



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## School Improvement Grant Application

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

CFDA Numbers: 84.377A; 84.388A



APPLICATION COVER SHEET

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Legal Name of Applicant:

**Arkansas Department of Education**

Applicant's Mailing Address:

**Four Capitol Mall, Room 302-B  
Little Rock, AR 72201**

<p>Legal Name of Applicant:</p> <p><b>Arkansas Department of Education</b></p>	<p>Applicant's Mailing Address:</p> <p><b>Four Capitol Mall, Room 302-B Little Rock, AR 72201</b></p>
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<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 1: SEA REQUIREMENTS

### A. Eligible Schools

#### 1. Definition of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools

Arkansas' Definition of Tier I, Tier II and Tier III Schools

The annual school performance data from the Arkansas assessments required under section 1111(b) (3) of the ESEA for literacy and mathematics were used to identify persistently lowest-achieving schools. Performance levels from annual assessments for 2007 through 2009 included all students completing a full academic year, as well as students completing an alternate assessment. Tier I schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving were determined from among 273 Title I participating schools that were in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

1. Schools were ranked based on 2009 academic achievement for mathematics and literacy combined using an added ranks method.
  - a. Schools were sorted from highest to lowest for the percentage of students proficient in mathematics in 2009. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order with 1 representing the highest ranked performance.
  - b. Schools were sorted from highest to lowest for the percentage of students proficient in literacy in 2009. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order with 1 representing the highest ranked performance.
  - c. An overall rank for 2009 academic achievement was obtained by summing the ranks for mathematics and literacy.
2. Schools were ranked on progress by utilizing the added ranks method for 2007, 2008, and 2009 performance.
  - a. Schools were sorted from highest to lowest for percentage of students proficient in mathematics for 2007 and 2008. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order for each year, with 1 representing the highest ranked performance.
  - b. Schools were sorted from highest to lowest for percentage of students proficient in literacy for 2007 and 2008. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order for each year, with 1 representing the highest ranked performance.
  - c. Overall ranks for 2007 and 2008 were obtained by summing the ranks for mathematics and literacy.
  - d. A 3-year progress ranking was obtained by summing the 2007, 2008, and 2009 rank values.
3. A final combined ranking was obtained by summing the weighted rankings for 2009 academic achievement and 3 year progress. Three year progress was weighted 1.0 and 2009 academic achievement was weighted 0.80.
4. The schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving were the bottom 14 schools when sorted by the final combined ranking. These schools had the 14 highest values for the final combined ranking.

5. There were no Title 1 schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that were identified based on persistently low graduation rate, less than 60.0 over a number of years. Three years of graduation rates were examined. In addition, no schools were identified for services as newly eligible.

Tier II schools were identified from among 46 Title 1 eligible (but not receiving Title I funds) secondary schools using the same method as Tier 1 schools. The bottom 5 schools had the highest final combined ranking values.

Tier III schools are all other Title I schools in improvement, corrective action or restructuring not listed in Tier I.

## **2. List of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools**

*(See Attachment 1: Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools)*

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

#### **Part 1: Actions that the LEAs must complete prior to submitting an application**

**Requirement 1: Criteria to determine whether the LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application and have selected an intervention for each school.**

The Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Planning (ACSIP) model is an annual planning and fund distribution design that must be used by all Arkansas public and charter schools, as defined by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-419. Using the ACSIP model, each school in Arkansas develops a comprehensive school improvement plan. The plan is also used as the school's application for all federal programs administered by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), under the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA), in addition to Student Special Use Funds. ACSIP must include activities based on the school's greatest needs and identify the performance of student subgroups if the subgroup did not meet the achievement level necessary for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Schools are required to analyze data for the following: combined population of the school; all subgroup data from state required achievement exams; local achievement assessments; attendance or graduation rates; relevant sources to determine student learning needs. Specific grade levels and/or content area information should be recognized as main concerns and achievement gaps between subpopulations should be identified. The ACSIP also serves as the LEA applications for federal and state funds. All LEA applications for funds must show how funds will support the overarching plan (i.e. how budgeted activities directly support the LEA's effort to

address the needs, goals, objectives, progress targets, and strategies within the overarching plan).

Within each ACSIP the LEA must identify the following information:

1. Mission statement: A written expression of the mission of the school. The goals and activities of the plan are connected to the mission.
2. Priorities: Expressions of the areas of greatest need, based on analysis of assessment data (e.g., Math, Literacy, Special Education for Focus Schools, Character Education, etc.).
3. Data statements: Statements of the three (3) most current years of information available for each grade tested. These statements may contain the results of comprehensive needs assessments that are developed for the Combined Population, Limited English Proficiency (ELL), Economically Disadvantaged (SES), Students with Disabilities (IEP), & Racial/Ethnic groups: White, African-American, and Hispanic. The following measurements must be included:
  - Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT):
    - a. Math identifying weaknesses from strands and goals, open response versus multiple choice and literacy for each subpopulation.
    - b. Literacy identifying weaknesses from multiple-choice and open response for each subpopulation.
  - Norm Referenced Tests (NRT):
  - Attendance or Graduation Rate (Develop statement for the area on which the building AYP calculation is based.)
  - Other appropriate areas as needed.
4. Goal statements: Statements that narrow the scope of the priority by addressing specific weaknesses based on CRT and NRT data disaggregation and analysis.
5. Benchmark statements: Benchmark statements reflect the building's current AYP status and where the building should be according to the current AYP chart located in the State's Accountability Workbook.
6. Interventions: Formatted descriptions of proposed research-based programs, initiatives, or strategies to address the student academic, behavioral and social needs identified in the data analysis.

*Research citations (the source, title, author, and date of publication) should be recent and include the scientifically-based research upon which the interventions are developed.*

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) will require all SIG applicants to provide a more detailed needs assessment (as indicated in Part 1 below) and substantiate how the selection of each intervention model is supported by the data. The LEA must include in its application a clear identification of the intervention the applicant proposes to implement, along with a timeline for implementation with benchmarks and clearly defined roles and responsibilities associated with the selected intervention, as well as a clear justification for the selection of the intervention model. (Indicators and questions are adapted from the Center for Innovation and Improvement tool "**Selecting the Intervention Model and Partners for a Low-Achieving School: A Decision-Making and Planning Tool for the Local Education Agency**").

Part 1 of the application requires the LEAs to assess school needs. The applicant would follow an orderly progression of steps as it completes this process:

The first step in completing the needs assessment is to assemble evidence as required to develop a profile of the school's context. This part includes the following indicators and questions:

- Grade levels;
- student enrollment;
- % free/reduced lunch;
- % special education students;
- % English language learners;
- home languages of ELL students;
- description of the enrollment area served by school;
- list of feeder schools and recipient schools;
- description of background and core competencies of the school's administrators;
- description of the evaluation process for administrators;
- summary profile of teaching staff;
- evaluation process for teachers; and
- description of current reform and improvement efforts over the last five years.

The LEA will then assemble evidence as required to develop a profile of the school's performance. This part includes the following indicators and questions:

- student proficiency in all tested subjects and grades for "all students" for the past five years;
- student proficiency in all tested subjects and grades by subgroup past three years;
- attendance rate;
- mobility rate; and
- graduation rate.

#### Key Questions

1. Which students are experiencing the lowest achievement?
2. Which students are experiencing the lowest graduation rates?
3. In which subjects are students experiencing the lowest achievement?
4. What characteristics of the student demographics should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners?
5. What characteristics of the enrollment area should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners?

The LEA must also include a detailed summary of the schools progress relative to the Arkansas Standards and Indicators for School Improvement, (ADE Scholastic Audit-**ATTACHMENT 2**). Specifically the LEA must describe:

- Specific findings that led to the "Recommendations";
- LEA (Leadership) and/or school "Recommendations" identified for implementation;
- Implementation progress;

- Timeline of prioritized “Recommendations” and the
- Evaluation process.

