



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable Sherri Ybarra
Superintendent of Education
Idaho State Department of Education
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720

JAN - 5 2015

Dear Superintendent Ybarra:

During the week of August 12-15, 2014, a team from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) reviewed the Idaho State Department of Education's (ISDE) administration of Title I, section 1003(g) (School Improvement Grants (SIG)) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). As part of its review, the ED team interviewed staff at the State educational agency (SEA) and two local educational agencies (LEAs). Enclosed you will find ED's final monitoring report based upon this review.

The primary purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the SEA carries out the SIG program consistent with the final requirements. Additionally, ED is using its monitoring review to observe how LEAs and schools are implementing the selected intervention models and identify areas where technical assistance may be needed to support effective program implementation.

In line with these aims, the enclosed monitoring report is organized in three sections: (1) *Summary and Observation*, (2) *Technical Assistance Recommendations*, and (3) *Monitoring Findings*. The *Summary and Observations* section describes the SIG implementation occurring in the schools and districts visited, initial indicators of success, and any outstanding challenges relating to implementation. The *Technical Assistance Recommendations* section contains strategies and resources for addressing technical assistance needs identified during ED's visit. Finally, the *Monitoring Findings* section identifies any compliance issues within the six indicator areas reviewed and corrective actions that the SEA is required to take.

The ISDE has 30 business days from receipt of this report to respond to all of the compliance issues contained herein. ED staff will review your response for sufficiency and will determine which areas are acceptable and which require further documentation of implementation. ED will allow 30 business days for receipt of this further documentation, if required. ED recognizes that some corrective actions may require longer than the prescribed 30 days, and in these instances, will work with the ISDE to determine a reasonable timeline. In those instances where additional time is required to implement specific corrective actions, you must submit a request for such an extension in writing to ED, including a timeline for completion for all related actions.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Each State that participates in an onsite or desk monitoring review and that has significant compliance findings in one or more of the programs monitored will have a condition placed on that program's grant award specifying that the State must submit (and receive approval of) documentation that all compliance issues identified in the monitoring report have been corrected. When documentation sufficient to address all compliance areas has been submitted and approved, ED will then remove the condition from your grant award.

With regards to the *Technical Assistance Recommendations* provided, ED encourages States to employ these strategies to further support the effective implementation of the SIG program. ED staff will follow up with your staff over the next few months to see how the ISDE is working to address these issues and make use of this technical assistance.

Please be aware that the observations reported, issues identified, and findings made in the enclosed report are based on written documentation or information provided to ED by SEA, LEA, or school staff during interviews. They also reflect the status of compliance in Idaho at the time and locations of ED's onsite review. The ISDE may receive further communication from ED that will require it to address noncompliance occurring prior or subsequent to the onsite visit.

The ED team would like to thank Greg Alexander and Kimberly Barnes for their hard work and the assistance they provided prior to and during the review in gathering materials and providing access to information in a timely manner.

I look forward to working further with your staff to resolve the issues contained in this report and to improve the quality of the SIG program in Idaho.

Sincerely,


Monique M. Chism, Ph.D.
Director
Office of State Support

Enclosure

cc: Greg Alexander, Director, Statewide System of Support

**THE IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ISDE)
TARGETED MONITORING REVIEW
OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG) UNDER
SECTION 1003(G) OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1985
AUGUST 12-15, 2014**

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG) MONITORING REPORT FOR
THE IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

<u>BACKGROUND</u>						
Models	Number of FY 2009 Served SIG Schools		Number of FY 2010 served SIG Schools		Number of FY 2013 served SIG schools	
Turnaround	0		0		1	
Transformation	6		2		7	
Restart	0		0		0	
Closure	0		0		0	
Tier	FY 2009 SIG-eligible Schools	FY 2009 SIG-funded Schools	FY 2010 SIG-eligible Schools	FY 2010 SIG-funded Schools	FY 2013 SIG-eligible Schools	FY 2013 SIG-funded Schools
Tier I	8	3	5	1	-	-
Tier II	5	3	2	1	-	-
Tier III	152	0	152	0 ¹	-	-
Priority School	-	-	-	-	21	8
Focus School	-	-	-	-	42	0

