

RHODE ISLAND
Targeted Monitoring Review of
School Improvement Grants (SIG) under section 1003(g) of the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
April 30 – May 3, 2012

BACKGROUND

**Overview of SIG Schools in Rhode Island
(Cohort 1)**

Tier	Number of Eligible SIG Schools	Number of Served SIG Schools
Tier I	6	1
Tier II	5	0
Tier III	32	0

**Implementation of
SIG School Intervention Models**

Models	Number of Schools Implementing the Model
Turnaround	0
Transformation	1
Restart	0
Closure	0

**Overview of SIG Schools in Rhode Island
(Cohort 2)**

Tier	Number of Eligible SIG Schools	Number of Served SIG Schools
Tier I	6	4
Tier II	5	1 (merged with Tier I school)
Tier III	32	1 (merged with Tier I school)

**Implementation of
SIG School Intervention Models**

Models	Number of Schools implementing the Model
Turnaround	0
Transformation	4
Restart	0
Closure	0

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MONITORING TRIP INFORMATION

Monitoring Visits

LEA Visited	<i>Providence Public Schools</i>
School Visited	<i>Young and Woods Elementary</i>
Model Implemented	<i>Transformation</i>
FY 2009 Funding Awarded	<i>LEA Award: \$ 3,972,909 School-level funding: \$999,754 (first year)</i>

LEA Visited	<i>Central Falls Public Schools</i>
School Visited	<i>Central Falls High School</i>
Model Implemented	<i>Transformation</i>
FY 2009 Funding Awarded	<i>LEA Award: \$1,363,967 School-level funding: \$1,343,160 (first year); \$1,363,967 (second year)</i>

SEA Visited	<i>Rhode Island Department of Education</i>
FY 2009 SIG Award	<i>\$12,509,424 (\$1,921,317 – Regular; \$10,588,107- ARRA)</i>
FY 2010 SIG Award	<i>\$1,817,469</i>

Staff Interviewed

- *Rhode Island Department of Education Staff*
- *Providence Public Schools Staff*
- *Young and Woods Elementary Staff: Principal, School Leadership Team, Teachers, Parents, Students, and Classroom Visits*
- *Central Falls School District Staff*
- *Central Falls High School Staff: Principal, School Leadership Team, Teachers, Parents, Students, and Classroom Visits*

U.S. Department of Education Staff

Team Leader	<i>Carlas McCauley</i>
Staff Onsite	<i>David Yi and Chuenee Boston</i>

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OVERVIEW OF MONITORING REPORT

The following report is based on the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) onsite monitoring visit to Rhode Island from April 30 – May 3, 2012 and review of documentation provided by the State educational agency (SEA), local educational agencies (LEAs), and schools. The report consists of two sections: *Technical Assistance Recommendations* and *Monitoring Findings*. 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.

The Department will later issue a *Summary and Observations* addendum that describes 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. That addendum will focus on how the SEA, LEAs, and schools visited are implementing the SIG program with respect to the following five areas: school climate, teachers and leaders, instructional strategies and time, use of data, and technical assistance.

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Issue:

Issue 1: Some LEAs requested more support in helping schools align curriculum to the state standards.

- Provide technical assistance to LEAs around benchmarking and curriculum mapping so that schools can better assess whether the curriculum being used is aligned with state standards (Responsibility: RIDE).

Issue 2: Based on interviews with Central Falls High School administration and staff, some SIG schools would benefit from more support in how to collect, analyze, and use student achievement and leading indicator data to inform instruction and school reform strategies.

- To build the capacity of SIG schools in collecting, analyzing, and using data, help LEAs to provide technical assistance, such as offering professional development and connecting struggling schools with schools that use data effectively (Responsibility: RIDE).

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. [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	6
2. Implementation	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))]	Finding	6-7
3. Fiscal	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]	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. [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	N/A
5. Monitoring	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))]	Finding	7
6. Data Collection	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))]	N/A	N/A

Monitoring Area: School Improvement Grant

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

Finding: For its cohort I competition, RIDE did not notify LEAs with Tier II schools that they were eligible to apply for SIG funds and limited the competition to only Tier I schools.

Citation: Section II.A.1 and II.B.7 of the final requirements for the SIG program state that “An LEA may apply for a School Improvement Grant 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... An SEA must award funds to serve each Tier I and Tier II school that its LEAs commit to serve, and that the SEA determines its LEAs have the capacity to serve...” (75 FR 66363 (October 28, 2010))

Further action required:

The SEA must ensure that its cohort II application process has been carried out consistent with the SIG final requirements. RIDE must provide ED with documentation demonstrating that its competition was open to all eligible schools and provide to ED evidence that it administered its competition consistent with its approved FY 2010 SIG application.

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

Finding (1): The SEA has not ensured that schools implementing the transformation model are using teacher and principal evaluation systems that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor.

Citation: Section I.A.2(d)(1)(i)(B) 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)), requires use of a rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals that— (1) Take into account data on student growth as a significant factor as well as other factors such as multiple observation-based assessments of performance and ongoing collections of professional practice reflective of student achievement and increased high school graduations rates; and (2) Are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

Further action required:

The SEA must submit to ED a support plan that outlines how the SEA will provide technical assistance to LEAs in order to help them meet the evaluation system requirements. Additionally, the SEA must submit to ED a timeline for implementing evaluation systems in any school currently not doing so. For each school implementing the transformation model, the SEA must submit to ED documentation demonstrating a teacher and principal evaluation system aligned to the SIG final requirements program is being implemented in the 2012-2013 school year.

Finding (2): The SEA has not ensured that the system of rewards for school leaders, teachers, and other staff implementing the transformation model is based in part on student achievement. The current staff evaluation process is not clearly linked to student performance.

Citation: Section I.A.2. (d)(1)(i)(c) of the SIG final requirements states that an LEA implementing a transformation model 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 SEA must provide a plan to ED for how it will assist LEAs in developing and implementing a system that identifies and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing the transformation model, have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates. The plan must include a timeline for implementation in the 2012-2013 school year, to identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing the transformation model, have increased student achievement.

Critical Element 3: Monitoring

The SEA ensures that monitoring of LEAs and schools is being conducted consistent with the final requirements of the SIG program.

Finding: The SEA has not ensured that monitoring of SIG implementation in LEAs and schools is being conducted as outlined in its approved application. According to RIDE’s application, “team members from the Office of Transformation, in conjunction with other relevant offices in RIDE, will coordinate periodic visits to these schools. Visits will be comprised of instructional observation, artifact examination, focus group discussions and checklists for progress monitoring on the objectives outlined in SRPs.” RIDE has not conducted onsite monitoring or developed a monitoring protocol.

Citation: Section 80.40 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) states that grantees must monitor grant and subgrant activities to ensure compliance with applicable Federal requirements. Section 9304(a) of the ESEA requires that the SEA must ensure that (1) programs authorized under the ESEA are administered in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications; and (2) the State will use fiscal control and funds accounting procedures that will ensure the proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds.

Further action required: The SEA must submit to ED a description of how it will carry out its monitoring plan as described in the approved SEA application. The plan must include a timeline, monitoring protocol, and a copy of the process the SEA will use to ensure that LEAs correct any areas of non-compliance identified in any future monitoring efforts.