The LEA must address how the LEA will support the building in providing continuous school improvement at the building level. Additionally, the LEA will specifically address those items unique to the role of the LEA (i.e., board policy, supervising and guiding building level leadership).

The school must address those items unique to the roles and responsibilities of the school for providing continuous school improvement.

In addition to the above indicators, the LEA must provide a summary of other data sources used to supplement the needs assessment and the selection of an appropriate intervention model for each Tier I and Tier II school. (i.e. perceptual data from students, staff and parents, process data, improvement plan outcomes or results, professional development program outcomes or results, other).

The LEA and school must support its annual goals for student achievement with its current Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP) priorities and actions. The ADE anticipates that applicants must update or otherwise adjust and amend its ACSIP to accommodate rapid transformation and too secure the input of new leadership that may come into the LEA. ACSIP Supervisors and Title I staff will be available to assist the LEA and schools with ACSIP amendments and adjustments as needed to support SIG initiatives.

A comprehensive rubric addressing each area of the school application and intervention models will be utilized to score the application and ensure that the LEA and school have the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related supports. The application is divided into six sections. Two sections require general information. The remaining four sections have a maximum point value of 150 points. The LEA must submit a separate application for each school. A team of ADE staff members will review all LEA applications and assess the adequacy and appropriateness of each component. Team members will include Title I, school improvement, accountability, curriculum and assessment, and federal finance. Each member will have the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on each section of the application. **(The full ADE Title I, 1003(g) SIG Review Rubric is located in Attachment 3)**

**Requirement 2 - Criteria to evaluate whether the LEA has demonstrated that it has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA’s application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.**

Part 2 of the application requires the LEA to assess the needs and capacity of the school and district relative to each of the intervention models and which intervention model will be likely to produce the most immediate and substantial improvement in student learning. Each LEA must

demonstrate the capacity to use SIG funds, 1003(a) school improvement funds, and other State and/or local funds to fully and effectively implement the selected intervention(s) identified for each school in the LEA's application.

To demonstrate capacity, the LEA is required to identify particular characteristics of school needs and capacity, district capacity, and community capacity (including supply of external partners, CMOs, EMO). These identified needs are linked to intervention models that are most appropriate given that characteristic. LEAs then rank order the intervention models based on fit and answer specific questions regarding each intervention model, to further refine the rank order. After answering the questions, the LEA must recommend and provide a rationale for its selection of an intervention model for each school.

The LEA is also required to examine any state statutes and policies, district policies, and district contractual agreements that provide support or otherwise affect each of the four intervention models. A descriptive response must be provided for each indicator. The LEA is also required to list external partners (CMOs, EMOs) that are available to assist with specific aspects of each of the four intervention models.

Additionally, the LEA will provide the following information:

1. Statement of Need - This section is a narrative description of the process the LEA utilized to complete the Needs Assessment, how the performance data informed the selection of the intervention model for each school, how the district analyzed the Scholastic Audit results and determined the resources and related support for each school. The narrative must also include a list of review team members and their positions. If the LEA has selected the Turnaround and/or Transformation models, it must explain how the LEA will assist schools in fulfilling the required activities for each school.
2. Lack of Capacity to Serve - If the LEA is choosing NOT to serve each Tier I school, please provide a detailed explanation indicating why the LEA has determined that it does not have the capacity to serve those schools. (Describe any key policies, processes, weaknesses, or issues that impact the lack of capacity.)

All LEA applicants will be required to submit evidence of their capacity for each of the indicators. Evidence may be in the form of data, district policies, district agreements, and other documentation. ADE will evaluate each LEA applicant's capacity to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school utilizing a comprehensive rubric. **(The full ADE Title I, 1003(g) SIG Review Rubric is located in Attachment 3)**

**Requirement 3 - The LEA's budget includes sufficient funds to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application as well as to support school improvement activities in Tier III schools throughout the period of availability of those funds (taking into account any waiver extending that period received by either the SEA or the LEA).**

ADE will evaluate each LEA applicant's budget to ensure it includes sufficient funds to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively in each Tier I and Tier II school as well as school improvement activities in Tier III schools throughout the period of availability of funds. LEA applicants will be required to submit a detailed budget table and narrative with supporting documentation of the cost of required and (if applicable) optional activities for the selected intervention model for each Tier I and Tier II school. Successful applicants will also show how School Improvement Grant funds will be used to support school improvement strategies in Tier III schools throughout the extended period of fund availability. Support of school improvement strategies for which School Improvement Grant funds are proposed, must be aligned, with school improvement strategies that are identified through the Scholastic Audit and the Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Planning (ACSIP) process.

ADE will evaluate each LEA applicant's budget according to the following requirements. If any requirements are not met, the application will be returned to the LEA for revision.

#### Budget Table Requirements

- Must include a budget table for each Tier I and Tier II school proposed to be served
- Must identify the school name and Tier
- Must clearly reflect the proposed interventions and activities supported through the needs assessment
- Must include costs for each intervention element for Years 1-3 and the total cost for each intervention element
- Must include the specific source of funds that will be used to cover each cost identified
- Must include the total cost over the availability of the grant funds
- Must include a budget table for each Tier III school proposed to be served
- Must list the school improvement activities, costs for each activity over the availability of the grant funds

#### Budget Narrative Requirements

- Must include justification of cost estimates
- Must include description of large budget items
- Must be aligned with the budget table
- Must describe how funds from different sources will be utilized

A budget justification narrative must accompany the budget for each Tier I or Tier II school for which funding is sought. The application will not be considered without the budget justification narrative.

**Evaluation Criteria - Part 2: Actions that an LEA may have taken, in whole or in part, prior to submitting an application, but most likely, will take after receiving a School Improvement Grant.**

**Requirement 1: Criteria to assess LEA commitment to design and implement the selected interventions consistent with the final requirements.**

ADE will evaluate the LEA's commitment to design and implement the selected interventions consistent with the final requirements by determining if LEA applicants have included the following information in the application:

- Detailed tasks, timelines, and responsibility for designing and implementing each required and (if applicable) optional activity for the selected interventions.
- Information to connect the tasks, timelines, and responsibility to the school's goals under ACSIP.
- Evidence of participation in technical assistance opportunities from the U.S. Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Education, or technical assistance centers.

The ADE will assess the degree to which intervention design and implementation is consistent with the final requirements through the ACSIP process. This procedure is one with which LEAs and schools are familiar. In addition to ACSIP supervisors the ADE will also use the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) to supervise the implementation of the improvement plan.

If the ADE application for a waiver to extend the funding period to September 30, 2013 is approved, all applicants, regardless of the beginning date of actual implementation will be subject to the September 30, 2013 end of the period of availability of School Improvement Funds. If the ADE application for a waiver to extend the funding period to September 30, 2013 is not approved, applicants may apply separately for a waiver to extend the period of availability of School Improvement Funds to September 30, 2013.

Applicants must fully implement intervention models in the 2010-2011 school year. However, certain model components; as identified in the non-regulatory guidance, such as job-embedded professional development or identifying and rewarding teachers and principals who have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates through effective implementation of a model, will occur later in the process of implementing an intervention model. For example, in the case of rewards for exemplary teachers and administrators, there must be a foundation or baseline for identifying teachers and administrators who have increased achievement and high school graduation rates. While this information may not be available on the first day of the 2010-2011 school year, it will become evident as the school year unfolds.

The ADE recommends peer review of intervention implementation with frequent reporting from the building level administrator to the superintendent; from the superintendent to the local school board; and from the local school board to the peer review committee. A peer review committee would consist of representatives from the following constituent groups:

- Higher education

- Local public school district
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Parent representative (not a school employee or employee spouse)
- Two representatives at large with expertise in grants management or administration

Monitoring of implementation may be formal or informal, on-site or through desk audits, focusing on compliance or geared toward technical assistance, and will be conducted using persons with expertise in relevant areas of teaching, administration, school culture and climate, and finance.