<u>MONITORING TRIP INFORMATION</u>	
Monitoring Visits and Award Amounts	
SEA Visited	Idaho State Department of Education
Total FY 2009 SIG Allocation	\$10,650,687
Total FY 2010 SIG Allocation	\$1,960,726
Total FY 2011 SIG Allocation	\$2,125,896
Total FY 2012 SIG Allocation	\$2,037,082
Total FY 2013 SIG Allocation	\$2,016,193
LEA Visited	Caldwell School District
LEA Information	Cohort 1: 1 school awarded \$1,092,400 Cohort 2: 0 schools awarded Cohort 3: 1 school awarded \$1,480,400.55
School Visited	Canyon Springs High School
School Information	Model: Transformation Cohort: 3

¹ This number excludes those schools that were improperly funded and for which Idaho deobligated funding as a result of findings from the 2011 SIG monitoring visit by the U.S. Department of Education.

	School-Level Award: \$1,262,750.00
LEA Visited	Minidoka School District
LEA Information	Cohort 1: 0 schools awarded Cohort 2: 0 schools awarded Cohort 3: 1 schools awarded \$1,070,778.00
School Visited	Mt. Harrison Junior/Senior High School
School Information	Model: Transformation Cohort: 3 School-Level Award: \$835,733.00
Staff Interviewed	
➤ Idaho State Department of Education Staff: Greg Alexander (Director, Statewide System of Support), Kimberly Barnes (Coordinator, System Improvement & Turnaround Leadership) and Elmira Feather (Federal Grants/Contract Specialist)	
➤ Caldwell School District Staff: Superintendent and other district staff	
➤ Canyon Springs School Staff: Principal, School Leadership Team	
➤ Minidoka Staff: Superintendent and other district staff	
➤ Mt. Harrison Junior/Senior High School Staff: Principal, School Leadership Team	
U.S. Department of Education Staff	
Team Leader	Michael Wells
Staff Onsite	Zaid Abuhouran, Molly Budman and Stephanie Washington

OVERVIEW OF MONITORING PROCESS

The following report is based on U.S. Department of Education’s (Department) on-site monitoring visit to Idaho from August 12-15, 2014 and review of documentation provided by the State educational agency (SEA), local educational agencies (LEAs), and schools.

The *School Improvement Grant (SIG) Monitoring Report* provides feedback to the Idaho State Department of Education (ISDE) on its progress in implementing the program effectively, and in a manner that is consistent with the SIG final requirements, authorized by Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, and as explained further in *Guidance on Fiscal Year 2010 School Improvement Grants Under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (March 2012)*. The observations and descriptions illustrate the implementation of the SIG program by the SEA, LEAs, and schools visited; initial indicators of success; and any outstanding challenges being faced in implementation. The report consists of the following sections:

- **Background Information:** This section highlights significant achievements in the ISDE’s implementation of the SIG grant. This section also includes a brief overview of the ISDE’s structure and vision for SIG implementation.

- ***Summary of ISDE's Implementation of SIG Critical Elements:*** This section provides a summary of the SEA's progress in implementing SIG and is based on evidence gathered during the monitoring visit on August 12-15, 2014 or through written documentation provided to the Department.
- ***Technical Assistance Recommendations:*** This section addresses areas where additional technical assistance may be needed to improve the quality of SIG program implementation.
- ***Monitoring Findings:*** This 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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Highlights of ISDE's Implementation of SIG

ISDE Highlights

- ISDE staff follow each of their extensive monitoring trips called “Focus Visits” with a report of potential findings, technical assistance recommendations and commendations within one day of returning from the visit. This promptness allows districts and schools to continuously improve their practice and helps to promote implementation that is done with fidelity.

Caldwell School District/Canyon Springs High School Highlights

- As part of its extracurricular activities, Canyon Springs is the first school in Idaho that is implementing a youth court project in partnership with the Canyon County prosecutors, juvenile probation and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. In this court, student judges rule on minor infractions committed by classmates and learn both about civics and how the justice system works. As part of the program, students will also take field trips to local courtrooms.

