

School Improvement Grants

Application for Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016 New Awards Competition

Section 1003(g) of the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act,
as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

CFDA Number: 84.377A

State Name: Alabama



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

OMB Number: 1810-0682
Expiration Date: September 30, 2016

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. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 100 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (authorized under section 1003(g) of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind (ESEA). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1810-0682. Note: Please do not return the completed School Improvement Grant application to this address.

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, as amended by No Child Left Behind (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. The Department published final requirements for the SIG program in the *Federal Register* on October 28, 2010 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>). In 2015, the Department revised the final requirements to implement language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, and the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, that allows LEAs to implement additional interventions, provides flexibility for rural LEAs, and extends the grant period from three to five years. The revisions to the requirements also reflect lessons learned from four years of SIG implementation. Finally, since the final requirements for the SIG program were published in 2010, 44 SEAs received approval to implement ESEA flexibility, pursuant to which they no longer identify Title I schools for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. To reflect this change, the revised requirements make an LEA with priority schools, which are generally a State's lowest-achieving Title I schools, and focus schools, which are generally the schools within a State with the largest achievement gaps, eligible to receive SIG funds. The SIG final requirements, published on February 9, 2015, are available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/02/09/2015-02570/final-requirements-school-improvement-grants-title-i-of-the-elementary-and-secondary-education-act>.

Availability of Funds

The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, provided approximately \$506 million for School Improvement Grants in fiscal year (FY) 2015 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 provided approximately \$450 million in FY 2016.

State and LEA Allocations

Each State (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas is eligible to apply to receive a SIG grant. The Department will allocate FY 2015 and FY 2016 SIG funds in proportion to the funds received in FY 2015 and FY 2016 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 SIG funds directly to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements. The SEA may retain an amount not to exceed five percent of its allocation for State administration, evaluation, and technical assistance.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Electronic Submission:

The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's FY 2015/2016 SIG application electronically. The application should be sent as a Microsoft Word document, **not** as a PDF.

Each SEA should submit its FY 2015/2016 application to its individual State mailbox address at: [OSS.\[State\]@ed.gov](mailto:OSS.[State]@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:

Michael Wells, Group Leader
Office of State Support, OESE
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W103
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 no later than May 27, 2016.

For Further Information

If you have any questions, please contact your OSS State contact or Michael Wells at (202) 453-6689 or by e-mail at Michael.Wells@ed.gov. Additional technical assistance, including webinars for State staff, will be provided in the spring.

APPLICATION COVER SHEET
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

<p>Legal Name of Applicant:</p> <p>Alabama State Department of Education</p>	<p>Applicant's Mailing Address:</p> <p>P.O. Box 302101 Montgomery, AL 36130-2101</p>
<p>State Contact for the School Improvement Grant</p> <p>Name: Dr. Karen Anderson</p> <p>Position and Office: Education Administrator Office of Student Learning, Instructional Services Section</p> <p>Contact's Mailing Address: P.O. Box 302101 Montgomery, AL 36130-2101</p> <p>Telephone: (334) 353 – 1191</p> <p>Fax: (334) 353 – 9204</p> <p>Email address: kanderson1@alsde.edu</p>	
<p>Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):</p> <p>Dr. Philip C. Cleveland</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>(334) 242 – 9700</p>
<p>Signature of the Chief State School Officer:</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>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.</p>	

PART I: SEA REQUIREMENTS

The directions below indicate information an SEA must provide in its application for a School Improvement Grant. Where relevant, these directions distinguish between the information that must be provided by SEAs that have approved requests for ESEA flexibility and those that do not. For any section that is not applicable to a particular SEA, the SEA should write “Not Applicable.”

A. ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS

For SEAs not approved for ESEA Flexibility: Definition of Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools and Eligible Schools: As part of its FY 2015/2016 application, an SEA must provide a list, by LEA, of each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school in the State. In providing its list of schools, the SEA must indicate whether a school has been identified as a Tier I or Tier II school solely because it has had a graduation rate below 60 percent over a number of years.

Along with its list of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, the SEA must provide the definition that it used to develop this list of schools. If the SEA’s definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools that it makes publicly available on its Web site is identical to the definition that it used to develop its list of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, it may provide a link to the page on its Web site where that definition is posted rather than providing the complete definition.

Directions: SEAs that generate new lists should create this table in Excel using the format shown below and attach the list to this application. An example of the table has been provided for guidance.

N/A

EXAMPLE:

SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE FOR FY 2015/2016 SIG FUNDS								
LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE	NEWLY ELIGIBLE ¹
LEA 1	##	HARRISON ES	##	X				
LEA 1	##	MADISON ES	##	X				
LEA 2	##	TAYLOR MS	##			X		X

¹ “Newly Eligible” refers to a school that was made eligible to receive SIG funds by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016. A newly eligible school may be identified for Tier I or Tier II because it has not made adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years; is in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on State’s assessments; and is no higher achieving than the highest-achieving school identified by the SEA as a “persistently lowest-achieving school” or is a high school that has a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years.

For SEAs approved for ESEA flexibility: Eligible Schools List: Each SEA should provide a link to the page on its Web site or a link to the specific page(s) in its approved ESEA flexibility request that includes a list of its current priority and focus schools. That list should clearly indicate which schools are SIG-eligible (*i.e.*, meet the definition of priority or focus school in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*).

The Alabama State Department of Education has been approved for ESEA flexibility, and the list of all SIG-eligible schools is attached.

Please note: Tier I and Tier II schools are current SIG schools and are not eligible for the 2016 grant period.

For all SEAs: Awards not renewed, or otherwise terminated: 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 the 2016-2017 school year. For each such school, note the date of nonrenewal or termination, reason for nonrenewal or termination, the amount of unused remaining funds, and explain how the SEA or LEA plans to use those funds.