**Requirement 2: Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality.**

ADE will evaluate the LEA’s commitment to recruit, screen and select external providers by assessing, according to the rubric below, the following information contained in the LEA application.

- Identification (or process to identify) of external providers with a history of success in turning around low performing schools using the interventions selected by the applicant.
- Identification (or process to identify) of external providers that can provide a broad range of services and resources, including but not limited to:
  - Curriculum alignment and calibration
  - Evaluating and developing staff
  - Effectively implementing extended learning time
  - Developing the support of community and faith-based organizations
  - Implementing an effective parent or family involvement plan
  - Creating sustained professional development and technical assistance; and
  - Direct services to administrators, faculty and students, including modeling of pedagogical and administrative techniques proven to be effective in settings similar to that of the applicant.

If the LEA chooses to use multiple external providers (CMO, EMO), the range of services and resources can be spread across the selection of providers. No single provider will be required to provide all services, but each of the services should be provided by one or more selected external providers (CMO, EMO).

*The ADE will use the following rubric to determine the extent to which the LEA’s commitment to recruit, screen, and select external provider (CMO, EMO). **A rating of Satisfactory is required for all components.***

**DETERMINING LEA COMMITMENT TO RECRUIT, SCREEN AND SELECT EXTERNAL PROVIDERS (CMO, EMO)**

<i>Limited</i>	<i>Basic</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The roles and responsibilities of the external provider (CMO, EMO), and LEA are unclear, minimally defined or not evident.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is little or no evidence that a range of providers has been researched.</i></li> <li>• <i>The external provider (CMO, EMO), has not shown clear success in turning schools around</i></li> <li>• <i>The LEA has failed to include all the required services and resources in its selection of external providers (CMO, EMO),</i></li> <li>• <i>The LEA does not have a plan for holding the external provider (CMO, EMO), accountable to specific, high standards of performance</i></li> <li>• <i>The timeline for services is unclear, minimally detailed, or missing</i></li> <li>• <i>Roles and responsibilities are unclear, minimally detailed, missing, or place an undue amount of responsibility on the LEA</i></li> <li>• <i>The cost associated with using this external provider (CMO, EMO), are unreasonable or unnecessary costs are included in the budget</i></li> <li>• <i>There is little or no evidence of involvement of parents or other stakeholder groups in the selection of the provider</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The roles and responsibilities of the external provider (CMO, EMO), and LEA are expressed in general terms</i></li> <li>• <i>There is some, but not compelling, evidence that a range of providers has been researched</i></li> <li>• <i>The success of the provider is questionable, or is not relevant</i></li> <li>• <i>Most, but not all of the required services are included in the selection</i></li> <li>• <i>There is a general plan for holding the provider accountable, but the standards are not sufficiently high</i></li> <li>• <i>The timeline is not reasonable or exceeds the timeline for the grant</i></li> <li>• <i>Roles and responsibilities of the LEA are unclear or unreasonable</i></li> <li>• <i>Costs are generally, but not completely reasonable and/or focused on change</i></li> <li>• <i>Parents and other stakeholders have had some involvement in choosing the provider, but their input is not clearly identified</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and reasonable</i></li> <li>• <i>Compelling evidence that a wide range of providers has been researched</i></li> <li>• <i>There is clear and compelling evidence that the provider has been successful in a relevant context or setting</i></li> <li>• <i>All required services are included in the selection of provider(s)</i></li> <li>• <i>There is a specific plan for holding the provider to high standards and consequences for failure to meet those standards are clearly stated</i></li> <li>• <i>The timeline for services is reasonable, within the time frame of the grant</i></li> <li>• <i>The roles and responsibilities of the LEA are clear, and reasonable</i></li> <li>• <i>Costs are reasonable and focused on change</i></li> <li>• <i>Parents and other stakeholders have had significant input into the selection of the provider</i></li> </ul>

**Requirement 3: Align other resources with the interventions.**

The ACSIP serves as the LEA applications for regular federal and state funds. All LEA applications for funds must show how funds will support the overarching plan (i.e. how budgeted activities directly support the LEA's effort to address the needs, goals, objectives, progress targets, and strategies within the overarching plan). Applicants will be required to document how these current-funding streams and resources will be integrated into or aligned with the use of School Improvement Grant funds. Specifically, ACSIP plans will be reflective of the intervention selected by the applicant and the intervention must, reciprocally, be reflective of the priority areas in the LEA's ACSIP plan. Because each LEA has different resources, ADE cannot always specify the other resources and non-federal funds that may be aligned with the interventions.

When the LEA submits the preliminary budget report, (LEA Attachment 5), it will also enter the source of funds and other state and local funds budgeted for each of the intervention models. The three-year budget summary will be reviewed and approved according to the alignment between the interventions outlined and other resources in the school and district.

Assessment of the LEA's commitment to align other resources may include, but will not be limited to:

- Assessing the alignment of other federal, state, and local resources based on evidence-based effectiveness and impact with the design of interventions;
- Assessing the alignment of other federal, state, and local resources with the goals and timelines of the grant (e.g., fiscal personnel, time allotments and scheduling, curriculum, instruction, technology resources and equipment);
- Conducting regularly scheduled reviews of the resource alignment to ensure all area are operating fully and effectively to meet the intended outcomes or making adjustments as necessary; and
- Redirecting resources that are not being used to support the school improvement process.

**Requirement 4: Modify its practices and/or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.**

If modification of practices or policies is necessary for the full and effective implementation of the interventions, then such modification will be required of the LEA. Monitoring of the degree to which modifications are necessary and the degree to which necessary modifications have been implemented will be monitored via one or more of the following: on-site monitoring, desk audits, State Specialty Team visits, and ACSIP.

Documentation of such support could include minutes of local board meetings or other stakeholder meetings along with results of on-site monitoring or desk audits, input from State Specialty Team, and inclusion of changes in an LEA's ACSIP plans.

The LEA will identify the process to review current practices and policies, which support or impede the efforts of the intervention models to include the following:

- The district will review annually the current policies and procedures. This will provide opportunities for public input.
- The district will identify practices related to recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and administrators.
- The district will address and identify practices and policies that include collective bargaining and fair dismissal and re-assignment for Tier I, II and III schools.
- Policies and procedures that provide collaborative and on-going communication between district office and participating schools.
- Identification of alignment of current programs, practices and strategies, which may support or hinder the interventions for Tier I, II and III schools.
- Will review the time structure and format of the instructional day of Tier I, II and III schools.

**Requirement 5: Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.**

The ADE recognizes that a plan for sustainability must be embedded in intervention implementation. Sustainability does not happen at the end of the grant period, but is an integral part of the entire process. Successful applicants will include in their application an identified mechanism for measuring and supporting capacity building of the local school board, central administration and building level administration; and a change in school culture to support the intervention implemented in the school or schools. Such mechanisms must include the use of formative evaluations to drive instruction and support the intervention; and may include differential pay for highly effective teachers. Additionally there is a requirement that sustainability must be addressed within the Implementation Plan.

The ADE will assess the LEA's commitment to sustaining reforms after the funding period ends by reviewing the following documents.

- Process used by the LEA in selecting an intervention model and partners;
- LEA goals and objectives;
- LEA three-Year Budget;
- Developing Profiles of Available Partners
- Selection of External Providers Process
- ACSIP Interventions and Actions
- Implementation of Scholastic Audit Recommendations

In addition to the above information the SEA will also assess the LEA by :

- Sustain the reforms by aligning funds for the continued support of those successful intervention efforts and strategies.
- Monitor targeted changes in practice and student outcomes and make adjustments as needed to meet identified goals.