Minidoka School District/Mt. Harrison Junior/Senior High School Highlights

- As part of the SIG reforms, Mt. Harrison has significantly increased teacher collaboration time. Teachers and leaders meet on Wednesday morning of each week to debrief about the previous week and set goals for the following week. On Thursdays, the staff meets for professional development related to the goals set the day prior. An example of Thursday morning professional development topics is writing and application of higher order thinking skills.

ISDE Structure

ISDE has three staff dedicated to working on SIG implementation. These positions are a Director and a Coordinator of System Improvement & Turnaround Leadership who are both full time and a Contracts Specialist who works part-time on supporting the SIG program. These positions are part of the Division of Statewide System of Support. ISDE has not changed its structure as a result of SIG implementation.

Summary of ISDE's Implementation of SIG Critical Elements

Application Process

During ISDE's most recent grant competition conducted during the 2013-14 school year, the ISDE did not make awards to LEAs in accordance with the timeline in its approved SIG application of May, 2014. During interviews, ISDE staff reported that although some LEAs were awarded on time, some were awarded late in July, 2014. ISDE staff indicated that some of the LEAs had to make extensive revisions to their original applications and therefore approval was delayed by the ISDE program staff and by the State board. ISDE personnel explained that these revisions strengthened the districts' plans and solidified their capacity to implement SIG with fidelity.

The ISDE conducted its FY 2013 SIG competition in accordance with what was outlined in its approved application. ISDE staff notified LEAs with SIG-eligible schools by first sending out an introductory email to SIG-eligible LEA leadership teams that explained the SIG requirements and guidelines for application. ISDE then followed with additional emails that included the application, rubric and guidance documents. Next, the ISDE team hosted webinars to discuss the FY 2013 application and to provide examples of best practices to consider for implementation. ISDE personnel also offered individualized teleconferences and occasional site visits for LEAs in need of additional assistance. In interviews, LEA staff stated that the ISDE supported LEAs through the application process by offering several webinars to introduce the key components of the SIG application process and grant requirements. LEA staff also indicated that ISDE personnel offered them a comprehensive document that provided step-by-step actions for the application process for them to refer to throughout their experience. Both LEAs explained that they received extensive feedback from ISDE after their initial application submission. These revisions included suggestions to add clarity to descriptive sections and to rethink the purpose of certain expenditures in relation to their overall goal for reform.

Since awarding the grants, the SEA has not received requests from LEAs to amend their SIG applications.

Implementation

Caldwell School District/Canyon Springs High School

Caldwell School District (Caldwell) identified school climate, school leadership and teaching and learning strategies as the major areas of concern in Canyon Springs High School's (Canyon Springs) needs assessment.

In its application, Canyon Springs indicated that it would improve school climate by focusing on teachers and students. First, the Canyon Springs application explained that the school would partner with its external provider, Conscious Teaching, to provide additional professional development for teachers related to personalized learning. This

professional development (PD) included use of “Innovate to Educate: System [Re]design for Personalized Learning” and John Clark’s “Changing Systems to Personalized Learning.” According to district leaders, the professional development taught teachers to plan and implement personalized learning plans for all students and to raise their academic and social expectations of students. District leaders also indicated that this PD stressed the importance of mastery of content rather than obtaining credit based on the “Carnegie Unit.” District leaders explained that this is achieved through a flexible use of time and individualized pacing which motivated students to authentically understand the material in each class and to “own it.” Caldwell also mentioned that they are phasing in a 1:1 technology program to equip each student with his/her own iPad to further individualize and personalize learning and pacing of material. During Interviews, Canyon Springs leaders stated that this additional PD has helped to increase expectations of both teachers and students and therefore has aided the school in building a culture of respect. Caldwell leaders echoed the same sentiment by saying that the professional development for teachers has really taught the school the importance of personalizing learning for students and that this practice has lead students to feel personally supported by teachers.

