submit an assurance that it is not making new awards, as defined above, through the separate application titled, “Continuation Awards Only Application for FY 2012 SIG Program”.

An SEA that must submit a FY 2012 application will be required to update its timeline for making awards to LEAs, but may retain all other sections from its FY 2010 application, including its lists of Tier I, II, and III schools and priority schools.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Electronic Submission:

The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA’s FY 2012 SIG application electronically. The application should be sent as a Microsoft Word document, **not** as a PDF.

The SEA should submit its FY 2012 application to the following address: OST.OESE@ED.GOV

In addition, the SEA must submit a paper copy of the cover page signed by the SEA’s authorized representative to the address listed below under “Paper Submission.”

Paper Submission:

If an SEA is not able to submit its application electronically, it may submit the original and two copies of its SIG application to the following address:

Carlas McCauley, Group Leader
Office of School Turnaround
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in government processing of mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

Application Deadline

Applications are due on or before January 18, 2013.

For Further Information

If you have any questions, please contact Carlas McCauley at (202) 260-0824 or by e-mail at Carlas.Mccauley@ed.gov.

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Legal Name of Applicant: Louisiana Department of Education	Applicant's Mailing Address: Louisiana Department of Education P.O. Box 94064 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064
State Contact for the School Improvement Grant Name: Sheila Guidry Position and Office: Executive Director, Grants Management Office Contact's Mailing Address: Louisiana Department of Education School Turnaround Office P.O. Box 94064 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064 Telephone: 225-219-4573 Fax: 225-342-7367 Email address: Sheila.Guidry@la.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Mr. John C. White	Telephone: 225-342-3607
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X	Date: January 18, 2012
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement Grants program, including the assurances contained herein and the conditions that apply to any waivers that the State receives through this application.	

FY 2012 NEW AWARDS APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please use this checklist to indicate the changes the SEA elects to make to its FY 2012 application from its FY 2011 application. An SEA will be required to update Section D (Part 1): Timeline, but will have the option to retain all other sections from its FY 2011 application, including its lists of Tier I, II, and III schools.

SECTION A: ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS	<input type="checkbox"/> SEA elects to keep the same definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SEA elects to revise its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) for FY 2012
	<i>For an SEA keeping the same definition of PLA schools, please select one of the following options:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> SEA elects not to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools <input type="checkbox"/> SEA elects to generate new lists	<i>For an SEA revising its definition of PLA schools, please select the following option:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> SEA must generate new lists <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SEA is substituting the PLA list with its list of priority schools (please see Waiver 4 in Section H of SEA application)
SECTION B: EVALUATION CRITERIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012
SECTION B-1: ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012
SECTION C: CAPACITY	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012
SECTION D (PART 1): TIMELINE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012	
SECTION D (PARTS 2-8): DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012
SECTION E: SEA RESERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012
SECTION F: CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation with stakeholders provided	
SECTION G: WAIVERS	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2012

PART I: SEA REQUIREMENTS

As part of its FY 2012 application for a School Improvement Grant under section 1003(g) of the ESEA, an SEA will be required to update its timeline, but may retain all other sections from its FY 2011 application, including its lists of Tier I, II, and III schools.

SECTION A: ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS	
<input type="checkbox"/> Definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) is same as FY 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) is revised for FY 2012 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SEA is substituting the PLA list with its list of priority schools (please see Waiver 4 in Section G of SEA application)
<p><i>For an SEA keeping the same definition of PLA schools, please select one of the following options:</i></p> <input type="checkbox"/> 1. The SEA elects not to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools. The SEA does not need to submit a new list for the FY 2012 application. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. SEA elects to generate new lists. Lists submitted below.	<p><i>For an SEA revising its definition of PLA schools, please select the following option:</i></p> <input type="checkbox"/> 1. SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has revised its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” Lists submitted below. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. SEA has generated a PLA list in accordance with their ESEA Flexibility request. List submitted below.

Directions: An SEA that elects to generate new lists or must generate new lists of Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has revised its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” must attach a table to its SIG application that include its lists of all Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools that are eligible for new awards.¹ An SEA that will not generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools does not need to submit a new list for the FY 2012 application.

SEAs that generate new lists should create this table in Excel using the format shown below. An example of the table has been provided for guidance.

¹ A “new award” is defined as an award of SIG funds to an LEA for a school that the LEA was not previously approved to serve with SIG funds in the school year for which funds are being awarded—in this case, the 2012–2013 school year. New awards may be made with the FY 2012 funds or any remaining FY 2009, FY 2010 or FY 2011 funds not already committed to grants made in earlier competitions.