All Cohort 2 SIG Schools have been renewed for the 2016-2017 school year. However, those schools which did not expend funds as expected during the 2015-2016 school year with regard to their continuation application have had their allocation reduced accordingly for the 2016-2017 school year.

LEA NAME	SCHOOL NAME	DATE OF ALLOCATION REDUCTION	REASON FOR ALLOCATION REDUCTION	DESCRIPTION OF HOW REMAINING FUNDS WERE OR WILL BE USED	AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS
Bullock County	Bullock County High School	October 1, 2016	LEA did not hire personnel as expected	Funds will be added to FY2015 and FY2016 ALSDE allocation to be used to support new schools	\$166,277.50
Bullock County	South Highlands Middle School	October 1, 2016	LEA did not hire personnel as expected	Funds will be added to FY2015 and FY2016 ALSDE allocation to be used to support new schools	\$73,734.00
TOTAL AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS:					\$240,011.50

If all schools have been renewed, please indicate not applicable (“N/A”) in the chart:

LEA NAME	SCHOOL NAME	DATE OF NONRENEWAL OR TERMINATION	REASON FOR NONRENEWAL OR TERMINATION	DESCRIPTION OF HOW REMAINING FUNDS WERE OR WILL BE USED	AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS
N/A					
TOTAL AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS:					

B. STATE-DETERMINED MODEL (OPTIONAL)

An SEA may submit one State-determined model for the Secretary’s review and approval. Submission of a state-determined model is not required. An SEA that previously submitted, and received approval for, a State-determined model need not re-submit that model. *(Check applicable box below)*

- SEA is submitting a State-determined model for review and approval. (Please attach to the application.)
- SEA is not submitting a State-determined model.

To be approved, a State-determined model must meet the definition of whole-school reform model:

A whole-school reform model is a model that is designed to:

- (a) Improve student academic achievement or attainment;
- (b) Be implemented for all students in a school; and
- (c) Address, at a minimum and in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, each of the following:
 1. School leadership
 2. Teaching and learning in at least one full academic content area (including professional learning for educators).
 3. Student non-academic support.
 4. Family and community engagement.

C. EVALUATION CRITERIA: An SEA must provide the criteria it will use to evaluate the information below in an LEA’s application for a School Improvement Grant.

The actions listed in this section are ones that an LEA must take to receive a School Improvement Grant. Accordingly, the SEA must describe, with specificity, the criteria the SEA will use to evaluate an LEA’s application with respect to these criteria.

If applicable, the SEA should attach an LEA application review rubric that it will use to evaluate each of the actions listed below. If a rubric is attached, provide relevant page numbers below and a description if needed. If a rubric is not attached, provide a description of the evaluation criteria to be used.

In partnership with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), a rubric is being finalized which will detail the indicators used to evaluate each criteria. Since the rubric is not attached, below please find a description of the

indicators which will be used to evaluate each of the required criteria.

Check here if an LEA application review rubric is attached.

- (1) The LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, as applicable, identified in the LEA's application and has selected an intervention for each school that is designed to meet the specific needs of the school, based on a needs analysis that, among other things, analyzes the school improvement needs identified by families and the community, and takes into consideration family and community input in selecting the intervention for each school.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence that a comprehensive needs assessment has been done with each school applying for SIG funds is mandatory. The needs assessment will take into account a number of academic and non-academic factors, such as student achievement scores, student attendance, graduation data (if applicable), and input from families/community. Information from the assessment will determine the intervention model for the school (transformation, turnaround, restart, closure, whole-school reform, early learning).

- (2) The LEA has designed and will implement interventions consistent with the SIG requirements.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence that the LEA demonstrates an expressed understanding of the intervention and an explanation of why that model was selected is required. In addition, the district must submit a comprehensive timeline for model implementation, including a list of persons responsible for each activity. If a planning year is selected, a description of pre-implementation activities must be listed. The application must demonstrate that sufficient capacity exists, both at the district and school levels, to implement the intervention model, including the staff and resources needed.

- (3) The LEA has demonstrated it will use the School Improvement Grants funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each school it commits to serve in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention on the first day of the first school year of full implementation.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence that school improvement processes from the district and school will be aligned so that the designed intervention will be supported must be demonstrated. The application must indicate how other resources, such as Title I, At-Risk, and Special Education funds, will be leveraged to successfully implement the chosen intervention model. In addition, evidence that resources which have not been used in the past are redirected to support implementation of the intervention model.

- (4) The LEA has demonstrated how it has, or will, recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality, and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence must describe the process for choosing the team responsible for selecting the external providers, the research from the team supporting the selection of the external providers, and the data substantiating that the external providers are selected based on the school's SIG needs. This research should confirm that the external provider is of high-quality, and that its experience and expertise align with the selected intervention model. Multiple sources of data should be referenced in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the external provider. Finally, a plan for monitoring and evaluating the success of the external provider should include a mechanism for reporting progress to the school, district, and ALSDE.

- (5) The LEA has demonstrated how it will align other resources with the selected intervention.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence of other resources to support the design and implementation of the intervention model must be demonstrated, as well as resources which are currently being used in an academic support capacity. Additional and/or potential resources that could be utilized in an academic support capacity must be identified.

- (6) The LEA has demonstrated how it will modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

The LEA must identify potential challenges and/or barriers that would slow or halt the school improvement process, thus necessitating a modification in practices or policies. Evidence of assessing, designing, and implementing a policy modification protocol that includes input from state and local education agency administrators, local board members, and/or personnel must be described.