Canyon Springs also implemented programs for students in an effort to improve school culture. The school adopted a more rigorous dress code for students, and added a “Tiger Bucks” program, which provides students with the opportunity to earn school store money for improved behavior and academic successes. Canyon Springs leaders reorganized advisory classes to focus on issues important to each grade level including study skills for freshman, career building for sophomores, college entrance exams for juniors and college essays for seniors. Lastly, students were able to apply for a position in the Canyon Springs Youth Court- a program designed to teach students about civics and the juvenile justice system while also empowering students to make good academic and social choices. School leaders indicated that these incentives and programs for students have increased the feeling of pride that students and teachers feel about Canyon Springs. They also explained that smaller efforts such as changing the dress code and school colors have given students more of a say in the policies at the school and for that they feel responsible and more connected. District leaders added that programs such as the Youth Court empower students to become more involved in their school community and they have already seen an improvement in attendance to key school events.

To address school leadership, Caldwell’s plan included hiring a new principal and providing district-level support and professional development to empower the new leader. In its SIG application, Caldwell indicated that it would expand its Caldwell Academy of Leadership (CAL) program. CAL provides support to administrators through PD showcasing current strategies of effective leadership and current educational trends. Additionally, CAL includes bi-monthly leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration amongst school and district leaders for sustained school improvement, data review and analysis, and progress towards meeting school benchmarks. In addition to district initiatives, Caldwell staff also indicated that the new principal offered PD related to relationship building for teachers prior to the start of the school year to set a precedent for a positive school culture and cohesive school staff. Caldwell teachers explained that the new principal set a lot of expectations for collaboration, teaching practice, rigor and

responsibilities at the start of the school year that have helped the school define its vision for success and for improvement.

Finally, to improve teaching and learning practices, Canyon Springs proposed offering materials aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS), hiring an instructional coach and providing additional job-embedded professional development for staff with its external provider. According to the school's application, through the use of the classroom module in Schoolnet (a web based instructional management tool), teachers are able to have ready-access to aligned instructional tools and grade-level appropriate digital resources that are aligned to the CCSS. In the school's application, Caldwell explained that these additional resources aid teachers in understanding the district adopted curriculum and therefore strengthen student learning which is conditional on receiving highly effective instruction. District staff indicated that Canyon Springs hired an instructional coach to provide onsite, job-embedded PD to demonstrate teaching methods that the district indicated are effective for promoting high-quality implementation of specific interventions. According to the school's application, Canyon Springs is also participating in the Dylan William's "Keeping Learning on Track" training that builds teacher experts in formative assessment practice and creates a community of practice within the school that focuses on five key strategies for improving teaching practice (sharing learning expectations, questioning, feedback, activating self, activating peers). Select teachers who participated in "Keep Learning on Track" training returned to Canyon Springs and developed ongoing Teacher Learning Communities to share the skills with their colleagues and to deepen their practice. School leaders indicated that with the help of their external provider, Conscious Teaching, teachers are also learning skills to improve classroom management to be able to implement the strategies from "Keeping Learning on Track" more effectively. Canyon Springs staff explained that the additional materials along with the PD, has helped to ground their teaching practice in standards and they feel more comfortable teaching to CCSS. District leaders indicated that they have seen a great improvement in teachers' abilities to differentiate. Teachers' comfort level with the material is evident in their lesson planning and delivery.

In addition to addressing the major areas of concern in the needs assessment, Canyon Springs hired a new principal for the first year of SIG implementation, implemented a new teacher and principal evaluation system that incorporates data on student growth, instituted a system of rewards for staff that have increased student achievement, increased learning time, provided on-going, job-embedded professional development for staff, used data to inform and differentiate instruction and implemented strategies to recruit, place, and retain staff.

In interviews, the school leadership indicated that Canyon Springs implemented, but struggled with providing robust opportunities for family and community engagement. Staff indicated that parents are involved in various school committees and that the school communicated with parents monthly about upcoming school activities, but it was unclear how parents and community members were actively involved in ways that supported classroom instruction and increased student achievement.

Mt. Harrison Jr/Sr High School/Minidoka School District

Minidoka School District identified in-depth preparation of coursework, instructional intensity, and parental involvement and as the major areas of concern in the Mt. Harrison Jr/Sr High School's (Mt. Harrison) needs assessment.