Directions: All SEAs are required to list any LEAs with one or more schools for which funding under previously awarded SIG grants will not be renewed. For each such school, note the amount of unused remaining funds and explain how the SEA or LEA plans to use those funds (e.g., reallocate to other schools with SIG grants or retain for a future SIG competition).

LEA NAME	SCHOOL NAME	DESCRIPTION OF HOW REMAINING FUNDS WERE OR WILL BE USED	AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS
Recovery School District	F. W. Gregory Elementary	This persistently low-performing school was closed by the LEA on June 1, 2011, so that students could transfer to higher performing schools. None of the SIG funds from this Round 1 school were expended; all of the funds (\$884,189.19) were returned to LDOE and redistributed through the Round 2 competitive award allocation process. None of the Round 2 schools were awarded more than \$2 million per year for each year of the three-year grant. The school closure process was conducted in accordance with the LDOE school closure protocol and is consistent with USED guidance on school closure.	\$884,189
Caddo Parish School System	Mrs. Eddie Jones W Shreveport Elementary School	This persistently low-performing school was closed by the LEA on June 1, 2012. Students were transferred to a newly opened school. Some of the SIG funds \$2,867.00 from this Round 2 school were expended on activities from the approved SIG Round 2 application. The remaining funds \$1,143,954.00 were returned to LDOE and redistributed through the Round 3 competitive award allocation process. None of the Round 3 schools were awarded more than \$2 million per year for each year of the three-year grant. The school closure process was conducted in accordance with the LDOE school closure protocol and is consistent with USED guidance on school closure.	\$1,143,954
TOTAL AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS:			\$2,028,143

Directions: In the boxes below, provide updates to any sections, if any, the SEA elects to revise. The only section the SEA will be required to update is *Section D (Part 1): Timeline*. The SEA does not need to resubmit information for any section in which it elects to use the same criteria as its FY 2011 SIG application. See Appendix A for guidelines on the information required for revised sections.

SECTION B: EVALUATION CRITERIA

SEA is using the same information in this section as in its FY 2011 application. The SEA does not need to resubmit this section.

SEA has revised the information in this section for FY 2012. Updated information listed below.

Louisiana's Strategy for School Improvement Grant Funds

In order to maximize the impact of the state's SIG funding, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) will give priority to LEA applications that demonstrate a strong commitment, capacity, and sustainability to implement bold and aggressive reforms to turnaround the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools. The LEAs that will receive priority are those that are:

- Structuring central office processes to better support low performing schools. Examples include:
 - Demonstration that additional funds flow directly to schools, rather than remaining at district offices; and
 - Creating portfolios or turnaround zones to address the needs of feeder patterns or schools with similar needs.
- Supporting teachers through Compass and other means. Examples include:
 - Creating common planning time;
 - Identifying and empowering teacher leaders to guide student work reflection sessions;
 - Developing benchmarking systems and sharing data regularly with teachers; and
 - Adapting hiring practices so as to consider teacher effectiveness results when making any additional hires.
- Creating new and better educational options for students. Examples include:
 - Providing a rigorous curriculum aligned to CCSS;
 - Expanding early childhood options;
 - Increasing HS course offerings through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment, and Industry Based Certifications; and
 - Increasing Carnegie credits offered in middle schools.
- Effectively communicating and partnering with parents, communities and key stakeholders to drive dramatic school improvement.

To further support its application, LEAs will be asked to explain how they are integrating and aligning this work with other resources and key reform initiatives (i.e., Race to the Top, previous SIG rounds, 1003(a), etc.)

to support their lowest performing schools. LEAs already receiving SIG funds must demonstrate how they have leveraged those funds to improve student achievement and how they will integrate their proposed SIG Round IV interventions as part of a broader turnaround strategy. Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate and leverage other LEAs, the SEA, and designated external lead partner(s) to build and sustain district wide capacity and ensure each school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support to dramatically enhance teaching and learning.

Louisiana's Grant Award Process

LDOE sets a high performance bar for SIG applicants and will only fund applications that propose bold, innovative intervention strategies and demonstrate significant capacity, commitment, and sustainability. To determine the SIG awardees, LDOE will first score and rank applications and prioritize funding to the Priority Schools that meet LDOE's high standards. Funding priority will be given to the LEA applications that demonstrate the commitment, capacity, and sustainability to implement one of the four intervention models. Funding priority will be given to the implementation of the federally defined intervention models in the following order: restart, turnaround, transformation, and closure.

The SEA must describe the criteria the SEA will use to evaluate an LEA's application with respect to the following actions:

- *The LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application and has selected an intervention for each school.*

Conducting a thorough needs assessment is critical for assessing the school's current performance level. Each LEA is required to conduct a needs assessment of the Priority Schools it commits to serve and then use each school's unique needs assessment to identify an appropriate intervention model. This needs assessment may be the LANA, Scholastic Audit, Quality Review, SACS, Breaking Ranks II, High Schools That Work, Technology Readiness Footprint, or another similarly accredited needs assessment.