- Develop an evaluation system that will measure short-term and long-term interventions as well as measure the accountability processes that provide the oversight of the interventions, school improvement activities, financial management, and operations of the school.
- Develop a plan with a timeline of continued implementation of the intervention strategies that are aligned with the resources, school's mission, goals and needs.
- Identify meaningful professional development for staff and administrators as well as demonstrating a commitment to the continuous development of teacher knowledge and skills.
- Develop a process to assure effective training of school staff to ensure the understanding and analyzing data and determining the appropriate program adjustments to drive instructional changes that will ensure student achievement

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

The Arkansas Department of Education will use the following to evaluate LEA's lack of capacity to serve all schools:

1. Is there evidence of past school improvement initiatives? If the answer is yes, what were the LEA's prior improvement, corrective action and restructuring plans? What was the success/failure rate of those initiatives?
2. Asses the commitment of the LEA, school board, school staff and stakeholders to support the selected intervention model.
3. Does the LEA currently have a school improvement specialist? If the answer is yes, has the LEA supported the school improvement specialist efforts?
4. Is there evidence that the LEA has required specific school improvement initiatives of all schools?
5. Examine the LEA's staff organizational model to include the experience and expertise of the staff.
6. The LEA's plan and ability to recruit qualified new staff and provide training to support the selected intervention model at each Tier I school.
7. Review the history of the LEA's use of state and federal funds.
8. How the LEA plans to allocate necessary resources and funds to effectively implement the selected intervention model.
9. A narrative description of current conditions (including barriers) related to the LEA's lack of capacity to serve all schools.

If the SEA determines that an LEA has more capacity than the LEA demonstrates using the above criteria, the SEA will contact the LEA for a consultation to identify ways in which the LEA can manage the intervention and sustainability.

The consultation will include but will not be limited to the following:

1. SEA will review the findings and collaborate with the LEA to determine what support it needs from the SEA.
2. The SEA will offer technical assistance where needed and request written clarification of application and an opportunity for the LEA to amend the application to support the claim.
3. If the LEA chooses not to submit requested clarification or an amended application then the LEA may re-apply for the SIG grant in the next funding cycle.

**D. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: An SEA must include the information set forth below.**

**Requirement 1: Describe the SEA’s process and timeline for approving LEA applications.**

The Arkansas Department of Education released (June 10, 2010) the projected list of Tier I and II schools to the LEA’s and posted a list to the SEA’s website. A commissioner’s memo announcing the grant opportunity and letters of intent were electronically sent to all eligible Tier I and II schools. The Arkansas Department of Education provided a draft LEA electronic application to the eligible districts with an application due date of July 30, 2010. A separate LEA application will be submitted for each eligible school. As soon as the application is approved by USDE, Arkansas will post the final version of the LEA application to its website [www.arkansas.gov](http://www.arkansas.gov).

The SEA provided an application process and review with the State System of Support team. This review provided an opportunity for the State System of Support team members to field questions or concerns as they prepare to provide LEA technical assistance. The State System of Support will provide technical assistance during the window of application and submission.

The SEA will pre-screen applications to determine eligibility and compliance with assurances. The SEA will convene and train a panel of grant peer reviewers to review the applications. Each SIG application will be independently reviewed by a minimum of two reviewers that will score the applications utilizing a scoring rubric to establish which LEA applications are complete and provide all of the required information. Overall scores will be used to prioritize all applications and determine LEA commitment and capacity. If the application does not reach the minimum number of points required the SEA will consult with the LEA to get additional information or amend the grant application to ensure compliance with regulations. Schools will be selected by score and notified after the selection process has been completed. If the rating is acceptable the SEA will work with the LEA to finalize their budget and announce final funding decisions.

With the resubmission of this proposal the LEAs will have only a few months to develop and implement their plan. The ADE is committed and assures that it will implement the timeline as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

<b>ADE APPROVAL TIMELINE:</b>	
<b>Process</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
The SEA will release the projected list of Tier 1, II, and III schools to the LEAs; Announce the grant opportunity through a Commissioner’s Memo; Distribute a letter of intent to apply to all LEAs with Tier I or Tier II schools	July 6, 2010
Offer technical assistance during the window of application submission	Immediately until due date
1. LEA Application Due Date	July 30, 2010
2. Recruit and train grant peer reviewers; Develop review materials packet; (Minimum two reviews for each application)	Immediately until due date
Pre-screen applications to determine eligibility, compliance with assurances	Pre-screen as applications are submitted
Peer review teams will read applications and score. The SEA will consult with LEA to get additional information or amend the grant application to ensure compliance with regulations if needed.  (Notify LEA of the date applications are scheduled for review and request that members of the LEA be available to answer questions by phone)	August 1 – 4, 2010
State Board Agenda Announce final funding decisions LEA receives Notice of Grant Award	August 9, 2010

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

The LEA’s annual measurable goals for reading and mathematics on the Arkansas Benchmark Exam must align with the LEA’s ACSIP priorities, including the annual percentage gains expected based on intervention strategies implemented in the schools for which School Improvement Grant funds are being sought. Each LEA that receives a School Improvement Grant will be monitored relative to its own application. The ADE recognizes that while Tier I schools may look very similar on paper, the school culture, resources and imperatives are often very dissimilar. For that reason, monitoring will be based on fidelity to the plan identified and detailed in the successful grant application, after any required amendments are made.

The following leading indicators will be used to hold schools receiving School Improvement Grant funds accountable:

1. Number of minutes within the school year
2. Student participation rate on State assessments in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup;
3. Dropout rate;
4. Student attendance rate
5. Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., AP/IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes;
6. Discipline incidents
7. Truants
8. Distribution of teachers by performance level on an LEA’s teacher evaluation system; and
9. Teacher attendance rate

Any data not collected must be noted. This data is required to be gathered at the LEA level and reported to the Arkansas Department of Education. LEAs receiving SIG funds must comply with all reporting requirements specified in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Quarterly and annual reports are required. Additional data reporting may be required.

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

The ADE proposes utilizing the expertise of members of the Title I staff, ACSIP, and/or Statewide Support Teams identified in Arkansas’s Smart Accountability System to conduct six-month on-site technical visits during the grant-funding period. The on-site technical visits will assess the degree

to which LEAs have met their annual goals for student achievement for its Tier I and Tier II schools. Grant recipients will receive a written report identifying areas of strength/success and weakness/concerns and will include recommendations for increasing success.

Each LEA receiving SIG funds for Tier I and Tier II schools must annually report on the progress of meeting its goals. ADE will review required reports on an annual basis to determine if the LEAs School Improvement Grant requires revision. The LEA must demonstrate progress with appropriate increases (e.g., increased the percentage of students that are proficient on state reading assessments), or appropriate decreases (e.g., decreased the total number of tardies in grade 6) on each measurable objective described in its application. Progress on locally established goals and objectives will be reported to ADE in June of each year of funding. Student outcomes will be reviewed after state assessments are administered on an annual basis. For LEAs with schools not meeting annual goals as described in the initial application, the LEA must revise the implementation plan outlining specific steps that will be taken to ensure the success of selected interventions. Revisions and budget amendments along with annual progress reports will be reviewed to determine if the LEAs SIG funds will be renewed.

If the LEA fails to meet its goals and make progress on the indicators, the ADE reserves the right to mandate that the LEA take specific steps to meet its goals. The LEA must submit a written plan to the ADE with a reasonable, amended timeline and the identification of barriers that led to its not meeting its goal(s) in the time frame set out in the approved application. If an LEA refuses to take the mandated steps in a specific school, the ADE reserves the right to refuse to renew the grant funding for that school. If an LEA refuses to take the steps mandated across all schools receiving funding, the ADE reserves the right to refuse to renew grant funding for the LEA as a whole.