In its application, Mt. Harrison staff indicated that they would address instructional intensity by introducing 100 percent bell to bell instruction to ensure that students were receiving consistent academic instruction in every classroom. In interviews, school administration and teachers stated that there was a lack of consistency and rigor of curriculum across classrooms before SIG implementation. Mt. Harrison implemented the *Scholastic* programs *Read 180* and *Math 180*, which were designed to meet Common Core state standards and increase literacy and math skills. Additionally, teachers and students were provided with new technology resources to increase engagement and improve critical thinking skills. In interviews, senior leadership and teachers discussed the positive impact of *Read 180* and *Math 180* including students' increased critical thinking skills and student engagement. However, Mt. Harrison staff/leaders acknowledged that additional support was still needed to help students transition to algebra. To help with the algebra transition, Mt. Harrison senior leadership hired a half-time teacher to provide remedial support.

To improve the school culture and environment with administration, staff, students, and community, senior leadership at Mt. Harrison conducted informal learning sessions to identify challenges and to construct a new vision for the school. Through the learning sessions, senior leadership learned that students expressed intimidation and fear within the building, family and community engagement was limited, and teachers identified a lack of trust with the administration. The new principal focused on changing the school culture by introducing student community service projects to raise the school's public profile and removed eight students that were over the age of 21. The new principal also engaged teachers with open dialogs to discuss the new vision for Mt. Harrison and provided positive reinforcement for successes and challenges within the school. Teachers expressed that Mt. Harrison had transitioned to a more transparent and collaborative environment.

Finally, Mt. Harrison senior leadership and teachers improved family and community engagement by convening a parent and community advisory committee that met 2-5 times during the school year. The advisory committee provided input with the Ways to Improve School Effectiveness (WISE) Tool (ISDE's online system for tracking progress towards customized indicators of effective practice) and opportunities for parents to review school curriculum. Additionally, Mt. Harrison senior leadership and teachers invited parents to an end-of-the-year awards ceremony. In interviews, the leadership team discussed anecdotal successes regarding their parent and family engagement strategies noting increased junior and high school parental involvement, increased student engagement, and a decrease of student discipline violations for minor infractions.

In addition to addressing the major areas of concern in the needs assessment, Mt. Harrison hired a new principal the first year of SIG implementation, implemented a new teacher and principal evaluation system that incorporated data on student growth, and provided on-going, job-embedded professional development for staff.

In interviews, it was not clear that Mt. Harrison senior leadership implemented a system of rewards for staff that increased student achievement and increased learning time.

Fiscal

The ISDE reserves 5 percent of the State's SIG allocation and uses its reservation for salaries, benefits and travel for the three fully and partially dedicated SIG positions within the Division of Statewide System of Support office. Partially dedicated staff members are only paid for out of SIG funds for the percentage of time that they dedicate to SIG.

The ISDE staff ensure that SIG funds are spent on allowable activities through several measures. First, SIG expenditures are marked with a unique code that signals to the accounting department that they are to be paid for out of SIG funds and cannot be reimbursed with any other funding source. Secondly, ISDE staff review each budget prior to approval to ensure that purchases align to each school's budget and visions for improvement. ISDE SIG-dedicated personnel are also part of the approval process for all SIG-coded expenditures that come through the accounting office. Each expenditure is checked again before reimbursement is made to ensure that it is aligned with the school's approved SIG plan.

To ensure that its LEAs adhere to proper accounting of time and attendance for SIG paid staff and maintain equipment and materials purchased with SIG funds, the ISDE SIG team checks all equipment and staff logs during annual focus visits against the school's approved budget for staff and equipment. ISDE staff also approves all equipment and material purchases before reimbursements are finalized in the accounting department.