Using the needs assessment analysis and the school's historical performance data, the LEA must set ambitious but achievable performance goals for the school on the state's reading and mathematics assessments (and state science and history or social studies assessments, when applicable) and set projected goals for the state-determined School Performance Score. The LEA must select an intervention model to implement at each school and complete an application. The application will create a plan that describes both an overall LEA plan for addressing Priority Schools and the implementation activities for each school. The selected strategies must align to the federal requirements for the intervention model selected for each school. (Attached)

- *The LEA has demonstrated that it has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.*

Each LEA applicant will submit to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) one overall LEA application and a budget for each Priority School that the LEA commits to serve. The purpose of the LEA-application is to give applicants the opportunity to articulate LEA-wide strategies for dramatic school reform and demonstrate how district staff will support activities to implement the selected intervention model in the identified schools. The application divides the intervention work into five strategies with questions regarding deliverables, tasks, and activities key to successfully turning around low-achieving schools. For each deliverable, task, or activity the responsible person(s), projected implementation time frame, and budget

commitment should be identified. Activities for each school included in the application should be identified in the narrative responses. These plans should be completed by collaboration between district staff, school staff, and/or any relevant external partners. In the scoring rubric, priority is given to LEAs that demonstrate the capacity to implement their selected intervention strategies and sustain academic improvements beyond the grant period. The activities in the LEA Strategy Work Plan and the items included for each school in the budget should align.

The LDOE will give priority to applications that focus on the implementation of proven strategies that result in increased student achievement, the implementation of human capital systems that rely on evidence of effectiveness, the transition to Common Core State Standards, the expansion of early childhood offerings, the expansion of High School course offerings (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment, and Industry Based Certifications) and/or the expansion of Carnegie credit offerings in Middle School. The LDOE will also give priority to applications that focus on the strategies that incentivize recruiting and retaining effective teachers and leaders in these Priority Schools.

Each LEA applicant will also be assessed on its central office capacity to support the Priority Schools it commits to serve. The LEA implementation description and activities should include evidence of its existing or future governance structure and external partnerships for providing direct and efficient support to the SIG-receiving schools (e.g., has the LEA created, or will it create, a District Turnaround Office or Turnaround Zone to provide supports and services directly to the SIG-receiving schools? Will a CMO be selected? Will external consultants provide services to schools as part of the strategy?). The LEA must also describe the credentials, roles, and responsibilities of any existing or new LEA central office personnel who are - or will be - dedicated to serving the SIG schools.

In addition to its central office capacity, the LEA is asked to identify in the application its existing efforts and/or future plans to attract and/or develop talented human capital to serve in its Priority Schools. LDOE places particular emphasis on each LEA's strategy for selecting a CMO or EMO, replacing principals in any schools adopting the turnaround and transformation models, and for replacing school staff in any turnaround schools.

If an LEA submits applications for four or more schools that meet LDOE's standards for quality, LDOE will conduct an additional review to determine whether the LEA has the capacity to carry out the planned interventions not just in each school, but in all of the designated schools as a group. This additional review will focus on central office capacity, human capital development strategies and budgeting, emphasizing four questions:

- Has the LEA established an organizational or governance structure capable of overseeing multiple intervention efforts?
- Has the LEA staffed (or does it have plans to staff) the organizational unit responsible for turnarounds with a team that has the knowledge and capabilities needed to execute the plan? For evidence on these two questions, LDOE will examine the LEA's explanation of its organizational and governance structure in its LEA application.
- Do the LEA's human capital plans have the capacity to generate enough leaders and teachers for all the schools, not just individual schools? For evidence, LDOE will examine the LEA's responses to the human capital questions in the LEA application.
- Has the LEA budgeted sufficient resources to carry out LEA and school activities demanded by its plans?

For evidence on that question, LDOE will examine the LEA's responses in the Budget section of the application. If an application does not contain sufficient information to answer these questions, LDOE may seek additional information from the LEA. If the LDOE determines that the LEA lacks the capacity to carry out interventions in all of the schools as a group, it may grant funding to the LEA for a subset of qualifying schools and invite the LEA to resubmit the additional schools' applications in subsequent funding competitions.

Important note: While an LEA may apply for a grant for a Priority School, the LEA is not required to apply for any or all of its Priority Schools. The LEA may, at its discretion, apply for one or more Priority Schools.