All LEAs with Tier I schools receiving SIG funds will be monitored annually beginning the first year of receiving the SIG grant.

In addition to monitoring to assess fidelity to the intervention model, strategic plan, and budget proposed in the application, ADE will assess the degree to which timely, complete, and accurate data is collected and used to make decisions about school operations

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

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that it will do the following:

- ✓ Comply with the final requirements and ensure that each LEA carries out its responsibilities.
- ✓ 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 that the SEA approves the LEA to serve.
- ✓ Apportion its school improvement funds in order to make grants to LEAs, as applicable, that are renewable for the length of the period of availability, taking into account any waivers that may have been requested and received by the SEA or an individual LEA to extend the period of availability.
- ✓ Carry over 25 percent of its FY 2009 school improvement funds, combine those funds with FY 2010 school improvement funds, and award those funds to eligible LEAs consistent with the final requirements if not every Tier I school in the State receives FY 2009 school improvement funds to implement a school improvement model in the 2010-2011 school year (unless the SEA does not have sufficient school improvement funds to serve every Tier I school in the State).
- ✓ Ensure if the SEA is participating in the Department's differentiated accountability pilot, that its LEAs will use school improvement funds consistent with the final requirements.
- ✓ Monitor each LEA's implementation of the interventions supported with school improvement funds.
- ✓ To the extent a Tier I or Tier II school implementing the restart model becomes a charter school LEA, hold the charter school operator or charter management organization accountable, or ensure that the charter school authorizer holds the respective entity accountable, for meeting the final requirements.
- ✓ Post on its Web site, within 30 days of awarding School Improvement Grants, all final LEA applications and a summary of the grants that includes the following information: name and NCES identification number of each LEA awarded a grant; amount of the 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.
- ✓ Report the specific school-level data required in section III of the final requirements.

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

The ADE will use the five percent set aside from the School Improvement Grant to support regular administrative costs including accounting and governance of the grant; to secure an outside evaluator to evaluate the impact of the grant on LEAs and schools and the alignment of this grant with other federal grants currently operating in Arkansas, and to support the technical assistance required to implement, monitor, evaluate, and sustain the activities resulting from the implementation of interventions at the school and LEA level.

The Arkansas Department of Education anticipates using SIG funds to support a position(s) whose function is to oversee the implementation of SIG in LEAs that have successfully applied for the funds. It is anticipated that between 1.5 FTE and 3.0 FTE personnel will be hired to fulfill these functions.

Personnel will conduct activities related to finance, administration, evaluation, and technical assistance. They may also provide guidance in the review of external providers, budget development, carrying out the strategic plan, developing capacity, planning professional development, and recruiting and retaining highly qualified personnel.

These individuals will also liaison between the ADE and the standing Committee of Practitioners and other stakeholder groups, and the ADE personnel involved in oversight of any other federal or state funds that can be used to support and sustain the activities and goals of the School Improvement Grant Fund.

Additionally, these personnel will collect data to monitor the intervention implementation; effectiveness of teaching strategies and the climate and culture of the school; seek feedback from parents, students, and other stakeholder groups; improvement on the leading indicators; the basis for staff decisions (skills, qualifications, and experience as well as placement of teachers); and progress toward increased flexibility of operations.

***G. CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS: An SEA must consult with its Committee of Practitioners and is encouraged to consult with other stakeholders regarding its application for a School Improvement Grant.***

Sign-in-Sheets and minutes from the January 15, 2010 Committee of Practitioners meeting are attached. ***See attachment 4***

**H. WAIVERS: The final requirements invite an SEA to request waivers of the requirements set forth below. An SEA must list in its application those requirements for which it is seeking a waiver.**

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

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

- ✓ Waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2013.
- ✓ Waive section 1116(b) (12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Tier I and Tier II Title I participating schools that will implement a turnaround or restart model to "start over" in the school improvement timeline.
- ✓ 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.

The State assures that it will ensure that any LEA that chooses to implement one or more of these waivers will comply with section II.A.8 of the final requirements.

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

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

The State assures that, if it is granted one or more of the waivers requested above, 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, including which specific waivers each LEA is implementing.

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# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**LEA APPLICATION FOR  
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDS  
TITLE I, SECTION 1003(g)**

## **Overview:**

The School Improvement Grants (SIG) program is authorized by section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Under section 1003(g)(1) of the ESEA, the Secretary must “award grants to States to enable the States to provide subgrants to local educational agencies for the purpose of providing assistance for school improvement consistent with section 1116.” From a grant received pursuant to that provision, a State educational agency (SEA) must subgrant at least 95 percent of the funds it receives to its local educational agencies (LEAs) for school improvement activities. In awarding such subgrants, an SEA must “give priority to the local educational agencies with the lowest-achieving schools that demonstrate — (A) the greatest need for such funds; and (B) the strongest commitment to ensuring that such funds are used to provide adequate resources to enable the lowest-achieving schools to meet the goals under school and local educational improvement, corrective action, and restructuring plans under section 1116.” The regulatory requirements expand upon these provisions, further defining LEAs with the “greatest need” for SIG funds and the “strongest commitment” to ensuring that such funds are used to raise substantially student achievement in the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the State.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 16, 2009, included two critical changes to the SIG program. First, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 allows SEAs and LEAs to use SIG funds to serve certain “newly eligible” schools (*i.e.*, certain low-achieving schools that are not Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring). Second, the law increases the amount that an SEA may award for each school participating in the SIG program from \$500,000 annually to \$2 million annually.

The final requirements for the SIG program, set forth in 74 FR 65618 (Dec. 10, 2009), and amended by the interim final requirements, set forth in 75 FR xxxxx (Jan. 21, 2010) (final requirements), implement both the requirements of section 1003(g) of the ESEA and the flexibilities for the SIG program provided through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010. The purpose of this document is to provide assistance to SEAs, LEAs, and schools in implementing the final requirements. The Department may supplement this document with additional guidance in the future.

In the Tier I and Tier II schools an LEA chooses to serve, the LEA must implement one of four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model.

### ***LEA Eligibility***

Eligible applicants are LEAs that receives Title I, Part A funds and that has one or more Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III schools. Note that an LEA that is in improvement and does not have any Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III schools is not eligible to receive SIG funds.

### ***Allocations***

An SEA must award a School Improvement Grant to an LEA in an amount that is of sufficient size and scope to support the activities required under section 1116 of the ESEA and these requirements. The LEA’s total grant may not be less than \$50,000 per school for each of the three years (unless a shorter time period is needed) or more than \$2,000,000 per year for a three year period for each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school that the LEA commits to serve. If an SEA does not have sufficient SIG funds to support fully and effectively each school for which its LEAs have applied throughout the period of availability, an SEA must give priority to LEAs seeking to fund Tier I or Tier II schools.

### ***Budget and Accounting***

School Improvement Grant 1003(g) funds can supplement, but they **cannot be used to replace existing funding or services**. School Improvement funds are awarded for individual schools, and must be accounted for at the individual school level. *These funds must be tracked separately* from the Title I, Part A Basic Grant and the other Title I School Improvement funds distributed by formula under Section 1003(a).

### **Application Elements:**

**Section A-1: LEA Contact Information and Certification:** Complete Section A-1, LEA and school contact information. The local board of education’s authorized representative and superintendent (if not the authorized representative) are required to sign the grant application.

**Section A-2: Schools to be Served:** ADE will provide the LEAs with a list of the schools that are eligible to be served in Tiers I, II, and III. The LEA will indicate in the application which schools it intends to serve and which interventions it plans to implement.