- (7) The LEA has demonstrated how it will provide effective oversight and support for implementation of the selected intervention for each school that it proposes to serve, such as by creating an LEA turnaround office.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

The LEA must describe plans for monitoring and ensuring full implementation of the interventions by school administrators, faculty, and staff. In addition, a process should be described whereby interventions and school improvement plans are embedded in strategic long-term plans so that gains in student achievement are sustained. The plan should also include an accountability process that provides effective oversight of the interventions, school improvement activities, financial management, and school operations. Finally, an LEA plan for demonstrating support for implementation of the selected intervention model must be described. The SEA will assess LEA plans for the frequency and quality of oversight and support activities and for the ability of the LEA to execute the monitoring plan it presents in the application.

- (8) The LEA has demonstrated how it will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the selected intervention on an ongoing basis.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

The LEA must describe an infrastructure which delineates a plan for engagement, communication, and opportunities for families to be meaningfully involved in the school improvement process. Community partners should be included in the infrastructure and established community relationships which support the chosen intervention model must be identified.

- (9) The LEA has described how it will sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

The LEA application must describe a structure for sustaining practices which foster student achievement and the effective implementation of the chosen intervention model, to include training of school and district leadership to ensure operation flexibility which enhances effective implementation of the model; training of school staff to ensure effective implementation of interventions into curriculum and instructional activities; meaningful professional development that supports short and long term initiative of educational improvement; continuous development of teacher knowledge and skills as evidenced by a detailed action plan.

- (10) The LEA has demonstrated how, to the extent practicable, in accordance with its selected SIG intervention model(s), it will implement one or more evidence-based strategies.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

The application must list the evidence-based strategies that will be implemented, and explain how those strategies align with and support full implementation of the SIG intervention model selected.

- (11) 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, or each priority and focus school, as applicable, identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

Evidence of the LEA's capacity for implementing interventions and improvement activities must be clearly described. In addition, identification of additional funding sources to sustain operational protocol that may require financial support must be documented in the application.

- (12) For an LEA eligible for services under subpart 1 or 2 of part B of Title VI of the ESEA (Rural Education Assistance Program) that proposes to modify one element of the turnaround or transformation model, the LEA has described how it will meet the intent and purpose of that element.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

If the LEA is eligible for services under subpart 1 or 2 of part B of Title VI of the Rural Education Assistance Program, the LEA must identify which element of the turnaround or transformation model will be modified. In addition, the LEA must explain how the modification will meet the intent and purpose of the element. For example, if the LEA proposes to adopt the turnaround model but retain the current principal, their proposal must explain how retaining the current school administrator addresses the leadership element, perhaps by demonstrating that the current principal possesses the competencies necessary for their selected model.

- (13) An LEA that proposes to use SIG funds to implement, in partnership with a whole school reform model developer, an evidence-based, whole-school reform model in a school, must demonstrate that (a) the evidence supporting the model includes a sample population or setting similar to that of the school to be served; and (b) it has partnered with a whole school reform model developer that meets the definition of “whole school reform model developer” in the SIG requirements.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

If the whole-school reform intervention model is selected, the LEA must describe in detail, the proposed developer. In addition, research for the impact of the whole-school reform intervention model on student achievement in a setting similar to that of the school to be served must be provided.

- (14) For an LEA that proposes to use SIG funds to implement the restart model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA has demonstrated that it will conduct a rigorous review process, as described in the final requirements, of the charter school operator, charter management organization (CMO), or education management organization (EMO) that it has selected to operate or manage the school or schools.

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

If the restart intervention model is selected, the LEA should provide documentation that their district serves as an authorized charter school operator, and the EMO should be clearly listed. The CMO or EMO’s plan for managing the school’s turnaround efforts will be assessed, as will the CMO or EMO’s

past performance in managing turnaround efforts in similar schools.

Moreover, a thorough description of the support provided by the EMO is required, and the rigorous review process must describe the charter school operator. Specifically, the rigorous review process must include a determination by the LEA that the selected CMO or EMO expects to produce strong results for the school. In making this determination, the LEA must consider the extent to which the schools currently operated or managed by the selected charter school operator, CMO, or EMO, if any, have produced strong results over the past three years (or over the life of the school, if the school has been open for fewer than three years), including:

- a) Significant improvement in academic achievement for all of the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA;
- b) Success in closing achievement gaps, either within schools or relative to all public elementary school and secondary school students statewide, for all of the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA;
- c) High school graduation rates, where applicable, that are above the average rates in the State for the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA; and
- d) No significant compliance issues, including in the areas of civil rights, financial management, and student safety.

D. LEA BUDGETS: In addition to the evaluation criteria listed in Section C, the SEA must describe how it will evaluate an LEA's budget and application.

The SEA must describe how it will review each LEA's budget, including a description of the processes the SEA will use to determine if it is appropriate to award an amount different than that requested in the LEA's budget request.

Criteria used to review each LEA's budget include a description of how funds are budgeted to support the selected intervention model; evidence of the alignment of LEA and school improvement processes to support the desired intervention; funding to support appropriate staffing and activities for the chosen intervention model; and a detailed breakdown of expenditures aligned with activities. The LEA application explains that the submitted budget can include an optional planning year. SIG schools will receive four years of funding if the school will utilize the 2016-2017 school year as a planning year, and three years of funding if implementation begins with the 2016-2017 school year. The ALSDE will continue to monitor the school's sustainable practices for two consecutive years after funding ends.

*Please note that an SEA may make a SIG award to an LEA for up to five years for a particular school, of which the LEA may use one school year for planning and other pre-implementation activities and up to two school years for activities related to sustaining reforms following at least three years of full intervention implementation. The LEA budget should address the entire grant period. An LEA may not receive more than five years of SIG funding for a particular school.