- *The LEA's budget includes sufficient funds to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application, as well as to support school improvement activities in Tier III schools, throughout the period of availability of those funds (taking into account any waiver extending that period received by either the SEA or the LEA).*

In the sub-grant application, the LEA will be scored on specific actions it proposes to take or has already taken to align other resources with the proposed interventions (e.g., Title I or other state and federal grant funding), as well as its plan for sustaining the reforms beyond the three-year SIG funding period, provided that Louisiana receives a waiver from USED to extend the grant period. The LEA must submit a comprehensive school-level budget that includes line items for salaries, employee benefits, contracted professional and technological services, other purchased services, supplies, property costs, and any other costs directly associated with implementing the schools' intervention models. The LEA must submit a budget for each of three years, with the first year of the grant period covering any pre-implementation costs.

The LEA also must link items in the LEA application to each school budget items citing all critical expenditures needed to carry out human capital strategies, instructional program plans, governance changes, extended learning time and additional student support efforts, accountability system development plans, and all other relevant activities aligned to support each school's intervention strategy. An LEA may request a maximum of \$2 million dollars per year totaling up to \$6 million for the three year grant period for an eligible school. LDOE is not allowed to cap these allocations.

The LEA may have taken the following actions prior to submitting its application but most likely will take them after receiving SIG funds. The SEA must describe the criteria it will use to assess the LEA's commitment to do the following:

- *Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements.*

The LEA has to submit an LEA Work Plan including each Priority School it commits to serve. This implementation plan must address specific actions the LEA will take to implement each and every requirement of the selected intervention model. If any intervention requirements are not addressed in the implementation plan, the applicant will not be eligible to receive SIG funding. The language in the sub-grant application and the accompanying scoring rubric make it clear that the LEA may not pick and choose which intervention model requirements to implement: The intervention models **must** be implemented in full.

- *Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality.*

No matter what intervention model is selected, each LEA must describe in its application if and how it will

leverage external providers to manage the school's intervention effort. If an LEA contracts with an external provider to manage a school's turnaround, transformation, or closure, the LEA must describe its process for recruiting, selecting, and evaluating external partners. If the provider has already been selected, the LEA must describe the provider's roles and responsibilities at the school, as well as its performance to date. Finally, the LEA must describe how the external provider is being held or will be held accountable for producing significant growth in student achievement at the SIG-funded school.

For schools adopting the restart model, the LEA is required to select a charter school operator, a Charter Management Organization (CMO) and answer the same external provider questions required of the schools adopting the turnaround, transformation, or closure model. Additionally, the applicant must describe the termination conditions of the contract between the operator and the LEA. The LEA must also describe the rigorous review process it used or will use for selecting a CMO, and this process must include the following elements:

- Recruiting several potential operators
- Assessing applicants' reform plans and strategies and their alignment with the restart school's needs assessment
- Assessing applicants' history with low-performing schools
- Assessing applicants' capacity to implement the restart intervention
- Assessing applicants' human capital strategies

- *Align other resources with the intervention.*

In the application, the LEA is asked to describe specific actions it will take or has already taken to align other resources with the proposed interventions (e.g., Title I, other state or federal grant funding), as well as its plan for sustaining the reforms after the period of SIG funding ends. The applicant must provide LEA-level and school-level budgets for three consecutive years (with pre-implementation activities taking place in year 1) and has to provide an additional 2-year budget indicating sustainability funds (i.e., Race to the Top, Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant, Teacher Incentive Funds).

- *Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.*

Research on school turnaround shows that building capacity at the school level requires changing operating conditions around 4 critical areas: people, time, money, and program. In the application, the LEA is asked to describe the steps it has taken or will take to give the SIG school principals more operational autonomy over staff hiring/removals, budgeting, calendars and extended learning time, and school programs. The scoring rubric awards more points to LEAs that submit evidence to LDOE that they have already changed policies and practices giving eligible schools more operational autonomies. Examples of evidence that an LEA may submit include, but are not limited to, new or amended teacher agreements and/or new or amended principal contracts.

- *Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.*

In the sub-grant application, the LEA should describe its plan for sustaining the reforms after the period of SIG funding ends. In addition to describing local, state, and federal funding sources that will help sustain reform efforts, the LEA's proposed human capital building strategy is considered an integral aspect of sustainability

SECTION B-1: ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PRE-IMPLEMENTATION

SEA is using the same information in this section as in its FY 2011 application. The SEA does not need to resubmit this section.

SEA has revised the information in this section for FY 2012. Updated information listed below.

1. *How will the SEA review an LEA's proposed budget with respect to activities carried out during the pre-implementation period to help the LEA prepare for full implementation in the following school year?*

In both the Work Plan and the budget, the LEA must identify pre-implementation activities it will carry out from the time it receives its grant funds to the beginning of the first school year of the three-year grant period. The LEA may identify pre-implementation costs associated with employee benefits, contracted professional and technological services, other purchased services, supplies, property costs, and any other costs directly associated with preparing to implement the schools' intervention models.