**Section B: Descriptive Information:** Section “B” allows the LEA to explain the areas of need in each Title I school to be served, in regards to improving student achievement; determine capacity to serve each school; develop appropriate actions, goals and timelines to address the selected interventions and show how the LEA involves stakeholders and the community. Please provide information in Section B that details the LEAs plans for serving schools in Tiers I and Tier II. The information should be detailed enough for the grant peer reviewers to determine how the LEA has made decisions and how it plans to implement interventions and improvement activities in each school it commits to serve. This section has eight parts

1. Section B, Part 1 – Needs Assessment
2. Section B, Part 2 - LEA Capacity.
3. Section B, Part 3 – Annual Goals
4. Section B, Part 4 – Proposed Activities
5. Section B, Part 5 – Timeline
6. Section B, Part 6-7 – Services for Tier III Schools
7. Section B, Part 8 – LEA Consultation

**Section C: Budget:** Budgets for LEA and school activities should be submitted with enough detail for the application peer reviewers to determine the direct alignment of the needs analysis, to the plans, and to the budget. Budgets are required to detail all available resources that will be used to operate the Tier I and II schools the LEA commits to serve. The budget shall reflect the LEA-level activities to support the interventions and improvement activities in each school.

**Section D: Waivers:** 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.

**Section E: Assurances:** The local board of education’s authorized representative and superintendent (if not the authorized representative) are required to sign the grant application. The following leading indicators are included in the Statement of Assurance and will be used to hold schools receiving SIG funds accountable.

The following metrics constitute the leading indicators for the SIG program:

- (1) Number of minutes within the school year;
- (2) Student participation rate on State assessments in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup;
- (3) Dropout rate;
- (4) Student attendance rate;
- (5) Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., AP/IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes;
- (6) Discipline incidents;
- (7) Truants;
- (8) Distribution of teachers by performance level on an LEA’s teacher evaluation system; and
- (9) Teacher attendance rate.

Any data not collected must be noted. This data is required to be gathered at the LEA level and reported to the Arkansas Department of Education. LEAs receiving SIG funds must comply with all reporting requirements specified in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Quarterly and annual reports are required. Additional data reporting may be required.

**Suggested LEA Teams:**

The Leadership Team should be large enough to get diverse perspectives on LEA efforts, yet small enough to ensure that the team can meet regularly to complete the analysis. It is recommended that the team is comprised of a cross section of LEA and school staff involved in LEA and school improvement, professional development, special education, pupil services, fiscal management, testing and data analysis, curriculum and instruction, union representation, parents, other community stakeholders and the superintendent. Additionally, it is important to involve school teams—with the current school leader, staff, parents, and others who have a large stake in each school’s success.

**ADE Approval Process:**

**The steps in the approval process are:**

**Table 1**

Process	Timeline
<p>The SEA will release the projected list of Tier 1, II, and III schools to the LEAs.</p> <p>Announce the grant opportunity through a Commissioner’s Memo</p> <p>Distribute a letter of intent to apply to all LEAs with Tier I or Tier II schools</p>	<p>July 6, 2010</p>
<p>Offer technical assistance during the window or application submission</p>	<p>Immediately until due date</p>
<p>1. LEA Application Due Date</p>	<p>July 30, 2010</p>
<p>2. Recruit and train grant peer reviewers (minimum two reviews for each application) Develop review materials packet</p>	<p>Immediately until due date</p>
<p>Pre-screen applications to determine eligibility, compliance with assurances</p>	<p>Pre-screen as applications are submitted</p>
<p>Peer review teams will read applications and score</p> <p>The SEA will consult with LEA to get additional information or amend the grant application to ensure compliance with regulations if needed.</p> <p>(Notify LEA of the date applications are scheduled for review and request that members of the LEA be available to answer questions by phone)</p>	<p>August 1 – 4, 2010</p>
<p>Announce final funding decisions LEA receives Notice of Grant Award</p>	<p>August 6, 2010</p>
<p>Board Agenda and post notice</p>	<p>August 9, 2010</p>

**LEA APPLICATION FOR  
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDS  
SIG ARRA 1003(g)**

**SECTION A -1: LEA Contact Information and Certification**

<b>LEA Name:</b>	
<b>Mailing Address (Street, P.O. Box, City/Zip)</b>	<b>Starting Date</b>
<b>Name, title and phone number of authorized contact person:</b>	<b>Ending Date</b>
<b>Amount of funds requested:</b>	<b>Number of schools to be served: _____</b>

I HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct. The applicant designated below hereby applies for a subgrant of Federal funds to provide instructional activities and services as set forth in this application. The local board has authorized me to file this application and such action is recorded in the minutes of the agency's meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date).

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent of Schools

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

AND

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Designated Board Representative

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Both signatures required ONLY if the Superintendent is not the Designated Board Representative*

<b>ADE USE ONLY</b>	
Date Received: _____	Obligation Amount: _____
Reviewer Signature: _____	Approval Date: _____
Reviewer Signature: _____	Approval Date: _____

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**SECTION A -2: Schools to be Served**

**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.**

Using the list of Tier I, II and III schools provided by ADE, complete the information below, for all Tier I and II schools the LEA will serve. The Intervention Model must be based on the “School Needs Assessment” data.

Prior to selecting an Intervention Model, the LEA must complete all of section B.

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID#	Grade Span	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	INTERVENTION (TIER I AND II ONLY)			
						Turnaround	Restart	Closure	Transformation

Note: An LEA that has nine or more Tier I and Tier II schools may not implement the transformation model in more than 50 percent of those schools.

**SECTION B, PART 1:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Needs Assessment**

*Complete steps 1 and 2, Develop a Profile of the School's Context and Performance. Please develop a profile for each school to be served. (Items in this section have been adapted from Selecting the Intervention Model and Partners/Providers for a Low-Achieving School A Decision-Making and Planning Tool for the Local Education Agency, Center on Innovation & Improvement.)*

**Step 1 - Develop a Profile of the School's Context**

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LEA #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Context**

- 1. Grade levels (e.g., 9-12): \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Total Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. % Free/Reduced Lunch: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. % Special Education Students: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. % English Language Learners: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Home Languages of English Language Learners (list up to 3 most frequent):

