

**Idaho**  
**Targeted Monitoring Review of**  
**School Improvement Grants (SIG) under section 1003(g) of the**  
**Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965**  
**February 27-March 2, 2012**

**BACKGROUND**

**Overview of SIG Schools in  
Idaho FY 2009**

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Number of FY 2009 Eligible SIG Schools</b>	<b>Number of FY 2009 Served SIG Schools</b>
Tier I	8	3
Tier II	5	3
Tier III	152	62

**Implementation of  
SIG School Intervention Models**

<b>Model</b>	<b>Number of Schools Implementing the Model</b>
Turnaround	0
Transformation	6
Restart	0
Closure	0

**Overview of SIG Schools in  
Idaho FY 2010**

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Number of FY 2010 Eligible SIG Schools</b>	<b>Number of FY 2010 Served SIG Schools</b>
Tier I	5	1
Tier II	2	1
Tier III	152	15

**Implementation of  
SIG School Intervention Models**

<b>Models</b>	<b>Number of Schools Implementing the Model</b>
Turnaround	0
Transformation	2
Restart	0
Closure	0

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**MONITORING TRIP INFORMATION**

**Staff Interviewed**

- *SEA Staff: Director – Statewide System of Support, Deputy Superintendent, Title I Director, SEA Grant Specialist, Regional Coordinators, School Improvement Specialists, School Systems Improvement and Turnaround Leadership Coordinator*
- *LEA #1 Staff: District Transformation Team: Superintendent, Principal of Shoshone Elementary School, Principal of Shoshone Middle School*

**Monitoring Visits**

<b>LEA Visited</b>	<i>Shoshone School District</i>
<b>Schools Receiving SIG Funds in District</b>	<i>Shoshone Elementary, Shoshone Middle</i>
<b>Models Implemented</b>	<i>Transformation</i>
<b>FY 2009 Funding Awarded (over three years)</b>	<i>LEA Award (for 2 SIG schools): \$663,918 School-level funding: \$663,918</i>
<b>SEA Visited</b>	<i>Idaho State Department of Education</i>
<b>FY 2009 SIG Award</b>	<i>\$1,939,057 – Regular Appropriation \$10,650,687 – ARRA</i>
<b>FY 2009 SIG Awards to 7 LEAs</b>	<i>\$3,161,522</i>
<b>FY 2010 SIG Award</b>	<i>\$1,960,726</i>

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**OVERVIEW OF MONITORING REPORT**

The following report is based on U.S. Department of Education's (ED) desk monitoring of Idaho from *February 27, 2012, to March 2, 2012*, and review of documentation provided by the State educational agency (SEA) and local educational agencies (LEAs). The report consists of three sections: *Summary and Observations*, *Technical Assistance Recommendations*, and *Monitoring Findings*. The *Summary* section describes the implementation of the SIG program by the SEA and LEA monitored, initial indicators of success, and outstanding challenges being faced in implementation. This section focuses on how the SEA and LEA monitored are implementing the SIG program with respect to the following three areas: school climate, teachers and leaders, use of data, and technical assistance. The *Technical Assistance Recommendations* section identifies strategies and resources for addressing technical assistance needs. The *Monitoring Findings* section identifies areas where the SEA is not in compliance with the final requirements of the SIG program and indicates required actions that the SEA must take to resolve the findings.

Please Note: The summary and descriptions included in this report reflect the specific context of the limited number of interviews conducted at a small number of LEAs within the State. As such, they are a snapshot of what was occurring at the LEA level, and are not meant to represent a LEA's or State's entire SIG program. Nor are we approving or endorsing any particular practices or approaches by citing them.

**SUMMARY**

**School Climate**

**Shoshone School District**

As part of its SIG implementation, Shoshone School District (SSD) hired a Parent Liaison who is responsible for community and family engagement. The Parent Liaison identifies parent needs and shares grant implementation strategies with parents. The superintendent reported that the parent liaison has increased shared accountability by helping parents and students interpret and analyze student data.

**Teachers and Leaders**

**Shoshone School District**

In August 2010, the SSD hired a new superintendent. The superintendent restarted the SIG application process to incorporate his vision and strengthen stakeholder involvement across the district. SSD did not replace the principals, who had been in their positions since August 2008, because the superintendent believed that the principals had strong leadership experience.

Given the district's remote location, SSD focused its teacher recruitment strategy on aggressively recruiting new candidates at job fairs outside the district. In recruiting at colleges and universities in Idaho and Washington, the district talked with teacher candidates about the

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challenges and benefits of teaching in a SIG school during the transformation process. The superintendent and principals sought staff that would be willing to participate in the SIG transformation model. Since the beginning of SIG implementation, the district hired seven new teachers for the two schools. Three of the new teachers are bilingual, which the superintendent believes will help serve the district's large English learner population.

The district's SIG schools use a teacher evaluation model with six metrics (three quantitative, three qualitative) to assess teacher effectiveness and provide bonuses to highly effective teachers. In addition, the district provides a \$500 teacher bonus to the school's entire staff if 90% of students who are proficient or above remain at that level or advance throughout the school year. Teachers receive a \$10 bonus for each student that moves up a proficiency level in achievement. In 2012-2013, the ISDE will require that all districts use a teacher evaluation system that requires that 50 percent of the evaluation is based on student achievement.