An applicant's proposed pre-implementation expenses must be reasonable and necessary to carry out the activities described in the applicant's budget narrative. The bulk of an applicant's SIG program budget should be devoted to implementation of the intervention model during the first school year of the three-year grant period.

2. *How will the SEA evaluate the LEA's proposed activities to be carried out during the pre-implementation period to determine whether they are allowable?*

Any proposed pre-implementation activities that do not directly address a school's intervention model requirements and implementation plan will not be approved by LDOE. Additionally, SIG funds may not be used to buy out principal or teacher contracts or to continue funding teachers who have been removed from the classroom. The applicant also may not use SIG funds to pay for activities that took place before the applicant received its grant funds; these include the costs of any school needs assessments used to select appropriate intervention models.

An applicant's proposed pre-implementation activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Family and community engagement to educate stakeholders about changes taking place at the SIG-receiving schools and to cultivate their ongoing support and involvement at the schools.
- Conducting a rigorous recruitment and evaluation process for external providers, especially those taking on school operating responsibilities.
- Recruiting, placing and training new school leaders and staff.
- Evaluating current school staff based on identified standards and competencies.
- Evaluating and improving school instructional programs, with significant input from the school's incoming principal.
- Providing job-embedded professional development for staff and school leaders that will adequately prepare them to begin school intervention activities in the first school year of the three-year grant period.

Developing an LEA data management and accountability system that will allow the LEA to consistently monitor school performance and provide ongoing feedback to schools that allow them to make informed mid-course corrections.

SECTION C: CAPACITY

SEA is using the same information in this section as in its FY 2011 application. The SEA does not need to resubmit this section.

SEA has revised the information in this section for FY 2012. Updated information listed below.

The SEA must explain how it will evaluate whether an LEA lacks capacity to implement a school intervention model in each Tier I school. The SEA must also explain what it will do if it determines that an LEA has more capacity than the LEA demonstrates.

The LDOE has designed a comprehensive rubric for the LEA application and budget to ensure that we are able to address capacity and adherence to the USED regulations. LEA capacity will be evaluated through the quality with which it addresses the implementation of the selected intervention model at each school in each component of the LEA application. In addition to the LDOE rubric, the implementation of intervention models will be screened against the USED intervention model requirements. If an LEA scores below LDOE's acceptable level on the rubric, it will be clear that the LEA does not possess the capacity to implement the intervention models at targeted schools. If an LEA scores above LDOE's acceptable level on the rubric, yet is missing an intervention model component, that LEA may submit an amendment to its plan that describes how it will address the missing component in order to receive funding.

If an LEA submits an application to serve four or more schools that meet LDOE's standards for quality, LDOE will conduct an additional review to determine whether the LEA has the capacity to carry out the planned interventions not just in each school, but in all of the designated schools as a group. This additional review will seek to answer four primary questions:

- First, has the LEA established an organizational or governance structure capable of overseeing multiple intervention efforts?
- Second, has the LEA staffed (or does it have plans to staff) the organizational unit responsible for turnarounds with a team that has the knowledge and capabilities needed to execute the plan? For evidence on those two questions, LDOE will examine the LEA's explanation of its organizational and governance structure in its application.
- Third, do the LEA's human capital plans have the capacity to generate enough leaders and teachers for all the schools, not just individual schools? For evidence, LDOE will examine the LEA's responses to the human capital questions in the application.
- Fourth, has the LEA budgeted sufficient resources to carry out activities demanded by its plans? For evidence, LDOE will examine the LEA's responses in the Budgets for both the LEA and school. If an application does not contain sufficient information to answer these questions, LDOE may seek additional information from the LEA. If the LDOE determines that the LEA lacks the capacity to carry out interventions in all of the schools as a group, it may grant funding to the LEA for a subset of qualifying schools and invite the LEA to resubmit the additional schools' applications if subsequent funding competitions are available.

In its application, the LEA is required to explain why it lacks capacity to serve any eligible Priority Schools in its jurisdiction. If an LEA applies for one or more of its Priority Schools but not all of its Priority Schools, and

the LDOE approve for the LEA to receive SIG funding for some of its Priority Schools. If the LDOE determines that an LEA has more capacity than the LEA demonstrates, the LDOE may contact the LEA about revising their application to address an increased capacity to implement the intervention models at Priority Schools.

SECTION D (PART 1): TIMELINE: An SEA must describe its process and timeline for approving LEA applications.