7. Briefly describe the school's catchment or enrollment area (neighborhoods, communities served):

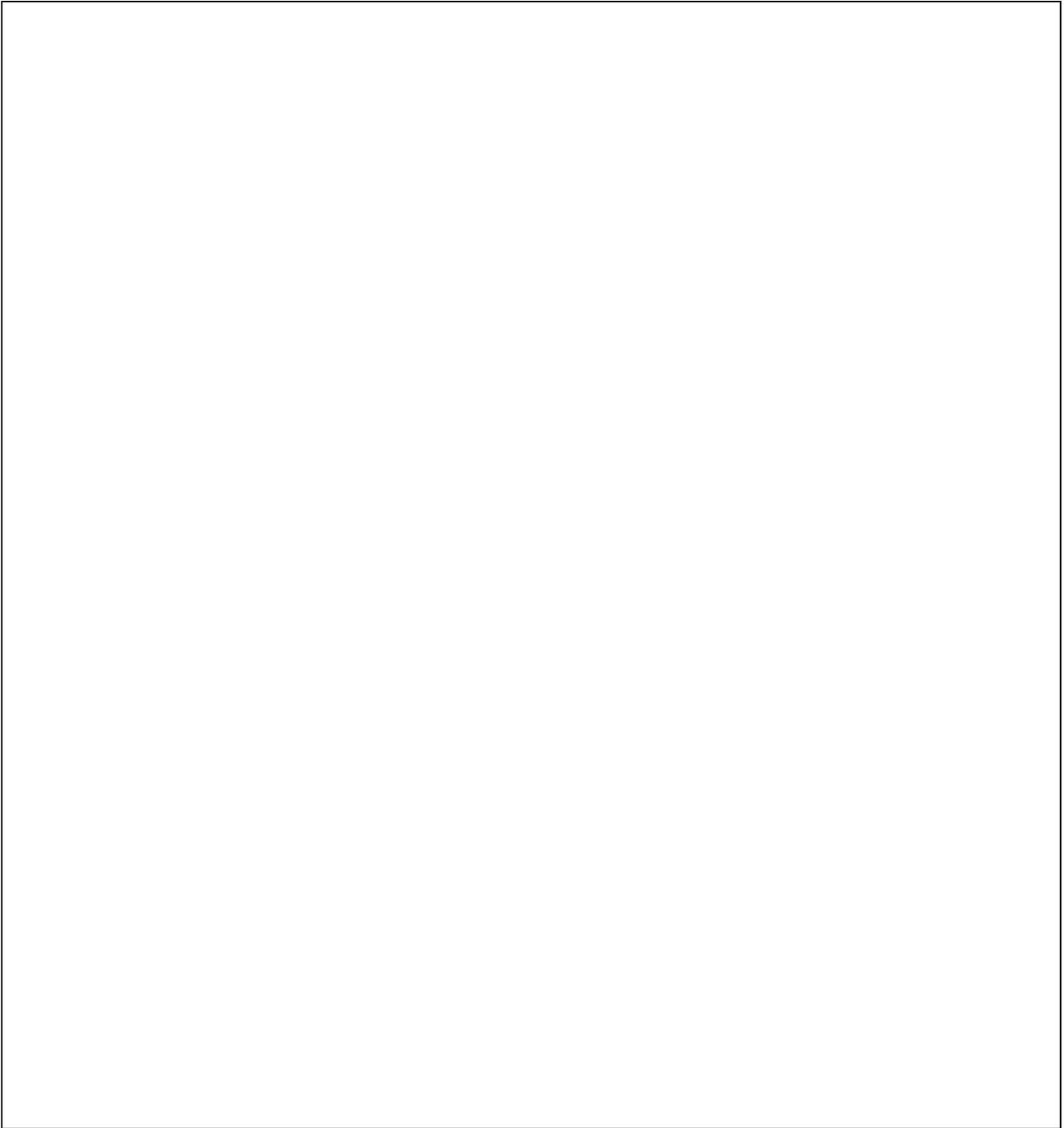
8. List the feeder schools and/or recipient schools that supply or receive **most** of this school's students:

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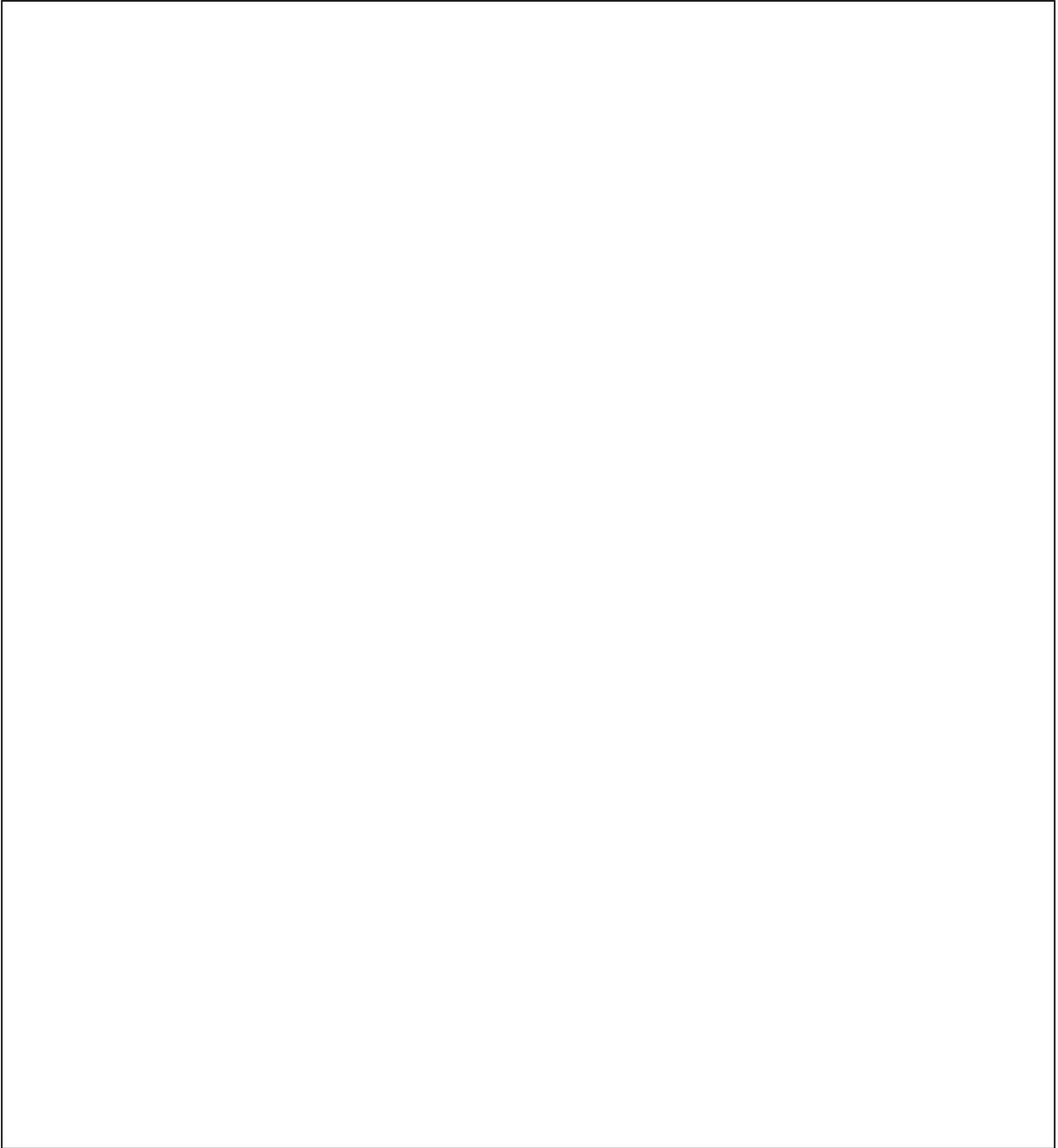
9. Briefly describe the background and core competencies of the school's current key administrators and indicate the number of years they have held the position and the number of years they have been employed in the school and LEA.

Position	Background and Core Competencies	Years in Position	Years in School	Years in LEA

10. Describe how administrators are evaluated. By whom? How frequently? What is the process?



11. Give a brief summary profile of the teaching staff and summarize the process by which teachers are evaluated. By whom? How frequently?



12. Briefly describe previous and current reform and improvement efforts, within the last 5 years.

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**Step 2 - Develop a Profile of the School's Performance**

1. Enter the percentage of all students who tested as proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available.

Subject	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Reading/Language/English					
Mathematics					
Science					
Social Studies					
Writing					

2. Student analysis from the past **3 years** - enter the percentage of students in each subgroup who tested proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available.

Test Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	White, non-Hispanic			Black, non-Hispanic			Hispanic			Other Ethnic			Special Education		
	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
Reading/Languag/English															
Mathematics															
Science															
Social Studies															
Writing															

3. Student analysis from the past **3 years** - enter the percentage of students at each grade level in this school who tested proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available.