E. TIMELINE: An SEA must describe its process and timeline for approving LEA applications.

At a minimum, the timeline should include information regarding when the:

- (1) SEA will notify LEAs about the SIG competition;

- (2) LEA applications are due to the SEA;
- (3) SEA will conduct its review of LEA applications;
- (4) LEAs will be notified about their award status; and
- (5) SEA will award FY 2015/2016 SIG funds to LEAs.

May 2016 – ALSDE SIG application submitted

July 2016 – ALSDE notifies LEAs about SIG competition

Notification will occur via a memo, sent to all superintendents with priority and focus schools in their district, which will include a link to the SIG application. In addition technical assistance, via Webinar and on-site visits as requested, will be available to inform and support districts throughout the application process.

August 2016 – Intent to Apply letter submitted

Approximately two weeks after the ALSDE notifies LEAs of the availability of SIG Applications, the LEA should submit a letter to the ALSDE stating their intent to apply for SIG funds. This letter is not binding, and LEAs may submit a SIG application even if an Intent to Apply letter is not submitted. The Intent to Apply document is simply a letter on LEA letterhead, signed by the superintendent, expressing the desire of the LEA to pursue SIG funding.

September 2016 – LEA applications are due to the ALSDE

September/October 2016 – ALSDE will conduct its review of LEA applications

Reviewers are ALSDE staff who will score LEA applications using the criteria described in Section C. The scoring process is electronic; SIG application criteria will be uploaded into Share Point to facilitate easy access by reviewers. After scoring, access to the Share Point site will be removed for all reviewers and information will be archived. Districts with applications that received highest scores will be contacted for on-site interviews.

Lessons learned from past years of SIG implementation have underscored the importance of strong leadership and the capacity at the LEA level to fully support school improvement and turnaround efforts. Consequently, after LEA applications have been scored, on-site interviews will be conducted so that additional information can be gathered to confirm a district's philosophy and readiness for school improvement.

A team, comprised of the SIG Coordinators and ALSDE staff, will interview a team from the LEA, including the superintendent, district contact, principal of each school requesting SIG funds, lead teachers at the school, and stakeholders, such as parents and community partners. The interview procedure will be similar to the current Instructional Audit process presently in use with schools across the state, and information will be triangulated with the LEA application to develop a list of funded SIG schools.

October 2016 – LEAs will be notified of SIG award status

October 2016 – ALSDE will award SIG funds to LEAs

October 2016 – Planning Year OR Implementation Year begins

Additionally, the SEA should specify if it is using FY 2015/2016 funds to make two-year awards or multi-year awards, through a waiver of the period of availability of funds, to grantees.

Typically, Alabama schools begin instruction in August of each year. Due to the constricted timeline as outlined above, LEAs will be encouraged to use the 2016-2017 school year as a planning year to ensure that schools are prepared for full implementation of their selected intervention model for the 2017-2018 school year. Therefore, FY 2015/2016 funds will be used to make multi-year awards through a waiver of the period of availability of funds to grantees.

LEAs Opting for a Planning Year in 2016-2017

2016-2017 – Planning Year

2017-2018 – Implementation Year 1

2018-2019 – Implementation Year 2

2019-2020 – Implementation Year 3

However, schools which will implement their chosen intervention model during the 2016-2017 school year will have a slightly different schedule.

LEAs Opting for Full Implementation in 2016-2017

2016-2017 – Implementation Year 1

2017-2018 – Implementation Year 2

2018-2019 – Implementation Year 3

Whether the LEA selects a planning year or not, the ALSDE will monitor the sustainability of the intervention model over the next two school years, either 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 or 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 respectively, and provide support and direction as needed. Support and direction will come through ongoing monitoring on a quarterly basis in collaboration with Regional Support Coordinators and through required SIG School meetings (held at the beginning, middle and end of the year), on-site and virtual, with SIG staff.

F. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: An SEA must include the information below.

- (1) Describe the SEA's process for reviewing an LEA's annual goals for student achievement to ensure they are rigorous, relevant, and attainable for its Tier I and Tier II schools, or for its priority and focus schools, as applicable, and describe 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, or one or more priority or focus schools, in an LEA that is not meeting those goals and making progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements.

The ALSDE has developed a process to support LEAs, especially those with priority or failing schools (Failing schools have been designated by the Alabama Legislature as schools scoring in the bottom 6% of proficiency in Math and Reading), as they develop goals for the 2016-2017 school year. Districts complete a district turnaround Self-Assessment (see Appendix A) and develop three focus areas or goals. Priority and Failing Schools will replicate this process by using a similar rubric, called the Effective

Schools Rubric (see Appendix B), and develop three goals. Schools transfer their goals to a Goal Action Plan (found in the LEA application on page 36). This document includes practice goals which explain how their goals will be operationalized. The ALSDE, through meetings with district/school teams and follow-up visits on-site, support the development of challenging, reasonable, attainable goals with respect to student achievement and non-academic factors.

- (2) Describe the SEA's process for renewing the SIG award of an LEA that received SIG funds for a school year of planning and other pre-implementation activities for a school, including the SEA's process for reviewing the performance of the school against the LEA's approved application to determine whether the LEA will be able to fully implement its chosen intervention for the school beginning the first day of the following school year.

The process for renewing SIG awards would include a review of the status of each school's Goal Action Plans and Implementation Plans (refer to page 36 in the attached LEA application). In addition, a process is already in place for each school to undergo a Mid-Year Review and an End-Of-Year Review, based on the Effective Schools Rubric; growth from the initial assessment should be observed.

- (3) Describe how the SEA will monitor, including the frequency and type of monitoring (*e.g.*, on-site, desk, self-reported) 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, or priority and focus schools, as applicable, the LEA is approved to serve.

Goals from the Implementation Plan would be monitored on a monthly basis by SIG staff during the planning year, either by desk or on-site. Regional Support Coordinators will monitor Goal Action Plans on a quarterly basis, to include the aforementioned Mid-Year and End-of-Year review. SIG staff will communicate regularly and coordinate efforts with Regional Support Coordinators and regional staff to continually provide support and direction.