**Use of Data**

**Shoshone School District**

Through its SIG application, SSD committed to using data to inform instructional decisions and formed teacher data teams to monitor student progress. Data captains (principals) compile assessment data and share it with the data teams in each school. In addition, the district transformation team collects data to help determine the effectiveness of the implementation strategies and intends to make changes based on the data.

**Technical Assistance**

**Idaho State Department of Education**

To help support SIG implementation, ISDE assigned "capacity builders" to SSD's district transformation team, which also includes three teachers, both SIG school principals, and the superintendent. In addition to helping SSD with the application process, the capacity builders provide targeted support to assigned schools (8 hours per week during the first year, 8 hours biweekly in year two, and then 8 hours per month during the third year) and use "focus visits" to monitor specific indicators in each school's improvement plan. Each school is then provided specific assistance based on their demonstrated need. In Shoshone, capacity builders provided technical assistance for leadership development and instructional reviews.

The State's SIG schools take part in ISDE's Statewide System of Support, including its networks for principals, central office staff, and superintendents aimed at supporting school improvement efforts. Each network meets several times a year to share best practices, discuss challenges to reform efforts at the local level, and receive targeted technical assistance. In April 2010, ISDE created a Director of Statewide Support whose team manages SIG, RTI, and Parent Involvement.

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While the SEA is collecting data on its SIG schools, it is unclear how data has been used at the SEA level to develop a plan for providing targeted technical assistance to LEAs. This year, ISDE intends to provide various Departments control over certain data that are most relevant to their programs.

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**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

*This section addresses areas where additional technical assistance may be needed to improve the quality of SIG implementation.*

**Technical Assistance Strategies:**

**Issue 1:** The ISDE reported that it has not received a sufficient number of high-quality applications from its districts.

- Develop a plan to identify and assist the Idaho's districts build their capacity to implement interventions under SIG and develop and submit high-quality SIG applications (Responsibility: ISDE).

**Issue 2:** Shoshone School District (SSD) has not used data to develop and target instructional strategies.

- Provide SSD with technical assistance on how to effectively use data to inform professional development and targeted-assistance strategies (Responsibility: ISDE).
- Develop a strategy on how to use data to inform instructional practice, select professional development activities, and target interventions for particular students or groups of students (Responsibility: SSD).

**Issue 3:** SSD's district transformation team requested assistance in identifying strategies for sustaining reforms, especially for all-day kindergarten and increased learning time.

- Provide resources to ISDE (including webinar information) that discuss the issues of sustainability planning and implementation support for SIG projects (Responsibility: ED).
- Develop strategies to assist LEA's with continuing reforms after the SIG grant ends and with developing options for sustaining turnaround efforts (Responsibility: ISDE).

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**MONITORING FINDINGS**

**Summary of Monitoring Indicators**

Critical Element	Requirement	Status	Page
<b>1. Application Process</b>	The SEA ensures that its application process was carried out consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Sections I and II of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))]	Finding	10
<b>2. Implementation</b>	The SEA ensures that the SIG intervention models are being implemented consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Sections I and II of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))]	N/A	
<b>3. Fiscal</b>	The SEA ensures LEAs and schools are using funds consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Section II of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010)) ; §1114 of the ESEA; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87]	Finding	11
<b>4. Technical Assistance</b>	The SEA ensures that technical assistance is provided to its LEAs consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Section II of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section	N/A	

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	1003(g) of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))]		
<b>5. Monitoring</b>	The SEA ensures that monitoring of LEAs and schools is being conducted consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Section II of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))]	N/A	
<b>6. Data Collection</b>	The SEA ensures that data are being collected consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. [Sections II and III of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))]	Finding	12

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**Monitoring Area: School Improvement Grant**

**Critical Element 1: The SEA ensures that its application process was carried out consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program.**

**Finding 1:** The SEA failed to administer an application process consistent with the SIG final requirements because LEAs applying on behalf of Tier III schools used an unallowable application. Specifically, although ISDE included an LEA application in its approved FY 2009 application for SIG funds, it did not use that application for Tier III schools. Instead, it used a one page application tailored for its project through the universities. Moreover, Shoshone School District used an FY 2009 application to apply for funding during the FY 2010 competition.

**Citation:** Section II.B.2(b) of the SIG final requirements (75 Fed. Reg. 66363 (Oct. 28, 2010)) requires that, before approving an LEA's application, the SEA must ensure that the application is consistent with the SIG final requirements.