Dates	Activities
1/18/2013	LDOE submits FY12 Application to USED
3/22/2013	OSP releases USED-approved application to LEAs
3/27/2013	Webinar for LEAs to learn about successful school intervention strategies and SIG application information
3/27/2013 - 4/26/2013	OSP provides ongoing, technical assistance to LEA applicants
4/26/2013	Final day to submit LEA applications to OSP
4/29/2013 - 5/3/2013	Reviewers read, score and rank all applications submitted
5/6-7/2013	OSP analyzes reviewers' comments/scores and identifies list of finalists to recommend to LDOE leadership team
5/8-10/2013	LDOE leadership team reviews finalists and selects Round 4 winners to recommend to the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)
6/18-19/2013	BESE approves Round 4 winners
6/20-21/2013	OSP contacts Round 4 winners and non-winners
6/24/2013	OSP publicly announces Round 4 winners via website, e-blast and press release
6/28/2013	Grant Award Notifications issued to districts and allocations available to awardees for budgeting in electronics Grants Management System (eGMS). Funds are substantially approved and available for implementation activities on July 1, 2013.
7/19/2013	Deadline for districts to submit budget in eGMS.

SECTION D (PARTS 2-8) DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION:

SEA is using the same information in this section as in its FY 2011 application. The SEA does not need to resubmit this section.

SEA has revised the information in this section for FY 2012. Updated information listed below.

(2) Describe the SEA's process for reviewing an LEA's annual goals for student achievement for its Tier I and Tier II schools and how the SEA will determine whether to renew an LEA's School Improvement Grant with respect to one or more Tier I or Tier II schools in the LEA that are not meeting those goals and making progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements.

On an annual basis, the SEA will determine whether to renew an LEA's School Improvement Grant by looking at each school's progress on USED's nine leading indicators, its growth in student achievement on state assessments, and its progress toward reaching Louisiana's Eight Priority Goals.

Data for the state assessment goals will be derived from the math and reading scores – as well as available science and history or social studies data – on standardized tests administered by the Louisiana Department of Education. In the sub-grant application, LEAs are required to describe additional performance goals for each school, which may be derived from Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT) (including alternative standardized assessments, and/or dropout rates, data on percent proficient, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Pre-K/Kindergarten screening tests, or other standardized assessments and unit assessments).

Performance Warnings

If a SIG school shows a downward performance trend or little to no performance progress based on the state's quarterly performance monitoring, LDOE's will issue at least one warning to the LEA and to the SIG school that the school is not making performance gains and is at risk of facing one of two possible consequences: 1) the LEA might have to select a more rigorous intervention model for the school; or 2) the LEA could lose its SIG funding for that particular school. When the performance warning is issued, the STO will tell the LEA to submit a revised SIG plan that will put the school in question on course to meet its annual state assessment goals and make progress on USED's 9 leading indicators.

Grant Renewal Decisions

Towards the end of the first grant year and again towards the end of the second grant year, the LDOE staff and will convene to analyze each SIG school's implementation and performance progress over the past year. The team will review each school's progress towards its implementation of the approved SIG application, towards its goals on USED's 9 leading indicators, and its annual State assessment goals set forth in the approved SIG application.

LEAs and schools that do not follow their implementation plans or do not make progress towards their state assessment and leading indicator goals are at risk of losing their SIG funding for those specific schools. However, if an LEA has been responsive to state support but struggles to improve a SIG school because the intervention model selected is not rigorous enough, the state will consider giving the LEA the option to select a different intervention model for the school and submit a new SIG application for LDOE's review (e.g., if the

transformation model has not brought about the dramatic changes needed in a particular school, the LEA could choose to restart the school under a CMO , or select the turnaround model and replace and rehire at least 50 percent of the school's staff). If the LEA refuses to implement a different model, the state may terminate the school's SIG funding.

(3) Describe the SEA's process for reviewing the goals an LEA establishes for its Tier III schools (subject to approval by the SEA) and how the SEA will determine whether to renew an LEA's School Improvement Grant with respect to one or more Tier III schools in the LEA that are not meeting those goals.

See previous question.

(4) Describe how the SEA will monitor each LEA that receives a School Improvement Grant to ensure that it is implementing a school intervention model fully and effectively in the Tier I and Tier II schools the LEA is approved to serve.

The Louisiana Department of Education underwent a substantial internal reorganization during the summer of 2012. Each SIG-receiving LEA is required to designate a SIG liaison to serve as the principal contact for LDOE and to directly support and serve the LEA's SIG-receiving schools. These LEA liaisons work closely with grant monitoring consultants, who are responsible for conducting quarterly desk audits to track the implementation progress on the LEA Work Plan. The grant monitoring consultants will follow up with clarification requests and requests for additional documentation as needed throughout the review process. LEAs with identified implementation issues will receive written notification, technical assistance to amend implementation plans and budgets, and sanctions (if implementation issues are not addressed). On-site monitoring will occur as part of the consolidated monitoring schedule. The Office of Student Programs will annually establish a consolidated monitoring schedule. Any SIG items to be addressed with an on-site visit in a SIG receiving LEA will be included in the consolidated monitoring visit as part of LDOE's Burden Reduction streamlining efforts.