- (4) 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.

SIG funds will be prioritized according to need. Schools with weak or no mechanisms in place in areas such as Family and Community Engagement, data collecting/analysis, use of data to inform and adjust instruction, providing PD for teachers according to data, and/or building capacity in school administrators will receive priority in terms of funding. These schools will need greater support, direction, and resources in order to set them up for success on a school improvement journey that will positively impact and improve student achievement.

- (5) For SEAs not approved for ESEA flexibility, describe the criteria, if any, which the SEA intends to use to prioritize among Tier III schools.

N/A

- (6) For SEAs not approved for ESEA flexibility, describe the SEA's process for reviewing the goals an LEA establishes for its Tier III schools (subject to approval by the SEA) to ensure they are rigorous, relevant, and attainable 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.

N/A

G. ASSURANCES: The SEA must provide the assurances set forth below.

By submitting this application for new awards, the SEA assures that it will do or has done the following (check each box):

Comply with the final requirements and ensure that each LEA carries out its responsibilities outlined in the final requirements.

Consult with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in this application.

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 Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority or focus school, as applicable, that the SEA approves the LEA to serve.

Award each School Improvement Grant to an LEA based on an individual review of each application and a case-by-case determination of the amount needed to plan for implementation, as applicable, to fully implement a model, and sustain the model, as applicable, rather than make grant awards based on a formula.

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, including charter school operators and CMOs, to ensure their quality and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.

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.

If a school implementing the restart model becomes a charter school LEA, hold the charter school operator or CMO 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; amount of each LEA's grant; name and NCES identification number of each school to be served; and type of intervention to be implemented in each Tier I and Tier II school or priority and focus school, as applicable. An SEA must post all LEA applications, including those of applicants that did not receive awards, as well as applications to serve Tier III schools. Additionally, if an LEA amends an application, the SEA will post the amended application.

Report the specific school-level data required in section III of the final SIG requirements, including baseline data for the year prior to SIG implementation.

If the SEA intends to provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, seek and obtain approval from the LEA to have the SEA provide the services directly prior to providing services.

Prior to submitting its School Improvement Grant application, provide all LEAs in the State that are eligible to receive School Improvement Grants with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on its waiver

request(s) and attach a copy of that notice as well as copies of any comments received from LEAs to this application. The SEA also assures that it has provided notice and information regarding the waiver request(s) described below, if applicable, to the public in the manner in which the SEA 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.

H. SEA RESERVATION: The SEA may reserve an amount not to exceed five percent of its School Improvement Grant for administration, evaluation, and technical assistance expenses.

The SEA must briefly describe the activities related to administration, evaluation, and technical assistance (e.g. funding staff positions, supporting statewide support, etc.) that the SEA plans to conduct with any State-level funds it chooses to reserve from its School Improvement Grants allocation.

Five percent of the School Improvement Grant will be reserved for administrative, evaluation, and technical assistance. Specifically, the salaries for the SIG Coordinators and Assistant for the SIG Coordinators will be paid with these funds. SIG Regional Staff, who will work directly in schools to support essential school functions, such as data analysis, teacher professional development, and principal professional development, will also have their expenses paid with these funds. Travel expenditures for SIG Coordinators and SIG Regional Staff to visit SIG schools will come from these funds. Statewide support of these schools will be funded with these monies as well.

I. 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.

Alabama requests a waiver of the requirements it has indicated below. The SEA 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 Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools or in its priority and focus schools, as applicable, or will allow any 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.

Part 1: Waivers Available to All States

Waiver 1: Period of availability of FY 2015 funds waiver

Note: This waiver only applies to FY 2015 funds for the purpose of making three- to five-year awards to eligible LEAs.

In order to extend the period of availability beyond September 30, 2017, waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2015 school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2021.

Waiver 2: Period of availability of FY 2016 funds waiver

Note: This waiver only applies to FY 2016 funds for the purpose of making three- to five-year awards to eligible LEAs.

In order to extend the period of availability beyond September 30, 2018, waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2016 school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2021.

Part 2: Waivers Available Only to States Not Approved for ESEA Flexibility

Waiver 1: Tier II waiver

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2015/2016 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

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2015/2016 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: School improvement timeline waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the school improvement timeline waiver for the FY 2014 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2015/2016 competition must request the

waiver again in this application.

Schools that started implementation of a SIG model in the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016 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 Tier I or Tier II title I participating schools that will fully implement a SIG model beginning in the 2016–2017 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 a SIG model beginning in the 2016–2017 school year in a school that the SEA has approved it to serve. As such, the LEA may only implement the waiver in Tier I and Tier II 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 4: Schoolwide program waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the schoolwide program waiver for the FY 2014 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2015/2016 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 Tier I or Tier II Title I participating school that does not meet the poverty threshold and is fully implementing one of the seven 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 Tier I and Tier II 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.

PART II: LEA APPLICATION

An SEA must develop an LEA application form that it will use to make subgrants of School Improvement Grant funds to eligible LEAs. SEAs should attach their LEA application.

LEA APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The LEA application form that the SEA uses must contain, at a minimum, the information set forth below. An SEA may include other information that it deems necessary in order to award school improvement funds to its LEAs.

A. SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED: An LEA must include the following information with respect to the schools it will serve with a School Improvement Grant.

An LEA must identify each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school, or each priority and focus school, as applicable, the LEA commits to serve and identify the model that the LEA will use in each Tier I and Tier II school, or in each priority and focus school, as applicable.

The models the LEA may include are: (1) turnaround; (2) restart; (3) closure; (4) transformation; (5) evidence-based whole school reform model; and (6) early learning model.