**Further action required:**

Prior to making awards in the next competition to be held in the 2012–2013 school year, the ISDE must take the following steps:

- Submit the lists of Tier I, II, and III schools that will be eligible to receive funding through the competition. These lists must comply with the definitions in Section I.A.1 and I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements.
- Submit to ED a plan for how ISDE will build the capacity of LEAs to apply for, and implement one of the four models in Tier I, Tier II, and/or priority schools at the start of the 2013–2014 school-year and implement that plan no later than February 28, 2013. The plan must also include a strategy to communicate to districts with Tier I, Tier II, and/or priority schools the opportunity to apply for SIG funds to implement one of the four models.
- Within 30 days of the completion of the competition, provide to ED evidence that it has administered its competition consistent with the SIG requirements. The evidence must include at least two completed LEA applications, evidence that the ISDE implemented its plan to build capacity of LEAs to apply for, and implement, one of the models in Tier I, Tier II, and/or priority schools, and evidence of the outreach the ISDE conducted in an effort to encourage districts with Tier I, Tier II, and/or priority schools to apply for SIG funds.
- Submit to ED a summary of the SIG grants it plans to award, including the following information:
  - (1) Name and NCES identification number of each LEA awarded a grant.
  - (2) Amount of each LEA's grant for each Tier I, II, III and/or priority school.
  - (3) Name and NCES identification number of each school to be served.

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This finding must be met prior to the ISDE making awards in its next competition

**Finding 2:** The ISDE did not post on its website SIG applications of LEAs to which ISDE awarded SIG funds for Tier III schools and applications of LEAs that were not funded.

**Citation:** Section II.B.3 of the SIG final requirements (75 Fed. Reg. 66363 (Oct. 28, 2010)) requires an SEA to post on its website, within 30 days of awarding school improvement grants to LEAs, all final LEA applications.

**Further action required:**

ISDE must post on its website, within 30 days of receipt of this report, all final LEA applications, including all attachments and appendices, that ISDE has received to date. In addition, ISDE must post a summary of the SIG grants (Tier I, II, III) it has awarded, including the following information:

- (1) Name and NCES identification number of each LEA awarded a grant.
- (2) Amount of each LEA's grant.
- (3) Name and NCES identification number of each school being served.
- (4) Type of intervention being implemented in each Tier I and Tier II school being served.

The ISDE must submit the web link to ED within 30 days of receipt of this report.

**Critical Element 3: The SEA ensures LEAs and schools are using funds consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program.**

**Finding 1:** The SEA failed to ensure that awards were provided to LEAs with the greatest need and strongest commitment, instead awarding funds to 18 schools that were not on ISDE's list of Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III schools in its FY 2009 and FY 2010 SIG applications and thus were not eligible for the SIG funds.

**Citation:** Section I.A of the SIG final requirements (75 Fed. Reg. 66363 (Oct. 28, 2010)) requires an SEA to define three tiers of schools to enable the SEA to select those LEAs with the greatest need for SIG funds. Among LEAs with the greatest need, an SEA must then select those LEAs that demonstrate the strongest commitment to ensuring that the funds are used to raise achievement of students in the lowest-achieving schools. Under Section II.A.1 of the SIG final requirements, an LEA is eligible to apply for a School Improvement Grant only if it receives Title I, Part A funds and has one or more schools that qualify under the State's definition of a Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III school. According to Section II.A.2, an LEA must identify the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools it commits to serve in its application for SIG funds. Under Section II.B.2(b) of the final requirements, before approving an LEA's application, an SEA must ensure

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that the application meets all SIG requirements, including that it indicates the LEA will use SIG funds only in eligible schools that the SEA has identified.

Further action required:

As a result of providing SIG funds to ineligible schools, the ISDE must:

1. Assure that, moving forward, the ISDE will make award decisions by determining school eligibility before it makes awards to LEAs, and describe the process ISDE will use to ensure that it awards SIG funds only to eligible schools.
2. Document that ISDE has deobligated \$1,056,600 in FY 2009 SIG funds awarded to 18 ineligible schools and has replaced those obligations with state, local, or other allowable Federal funds. For example, the FY 2009 SIG funds could be replaced with ESEA section 1003(a) funds, to the extent the replacement is for Title I schools that were in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring when they received and used the SIG funds in question.
3. Amend ISDE's FY 2011 SIG application to clarify that ISDE will conduct two competitions with its currently available, or soon to be available, SIG funds: the first will be conducted during the 2012–2013 school year using FY 2009 SIG funds, including both carryover funds and the funds to be deobligated under the corrective action set forth above; and the second will be conducted in the 2013–2014 school year.

**Critical Element 6: The SEA ensures that data are being collected consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program.**

**Finding 1:** The SEA indicated to LEAs receiving SIG funding that reporting discipline incidents was an optional, rather than a mandatory, reporting requirement.

Citation: Section III.A.3 requires an SEA to collect and report data for any Tier I or Tier II school on discipline incidents.

Further action required:

The ISDE must establish, and provide to ED, a process for collecting and reporting discipline data for all LEAs with Tier I or Tier II schools being served, starting with the 2012–2013 school year. ISDE must also collect discipline data from LEAs with Tier I or Tier II schools that were served in previous school years and, where it is not possible to collect prior-years' data, provide to ED an explanation for the inability to collect the data. In addition, ISDE must submit by November 1, 2012, to ED the instructions and reporting requirements the SEA provides to LEAs.