Technical Assistance

ISDE

In interviews, ISDE staff stated that it is providing technical assistance to support LEAs with implementing SIG by providing on-site and virtual technical assistance opportunities for grantees. During on-site Focus Visits, ISDE team members spend time monitoring school and district implementation while also providing targeted and differentiated technical assistance based upon individual grantee need. Prior to these visits, the ISDE provides webinars to prepare their grantees for the monitoring portion of the visit, but also to entertain any questions or concerns related to the visit. ISDE also utilizes its WISE tool- Idaho's version of the Indistar system- an online system for tracking progress towards customized indicators of effective practice. ISDE provides technical assistance

for using the WISE tool to all schools in need of improvement through its fall tour. During the fall tour, ISDE staff differentiates technical assistance for using the WISE tool based on a district's individual needs so that they can optimize their use of the WISE tool. This assistance includes aiding in development of specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely (SMART) goals that are stored within WISE and that are progress checked throughout the year. Additionally, ISDE's SIG team provides districts and schools with an implementation guidebook and workbook to accompany WISE that explains the benchmarks and tasks for each school year.

In addition to these specific ISDE services, districts that choose to contract with the ISDE and local universities also receive technical assistance through the Idaho Building Capacity Project. The project provides a capacity builder, who is an experienced educational leader, who works with the school and district to build leadership capacity. Specific tasks include leadership coaching, system improvement planning, SIG implementation, and providing feedback on teaching and learning.. Capacity builders spend approximately eight hours per week in the school for the first year of SIG implementation, eight hours every other week during the school's second year and eight hours per month during the school's last year of SIG implementation. Districts also have the option to participate in Idaho Building Capacity programs such as the Idaho Superintendents Network (a network of turnaround superintendents that meet regularly and receive personalized technical assistance) and the Network of Innovative School Leaders (NISL) executive training program which strengthens district capacity to build the leadership of both serving principals and aspiring leaders.

LEA leadership stated that the ISDE support for SIG implementation has been timely and customized towards individual needs on site, via phone calls or through email correspondence. LEA leaders explained that the ISDE staff are easily accessible and along with their Capacity Builder have helped them refine their school improvement plans and use data to inform changes. In general, school leadership stated that the ISDE's support for SIG implementation has been consistent and useful.

Caldwell School District (Caldwell)/ Canyon Springs High School (Canyon Springs)
Caldwell School District proposed to support schools implementing SIG by utilizing the Idaho State Department of Education's capacity builder network. Additionally, Caldwell School District worked in close collaboration with Canyon Springs senior leadership by providing direct technical assistance and resources to ensure that the district and school were in compliance with SIG requirements. Finally, Caldwell School District utilized the WISE tool to provide peer mentoring and reporting to assist with Canyon Spring's technical assistance.

In interviews Canyon Springs staff described the technical assistance it receives from Caldwell as useful. The leadership team stated that Caldwell staff are constantly visiting the school (at least once a week) and providing support in whatever capacity the school needs. Canyon Springs staff indicated that the LEA was especially helpful in navigating the WISE tool and developing SMART goals for the year. School staff explained that

their relationship with Caldwell is informal and transparent, which they indicated that they really appreciate. School leaders mentioned that the technical assistance that they receive from the ISDE is also informal and that they feel comfortable asking for assistance from both the LEA and the SEA.

Minidoka School District (Minidoka)

Minidoka proposed supporting Mt. Harrison in implementing SIG by monitoring Mt. Harrison's policies and practices to ensure that they are consistent with the requirements of the transformation model and the goals listed in the school's WISE tool. The district-level leadership team provides oversight and technical assistance to Mt. Harrison and is responsible for providing the school with all of the support necessary to implement SIG with fidelity. Minidoka proposed to assist Mt. Harrison with several areas of SIG implementation including: financial responsibilities, analyzing assessment data, use of technology, curriculum support, professional development implementation and school improvement planning. Minidoka also proposed using ISDE's capacity builder programs (IBC, NISL and ISN) to support Minidoka's implementation of SIG. These programs are part of ISDE's statewide system of support but are supported by the school's SIG budget if the district decides to participate in them. Minidoka indicated that in consultation with its capacity builder, the district and school decided that the transformation model was the most appropriate option for Mt. Harrison. The school had already begun implementing some of the reforms required for that model and had the capacity to scale up and sustain them with the support of the district and capacity builder.

In interviews Mt. Harrison staff described the technical assistance it receives from Minidoka as inconsistent. School leaders stated that the LEA provides fiscal oversight and support for the grant, but that the majority of the school's technical assistance is provided by the Idaho State Department of Education and from its capacity builder. School leaders indicated that the support that they receive from the ISDE is done frequently and proactively through e-mail and phone correspondence as well as through yearly on-site focus visits.