Example (LEAs in an SEA approved for ESEA flexibility):

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	PRIORITY	FOCUS (if applicable) ²	INTERVENTION
Priority School ES #1	xxxxx	X		turnaround
Priority School HS #1	xxxxx	X		state-determined model
Priority School MS #1	xxxxx	X		transformation
Priority School ES #2	xxxxx	X		turnaround

Example (LEAs in an SEA not approved for ESEA flexibility):

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	INTERVENTION (TIER I AND II only)
Tier I ES #1	xxxxx	X			turnaround
Tier I ES #2	xxxxx		X		early learning model
Tier I MS #1	xxxxx	X			transformation
Tier II HS #1	xxxxx	X			state-determined model

²An LEA in which one or more priority schools are located must serve all of these schools before it may serve one or more focus schools.

B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: An LEA must include the following information in its application for a School Improvement Grant.

- (1) For each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that the LEA has analyzed the needs of each school, such as instructional programs, school leadership and school infrastructure, based on a needs analysis that, among other things, analyzes the needs identified by families and the community, and selected interventions for

each school aligned to the needs each school has identified.

- (2) For each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that it has taken into consideration family and community input in selecting the intervention.
- (3) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to design and implement a plan consistent with the final requirements of the turnaround model, restart model, school closure, transformation model, evidence-based whole school reform model, early learning model, or state-determined model.
- (4) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to determine its capacity to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, identified in the LEA's application in order to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model it has selected on the first day of the first school year of full implementation.
- (5) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality, and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.
- (6) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to align other resources (for example, Title I funding) with the selected intervention.
- (7) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively.
- (8) The LEA must describe how it will provide effective oversight and support for implementation of the selected intervention for each school it proposes to serve (for example, by creating an LEA turnaround office).
- (9) The LEA must describe how it will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the selected intervention on an ongoing basis.
- (10) The LEA must describe how it will sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
- (11) The LEA must describe how it will implement, to the extent practicable, in accordance with its selected SIG intervention model(s), one or more evidence-based strategies.
- (12) The LEA must describe how it will monitor each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, that receives school improvement funds including by
 - a. Establishing annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics; and,
 - b. Measuring progress on the leading indicators as defined in the final requirements.
- (13) An LEA must hold the charter school operator, CMO, EMO, or other external provider accountable for meeting these requirements, if applicable.
- (14) For an LEA that intends to use the first year of its School Improvement Grants award for planning and other pre-implementation activities for an eligible school, the LEA must include a description of the

activities, the timeline for implementing those activities, and a description of how those activities will lead to successful implementation of the selected intervention.

- (15) For an LEA eligible for services under subpart 1 or 2 of part B of Title VI of the ESEA (Rural Education Assistance Program) that chooses to modify one element of the turnaround or transformation model, the LEA must describe how it will meet the intent and purpose of that element.
- (16) For an LEA that applies to implement an evidence-based, whole-school reform model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA must describe how it will
 - a. Implement a model with evidence of effectiveness that includes a sample population or setting similar to the population or setting of the school to be served; and
 - b. Partner with a whole school reform model developer, as defined in the SIG requirements.
- (17) For an LEA that applies to implement the restart model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA must describe the rigorous review process (as described in the final requirements) it has conducted or will conduct of the charter school operator, CMO, or EMO that it has selected or will select to operate or manage the school or schools.
- (18) The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each school identified in the LEA's application.
- (19) For each Tier III school the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must identify the services the school will receive or the activities the school will implement.
- (20) The LEA must describe the goals it has established (subject to approval by the SEA) in order to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.

C. BUDGET: An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school, or each priority and focus school, it commits to serve.

The LEA must provide a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use in each school it proposes to serve and the funds it will use to —

- Conduct LEA-level activities designed to support implementation of the selected school intervention models in the LEA's Tier I and Tier II schools, or priority and focus schools; and
- Support school improvement activities, at the school or LEA level, for each Tier III school identified in the LEA's application (SEAs without ESEA flexibility only).

Note: An LEA's budget should cover all of the years of full implementation and be of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected school intervention model in each Tier I, Tier II, priority, or focus school the LEA commits to serve. Any funding for activities during the pre-implementation period must be included in the first year of the LEA's budget plan. Additionally, an LEA's budget may include up to one full academic year for planning activities and up to two years to support sustainability activities. An LEA may not receive more than five years of SIG funding to serve a single school.

An LEA's budget for each year may not exceed the number of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, or the number of priority and focus schools, it commits to serve multiplied by \$2,000,000.

Example: LEA Proposing a Planning Year for One or More Schools

LEA XX BUDGET

	Year 1 Budget (Planning)	Year 2 Budget (Full implementation)	Year 3 Budget (Full implementation)	Year 4 Budget (Full implementation)	Year 5 Budget (Sustainability Activities)	Five- Year Total
Priority ES #1	\$150,000	\$1,156,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,100,000	\$750,000	\$4,356,000
Priority ES #2	\$119,250	\$890,500	\$795,000	\$750,000	\$500,750	\$3,055,500
Priority HS #1	\$300,000	\$1,295,750	\$1,600,000	\$1,400,000	\$650,000	\$5,245,750
Focus MS #1	\$410,000	\$1,470,000	\$1,775,000	\$1,550,400	\$550,000	\$5,755,400
LEA-level Activities			\$150,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$400,000
Total Budget	\$879,250	\$4,812,250	\$5,520,000	\$4,950,400	\$2,550,750	\$18,812,650

Example: LEA Proposing to Implement a Model in One or More Schools on the First Day of the Upcoming School Year