(5) Describe how the SEA will prioritize School Improvement Grants to LEAs if the SEA does not have sufficient school improvement funds to serve all eligible schools for which each LEA applies.

Louisiana sets a high performance bar for SIG applicants and will only fund applications that propose bold, innovative intervention strategies and demonstrate significant capacity, commitment, and sustainability. To determine the SIG awardees, Louisiana will score and rank all applications. If an application does not meet the minimum performance bar, the applicant will not receive funding for that school. Of all of the applications that meet Louisiana's high performance bar, funding priority will be given to LEAs that demonstrate the commitment, capacity, and sustainability to implement one of the four intervention models. Funding priority will be given intervention models in the following order: restart, turnaround, transformation, closure.

(6) Describe the criteria that the SEA intends to use to prioritize among Tier III schools.

Not applicable.

(7) If the SEA intends to take over any Tier I or Tier II schools, identify those schools and indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school.

Not applicable. The LDOE ESEA Waiver approved Priority Schools list includes schools that have been taken over due to chronic low performance. These schools are either currently assigned to a CMO as a charter school

that is monitored by RSD, or are currently a direct run school awaiting the assignment of an approved CMO through the LDOE charter application process.

(8) If the SEA intends to provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, identify those schools and, for Tier I or Tier II schools, indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school and provide evidence of the LEA's approval to have the SEA provide the services directly.

Not applicable.

SECTION E: SEA RESERVATION

SEA is using the same information in this section as in its FY 2011 application. The SEA does not need to resubmit this section.

SEA has revised the information in this section for FY 2012. Updated information listed below.

SECTION F: CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

By checking this box, the SEA assures that it has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its application.

SECTION G: WAIVERS: SEAs are invited to request waivers of the requirements set forth below. An SEA must check the corresponding box(es) to indicate which waiver(s) it is requesting.

WAIVERS OF SEA REQUIREMENTS

Louisiana requests a waiver of the State-level requirements it has indicated below. The State believes that the requested waiver(s) will increase its ability to implement the SIG program effectively in eligible schools in the State in order to improve the quality of instruction and raise the academic achievement of students in Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 1: Tier II waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the Tier II waiver for its FY 2011 definition of “persistently lowest achieving schools” should request the waiver again only if it is generating new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2012 competition, waive paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and incorporation of that definition in identifying Tier II schools under Section I.A.1(b) of those requirements to permit the State to include, in the pool of secondary schools from which it determines those that are the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the State, secondary schools participating under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for at least two consecutive years or are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined.

Assurance

The State assures that it will include in the pool of schools from which it identifies its Tier II schools all Title I secondary schools not identified in Tier I that either (1) have not made AYP for at least two consecutive years; or (2) are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined. Within that pool, the State assures that it will identify as Tier II schools the persistently lowest-achieving schools in accordance with its approved definition. The State is attaching the list of schools and their level of achievement (as determined under paragraph (b) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools”) that would be identified as Tier II schools without the waiver and those that would be identified with the waiver. The State assures that it will ensure that any LEA that chooses to use SIG funds in a Title I secondary school that becomes an eligible Tier II school based on this waiver will comply with the SIG final requirements for serving that school.

Waiver 2: n-size waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the n-size waiver for its FY 2011 definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” should request the waiver again only if it is generating new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2012 competition, waive the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and the use of that definition in Section I.A.1(a) and (b) of those requirements to permit the State to exclude, from the pool of schools from which it identifies the persistently lowest-achieving schools for Tier I and Tier II, any school in which the total number of students in the “all students” group in the grades assessed is less than **[Please indicate number]**.

Assurance

The State assures that it determined whether it needs to identify five percent of schools or five schools in each tier prior to excluding small schools below its “minimum n.” The State is attaching, and will post on its Web site, a list of the schools in each tier that it will exclude under this waiver and the number of students in each school on which that determination is based. The State will include its “minimum n” in its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” In addition, the State will include in its list of Tier III schools any schools excluded from the pool of schools from which it identified the persistently lowest-achieving schools in accordance with this waiver.

Waiver 3: New list waiver

Because the State does not elect to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, waive Sections I.A.1 and II.B.10 of the SIG final requirements to permit the State to use the same Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III lists it used for its FY 2011 competition.

Waiver 4: Priority schools list waiver

In order to enable the State to replace its lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools with its list of Priority schools under ESEA flexibility, waive the school eligibility requirements in Section I.A.1 of the SIG final requirements.