Monitoring

In its approved application, the Idaho State Department of Education identified that the Director of the Statewide System of Support will oversee annual Core Focus Visits in each of the LEAs with SIG schools, review their implementation of progress using the WISE tool, and schedule onsite visits two or more times per year as necessary for SIG schools in need of additional assistance with implementation of SIG. In addition, SEA staff indicated that the Director would also oversee the review of school improvement plans and provide feedback to LEAs for improvement, schedule phone and in-person interviews with key district and school leaders at least two times per year as well as a fiscal review including a review of quarterly cash balance reports for each funded LEA. In interviews, school staff reported that the ISDE brought a focus team to their annual visit. The team, comprised of ISDE staff responsible for the implementation of SIG produced a report the day after leaving each visit which highlighted strengths and

suggested areas for improvement. During focus visits, ISDE staff interview the leadership team, teachers, parents and students to gain perspective on SIG implementation and areas in which each school needs additional assistance. According to both LEAs visited, these visits and subsequent reports were very well received and used to improve practice. Both LEAs visited explained that the focus visits are helpful in keeping their schools focused on their approved SIG plans and in thinking through innovative ways to overcome challenges or barriers to success.

Data Collection

The ISDE uses its Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE), a K-12 Longitudinal Data System that delivers information to educational stakeholders to facilitate data driven decisions to collect data on SIG achievement and leading indicators from LEAs and schools. LEAs submit data to the SEA on an annual basis.

According to EDfacts records, the ISDE has submitted all required achievement and leading indicator data to the Department

The ISDE uses the data it collects to better support LEAs and schools in planning and implementing SIG during new competitions or through the yearly renewal process. The ISDE also uses data to inform its policy decisions within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver process and new school improvement reforms.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue (Family and Community Engagement): Mt. Harrison is experiencing difficulty with creating opportunities for family and community engagement that are meaningful and well-attended by the public and members of the community.

Technical Assistance Strategies:

- Provide the ISDE resources on effective strategies for engaging families and the community (Responsibility: ED).
- Develop a family and community engagement plan or a set of strategies to involve parents in SIG implementation and to capitalize on community resources (Responsibility: ISDE and LEA).

Issue (Recruitment, Retention, and Placement of Staff): While Caldwell School District and Minidoka School District both had systems in place for recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, both LEAs indicated that they believed that it is a challenge recruiting and retaining qualified teachers in alternative high schools in Idaho. Minidoka School District expressed a need for technical assistance related to teacher recruitment, particularly in more rural parts of the state.

Technical Assistance Strategies:

- Connect the ISDE to other SEAs with promising practices or examples related to recruitment of qualified teachers. (Responsibility: ED).
- Connect the ISDE with resources from other SEAs, comprehensive centers, or organizations on teacher recruitment and retention. (Responsibility: ED)

Issue: (Implementation): Both Caldwell School District and Minidoka School District indicated that they needed more assistance in designing processes for recruiting, screening, and selecting external providers. ISDE stated that external providers that are not part of ISDE's statewide system of support were not re-evaluated through a formal process during the award period and that the SEA could use additional technical assistance with the development of such a process.

Technical Assistance Strategies:

- Connect the ISDE to guidance and resources related to holding external providers accountable for their performance throughout the period of the grant (Responsibility: ED)
- Develop a plan for assisting the LEAs in holding external providers accountable for their performance throughout the period of the grant (Responsibility: ISDE)
- Develop a plan for holding external providers accountable for their performance throughout the period of the grant (Responsibility: Caldwell School District and Minidoka School District)

Issue (Technical Assistance): Although responsive to LEA and school requests for assistance, the SEA does not appear to enforce or help develop technical assistance strategies at the LEA-level to get at school needs related to SIG program requirements and school turnaround efforts in all of its LEAs. In particular, the LEAs, especially Minidoka School District, would benefit from targeted assistance from the SEA around strategies for family and community engagement, increased learning time and overall technical assistance plans focused on ensuring fidelity of implementation of all SIG requirements. It is recommended that the SEA broaden existing TA efforts to address these issues as well as other issues related to school turnaround efforts.