LEA XX BUDGET							
	Year 1 Budget		Year 2 Budget (Full implementation)	Year 3 Budget (Full implementation)	Year 4 Budget (Sustainability Activities)	Year 5 Budget (Sustainability Activities)	Five-Year Total
	Pre-implementation	Year 1 (Full Implementation)					
Tier I ES #1	\$257,000	\$1,156,000	\$1,325,000	\$1,200,000	\$650,000	\$450,000	\$5,038,000
Tier I ES #2	\$125,500	\$890,500	\$846,500	\$795,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$2,907,500
Tier I MS #1	\$304,250	\$1,295,750	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$450,000	\$300,000	\$5,550,000
Tier II HS #1	\$530,000	\$1,470,000	\$1,960,000	\$1,775,000	\$800,000	\$550,000	\$7,085,000
LEA-level Activities	\$250,000		\$250,000	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$1,000,000
Total Budget	\$6,279,000		\$5,981,500	\$5,620,000	\$2,200,000	\$1,500,000	\$21,580,500

Note: An LEA may fill out both charts if it is applying for a planning year for some, but not all, of the schools it proposes to serve.

D. ASSURANCES: An LEA must include the following assurances in its application for a School Improvement Grant.

The LEA must assure that it will—

- (1) Use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, that the LEA commits to serve consistent with the final requirements.
- (2) Establish annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics and measure progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements in order to monitor each Tier I and Tier II school, or priority and focus school, that it serves with school improvement funds, and establish goals (approved by the SEA) to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.
- (3) Report to the SEA the school-level data required under section III of the final requirements, including baseline data for the year prior to SIG implementation.
- (4) Ensure that each Tier I and Tier II school, or each priority and focus school, that it commits to serve

receives all of the State and local funds it would receive in the absence of the school improvement funds and that those resources are aligned with the interventions.

E. WAIVERS: If an SEA not approved for ESEA flexibility has requested any waivers of requirements applicable to the LEA's School Improvement Grant, an LEA must indicate which of those waivers it intends to implement.

The LEA must check each waiver that the LEA will implement. If the LEA does not intend to implement the waiver with respect to each applicable school, the LEA must indicate for which schools it will implement the waiver. **NOTE:** Only LEAs in SEAs not approved for ESEA flexibility may request the following waivers.

- "Starting over" in the school improvement timeline for Tier I and Tier II Title I participating schools implementing a SIG model.
- Implementing a school-wide program in a Tier I or Tier II Title I participating school that does not meet the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold.

The LEA application, including the narrative, budget request, and assurances, is attached.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT LEA Application

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

USDOE FY 2015 – FY 2016



Alabama Department of Education
Office of Student Learning | Instructional Services Section
3323 Gordon Persons Building
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101

For technical assistance, contact:

Dr. Karen Anderson
Telephone: (334) 242-8173
E-mail: sig@alsde.edu

Mrs. Christine Spear
Telephone: (334) 353-5320
Email: sig@alsde.edu

School Improvement Grant (SIG) LEA Application Cover Sheet

School Improvement Grants are grants to states used to make competitive subgrants to school districts 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. Please complete the application in its entirety.

Section 1: Summary of Schools to be Served

An LEA must identify each priority and focus school, as applicable, the LEA commits to serve and identify the SIG intervention model that the LEA will use in each priority and focus school, as applicable. The models the LEA may include are: (1) turnaround; (2) restart; (3) closure; (4) transformation; (5) evidence-based whole school reform model; and (6) early learning model.

Fill in the chart below (replace examples with proposed list of schools to be served).

DISTRICT/NCES ID #:				
SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	PRIORITY	FOCUS (if applicable)	INTERVENTION
Priority School ES #1	xxxxx	X		turnaround
Priority School HS #1	xxxxx	X		evidence-based whole-school reform
Priority School MS #1	xxxxx	X		transformation
Priority School ES #2	xxxxx	X		turnaround

Section 2: School Cover Sheet for SIG Application

Complete this form in entirety for each school listed in the chart above applying for SIG funds.

Name of School:	Mailing Address:
Intervention Model:	
SIG School Contact	
Name:	
Position:	
Telephone:	
Fax:	
E-mail address:	
Superintendent (Printed Name):	Telephone:
Signature of the Superintendent X _____	Date:
Principal (Printed Name):	Telephone:
Signature of the Principal X _____	Date:
<p>The LEA, 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.</p> <p>ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATION: By signing this cover sheet, the applicant certifies that it will agree to perform all actions and support all intentions stated in the Assurances and Certifications in Attachment H, and will comply with all state and federal regulations and requirements pertaining to this program. The applicant certifies further that the information submitted on this application is true and correct.</p>	

Section 3: Application

NOTE: Narratives should follow the sequence of the grant application.

1. **Analysis of Need**

When preparing responses, the school should complete a Needs Assessment and consider evidence of need by focusing on improvement status; all core content achievement results, as measured by the state and local assessments, poverty level, graduation data, extended learning opportunities, special populations, etc. Consider how subgroups within the school are performing and possible areas to target for improvement. The narrative should include, at a minimum:

- a. Results of needs assessment (include needs assessment as Attachment A)
- b. A list of data source(s) consulted to determine needs
- c. Evidence that data was used in the decision-making process
- d. Evidence of stakeholders' (staff, parents, community, etc.) input

2. **Design and Implementation – provide narrative on the following:**

- a. Evidence of school's capacity (staff, resources, etc.) of implementing specific interventions and improvement activities
- b. Attach a comprehensive five-year timeline for implementing the selected intervention (Attachment B). Identify who is responsible for each implementation activity
- c. Description of pre-implementation activities (if 2016-2017 serves as a planning year)
- d. Description of staffing and activities needs to support the intervention model

3. **Intervention Model – provide narrative on the following:**

- a. Identify the appropriate interventions for the selected reform model using (Attachment C) and explain how the strategies align with school needs and priorities
- b. Describe how the school, to the extent practicable, will implement one or more evidence-based strategies in accordance with the selected SIG reform model
- c. Describe how the implementation of the SIG interventions will be evaluated for effectiveness
- d. Determine the school's student academic achievement goals in the core content areas **for each of the next five years** as determined by local and state (ACT, Aspire) assessments and complete Attachment D. At a minimum, mathematics and reading goals must be included. For example, if the present proficiency rate in mathematics is

18%, what will it be at the end of years one through five? If desired, the Goal Action Plan (Attachment E) can be submitted to propose how goals will be operationalized.