Assurance

The State assures that, through its request for ESEA flexibility, its priority school definition provides an acceptable alternative methodology for identifying the State's lowest-performing schools and thus is an appropriate replacement for the eligibility requirements and definition of PLA schools in the SIG final requirements.

WAIVERS OF LEA REQUIREMENTS

Louisiana requests a waiver of the requirements it has indicated below. These waivers would allow any local educational agency (LEA) in the State that receives a School Improvement Grant to use those funds in accordance with the final requirements for School Improvement Grants and the LEA's application for a grant.

The State believes that the requested waiver(s) will increase the quality of instruction for students and improve the academic achievement of students in Priority, Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools by enabling an LEA to use more effectively the school improvement funds to implement one of the four school intervention models in its Priority or Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III schools. The four school intervention models are specifically designed to raise substantially the achievement of students in the State's Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 5: School improvement timeline waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the school improvement timeline waiver for the FY 2011 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2012 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

Schools that started implementation of a turnaround or restart model in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 or 2012-2013 school years cannot request this waiver to "start over" their school improvement timeline again.

Waive section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III Title I participating schools that will fully implement a turnaround or restart model beginning in the 2013-2014 school year to "start over" in the school improvement timeline.

Assurances

The State assures that it will permit an LEA to implement this waiver only if the LEA receives a School Improvement Grant and requests the waiver in its application as part of a plan to implement the turnaround or restart model beginning in 2013-2014 in a school that the SEA has approved it to serve. As such, the LEA may only implement the waiver in Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, as applicable, included in its application.

The State assures that, if it is granted this waiver, it will submit to the U.S. Department of Education a report that sets forth the name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing a waiver.

Waiver 6: Schoolwide program waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the schoolwide program waiver for the FY 2011 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2012 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

Waive the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold in section 1114(a)(1) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to implement a schoolwide program in a Priority, Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III Title I participating school that does not meet the poverty threshold and is fully implementing one of the four school intervention models.

Assurances

The State assures that it will permit an LEA to implement this waiver only if the LEA receives a School Improvement Grant and requests to implement the waiver in its application. As such, the LEA may only implement the waiver in Priority or Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, as applicable, included in its application.

The State assures that, if it is granted this waiver, it will submit to the U.S. Department of Education a report that sets forth the

name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing a waiver.

ASSURANCE OF NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD – APPLIES TO ALL WAIVER REQUESTS
(Must check if requesting one or more waivers)

The State assures that, prior to submitting its School Improvement Grant application, the State provided all LEAs in the State that are eligible to receive a School Improvement Grant with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on its waiver request(s) and has attached a copy of that notice as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. The State also assures that it provided notice and information regarding the above waiver request(s) to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its Web site) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice.

PART II: LEA APPLICATION

An SEA must develop an LEA application form that it will use to make subgrants of school improvement funds to eligible LEAs.

LEA APPLICATION

SEA is using the same FY 2011 LEA application form for FY 2012.

The SEA does not need to resubmit the LEA application.

SEA has revised its LEA application form for FY 2012.

The SEA must submit its LEA application form with its application to the Department for a School Improvement Grant. The SEA should attach the LEA application form in a separate document.

APPENDIX A

REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR REVISED SEA APPLICATION SECTIONS

E. ASSURANCES

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that it will do the following (check each box):

- Comply with the final requirements and ensure that each LEA carries out its responsibilities outlined in the final requirements.
- Award each approved LEA a School Improvement Grant in an amount that is of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected intervention in each Priority or Tier I and Tier II school that the SEA approves the LEA to serve.
- Ensure, if the SEA is participating in the Department's differentiated accountability pilot, that its LEAs will use school improvement funds consistent with the final requirements.
- Monitor and evaluate the actions an LEA has taken, as outlined in its approved SIG application, to recruit, select and provide oversight to external providers to ensure their quality.
- Monitor and evaluate the actions the LEA has taken, as outlined in its approved SIG application, to sustain the reforms after the funding period ends and that it will provide technical assistance to LEAs on how they can sustain progress in the absence of SIG funding.
- If a Priority, Tier I or Tier II school implementing the restart model becomes a charter school LEA, hold the charter school operator or charter management organization accountable, or ensure that the charter school authorizer holds the respective entity accountable, for meeting the final requirements.
- Post on its Web site, within 30 days of awarding School Improvement Grants, all final LEA applications and a summary of the grants that includes the following information: name and NCES identification number of each LEA awarded a grant; total amount of the three year grant listed by each year of implementation; name and NCES identification number of each school to be served; and type of intervention to be implemented in each Priority or Tier I and Tier II school.
- Report the specific school-level data required in section III of the final SIG requirements.