Technical Assistance Strategies:

- Provide technical assistance to LEAs on strategies and methods to provide meaningful technical assistance to schools. Once plans are developed, ISDE should be regularly monitoring the use of each LEA's plan. (Responsibility: ISDE)
- Provide guidance to LEAs on the appropriate and meaningful use of increased learning time. It appears that the LEAs and schools could benefit from additional guidance on what qualifies as extended learning time and how schools can maximize the benefits of extended learning time, including by following ED guidance that effective programs expand learning time by a minimum of 300 hours per school year. (Responsibility: ISDE)

MONITORING FINDINGS

Summary of Monitoring Indicators

Critical Element	Requirement	Status	Page
1. Application Process	The SEA ensures that its application process was carried out consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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))]</i>	Finding	16
2. Implementation	The SEA ensures that the SIG intervention models are being implemented consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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))]</i>	Finding	17
3. Fiscal	The SEA ensures LEAs and schools are using funds consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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]</i>	N/A	N/A
4. Technical Assistance	The SEA ensures that technical assistance is provided to its LEAs consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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))]</i>	N/A	N/A
	The SEA ensures that monitoring of LEAs		

Idaho- Targeted Monitoring Review of SIG-August 12-15, 2014

<p>5. Monitoring</p>	<p>and schools is being conducted consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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))]</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>6. Data Collection</p>	<p>The SEA ensures that data are being collected consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program. <i>[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))]</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Monitoring Area: School Improvement Grant

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

Finding: The SEA did not ensure that its application process was carried out consistent with its approved FY 2009 and FY 2010 SIG applications. The ISDE stated in its approved SIG applications that “if LEAs apply to utilize external providers that are not already approved, those applications will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) Leadership Team”; it further stated that LEA proposals for external providers outside of its statewide system of support “will be evaluated based on the degree to which they demonstrate: a rigorous and thorough review, or screening, of available external providers, that the external provider’s services align with the implementation of the intervention model as defined in the SIG final requirements and that the external provider is sufficiently qualified to provide the services necessary for implementation of the intervention model.” During monitoring discussions, ISDE staff indicated that while they review LEA applications to confirm that a plan is in place for evaluating external providers, ISDE has no process for reviewing the substance or quality of each LEA’s plan and therefore, has no way to evaluate if LEAs are meeting the requirement to recruit, screen and select external provider to ensure their quality.

Citation: Section II.B. of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants program 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)), requires a State to submit to the Department for approval an application that contains such information as the Secretary may reasonably require. The FY 2009 and 2010 SIG applications required States to describe their process for ensuring that LEAs are meeting the requirement to recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality.

Further action required: The ISDE must review each LEA’s criteria on recruiting, screening and selecting external providers to determine that it is in accordance with SIG guidelines. For any LEA that the ISDE has determined does not have rigorous criteria for recruiting, screening, and selecting external providers, the ISDE must submit a plan for supporting the LEA(s) and school(s) in developing more rigorous criteria. The ISDE must submit the results of the review, and any plans developed as a result of the review, to ED within 60 days of receiving a copy of this report.

Critical Element 2: The SEA ensures that the SIG intervention models are being implemented consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program.

Finding: The ISDE has not ensured that Mt. Harrison Jr/Sr High School has established a system of rewards for school leaders, teachers, and other staff based on increased student achievement and high school graduation rates as required by the transformation model.

Citation: 75 C.F.R. § I.A.2. (d)(1)(i)(c) requires that an LEA must identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who in implementing this model, have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates and identify and remove those who, after ample opportunities have been provided for them to improve their professional practice, have not done so.

Further action required: The ISDE must submit to ED evidence that it has reviewed the progress of all schools that received SIG funds to implement the transformation model to ensure that these schools are identifying and rewarding school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing the transformation model, have increased student achievement. As part of the evidence, the ISDE also must submit to ED the results of that review and for any schools that are not implementing a rewards system the ISDE must submit the steps it will take to ensure that all schools receiving SIG funds to implement the transformation model have done so.