4. External Service Provider Selection – provide narrative on the following:

- a. Explain how the individuals, team, or committee responsible for vetting and selecting external provider was determined
- b. Describe the selection process, and explain how the external provider was identified based on school's needs
- c. Document the process used to research the provider and review evidence of effectiveness to assure quality
- d. Explain how the external provider will monitor, record, and report progress to the school, district and ALSDE

5. Resource Alignment – provide narrative on the following:

- a. Describe how the district will leverage state and federal funds to implement the selected intervention model. As you develop your response, consider how SIG funds will be used to supplement and support other funding resources such as general funds, Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, IDEA Special Education funds, and At-Risk funding.
- b. Describe how the district will coordinate resources to implement the selected intervention model.
- c. Describe the sources of data that will be used to identify content of professional learning and how the school will deliver professional development throughout the year. Provide a draft professional development calendar for Year One of the grant (Attachment F)
- d. Describe how the district will support implementation of the selected intervention model

6. Oversight and Support – Plans will be assessed for the frequency and quality of oversight and support activities, and the ability of the LEA to execute the monitoring plan as described. Please provide narrative on the following:

- a. Evidence of plan to monitor and ensure full implementation of the interventions by the school administration, faculty and staff (minimum one day per week in the first year) with the selected service provider(s))
- b. Explain the process for embedding interventions and school improvement plans into long-term plans to sustain student achievement gains

- c. Explain how the accountability process will be established and implemented so that effective oversight of the interventions, school improvement activities, financial management, and school operations will be provided
- d. Identify challenges that may halt or slow the school improvement process and assess, design, and implement a policy modification protocol that includes input from state and local education agency administrators, board members and/or personnel

7. Family and Community Engagement – provide narrative on the following:

- a. Describe how the results of the needs assessment impact/affect the families and community of the school
- b. Describe how the school and district will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the reform model on an ongoing basis
- c. Describe the infrastructure in place that facilitates stakeholder involvement

8. Sustaining Reforms – provide narrative on the following:

- a. Describe how the reforms from the selected intervention will be sustained in this school after the funding period ends
- b. Describe how capacity will be increased as a result of receiving the grant
- c. Describe what commitment(s) will be made to sustain reforms after the grant period ends

9. Additional Sections – provide narrative on the following as needed:

a. Title VI Rural Schools Element Modification

- i. If the LEA receives rural school funding Title VI, it is allowed to modify one element of the transformation or turnaround model. Indicate which element the school will modify, and describe how it will meet the intent and purpose of the original element.
- ii. NOTE: this modification does not apply to the other models. If the LEA does not receive Title VI rural school funding, mark section 3a as “N/A.”

b. Model options – If the LEA has not selected either of the options listed below, mark section 3b as “N/A.”

- i. Evidence-based whole-school reform Model – Describe how the LEA will:
 - Implement a model with evidence of effectiveness that includes a sample population or setting similar to that of the school that will be served

- Partner with a whole school reform model developer, as defined in the SIG requirements.
- ii. **Restart Model** – Describe the rigorous review process which was conducted or which will be conducted for the charter school operator, CMO, or EMO that has been selected or will be selected to operate or manage the school or schools. The SIG final requirements state that a rigorous review process must include a determination by the LEA that the selected charter school operator, CMO, or EMO expects to produce strong results for the school. In making this determination, the LEA must consider the extent to which the schools currently operated or managed by the selected charter school operator, CMO, or EMO, if any, have produced strong results over the past three years (or over the life of the school, if the school has been open for fewer than three years), including:
- Significant improvement in academic achievement for all of the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA;
 - Success in closing achievement gaps, either within schools or relative to all public elementary school and secondary school students statewide, for all of the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA;
 - High school graduation rates, where applicable, that are above the average rates in the State for the groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA; and
 - No significant compliance issues, including in the areas of civil rights, financial management, and student safety.

10. Budget Narrative and Preliminary Budget – provide narrative on the following:

- a. Describe appropriate staffing and activities to support the intervention model at the school level for the full years of grant funding. Appropriate FTEs by enrollment must be documented for SIG funded positions.
- b. Indicate which option the school is selecting from those detailed below.
- c. Explain how the school’s yearly budgets and activities will differ over the years of the grant. Indicate at the beginning of the narrative whether the school will use Option 1 or Option 2 detailed below.
 - i. **Option 1:** One Year of pre-implementation/planning not to exceed \$200,000, two years of full implementation not to exceed \$500,000 annually, and one year of sustaining reforms not to exceed \$300,000.

How will the Year One pre-implementation and planning activities differ from what will be budgeted for full implementation sustaining reforms?

NOTE: schools selecting this option may not use the pre-implementation/planning year to research and select the intervention model. The intervention model must have been selected prior to the start of the grant.

Schools choosing this option are required to submit a “*Plan for Full Implementation*” to the ALSDE by November 1, 2016. Funding for years 2-4 are dependent on ALSDE approval of the *Plan for Full Implementation*. More information will be provided at a later date.

- ii. **Option 2:** three years of full implementation not to exceed \$500,000 annually.

How will reforms be sustained after three years of fully funded implementation activities?

- d. Complete the preliminary **building level** budgets for all years of the grant. (Attachment G)