Test Year: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Subject</b>	<b>3rd Gr.</b>	<b>4th Gr.</b>	<b>5th Gr,</b>	<b>6th Gr.</b>	<b>7th Gr.</b>	<b>8th Gr.</b>	<b>9th Gr.</b>	<b>10th Gr.</b>	<b>11th Gr.</b>	<b>12th Gr.</b>
Reading/Language/English										
Mathematics										
Science										
Social Studies										
Writing										
Other										

Test Year: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Subject</b>	<b>3rd Gr.</b>	<b>4th Gr.</b>	<b>5th Gr,</b>	<b>6th Gr.</b>	<b>7th Gr.</b>	<b>8th Gr.</b>	<b>9th Gr.</b>	<b>10th Gr.</b>	<b>11th Gr.</b>	<b>12th Gr.</b>
Reading/Language/English										
Mathematics										
Science										
Social Studies										
Writing										
Other										

Test Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	3rd Gr.	4th Gr.	5th Gr.	6th Gr.	7th Gr.	8th Gr.	9th Gr.	10th Gr.	11th Gr.	12th Gr.
Reading/Language/English										
Mathematics										
Science										
Social Studies										
Writing										
Other										

4. Average daily attendance percentage for last complete school year: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mobility rate for last complete school year: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Graduation rate for all students for most recent year: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

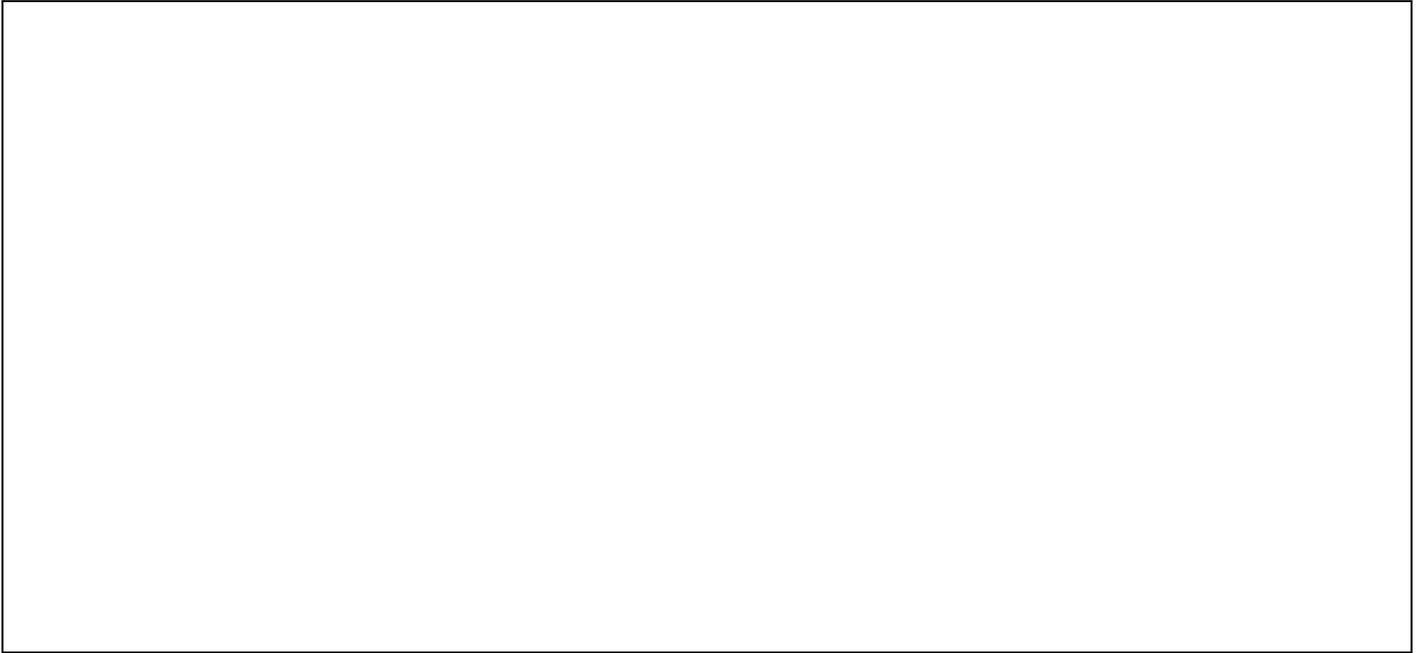
7. Graduation rate percentage for past **3 years**: (high schools only)

	All Students	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other Ethnic	Special Education
2010						
2009						
2008						

**Key Questions**

1. Which students are experiencing the lowest achievement?

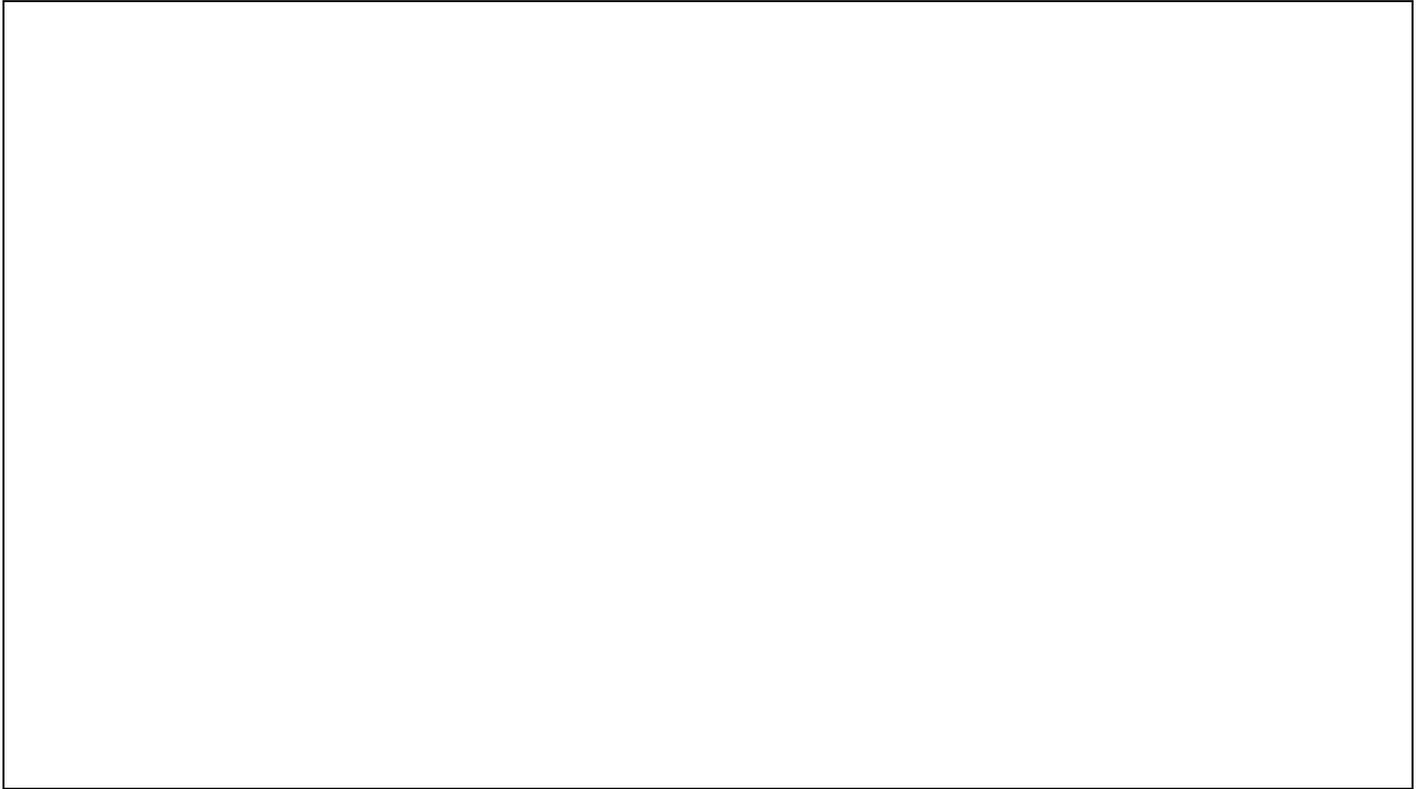
2. Which students are experiencing the lowest graduation rates?



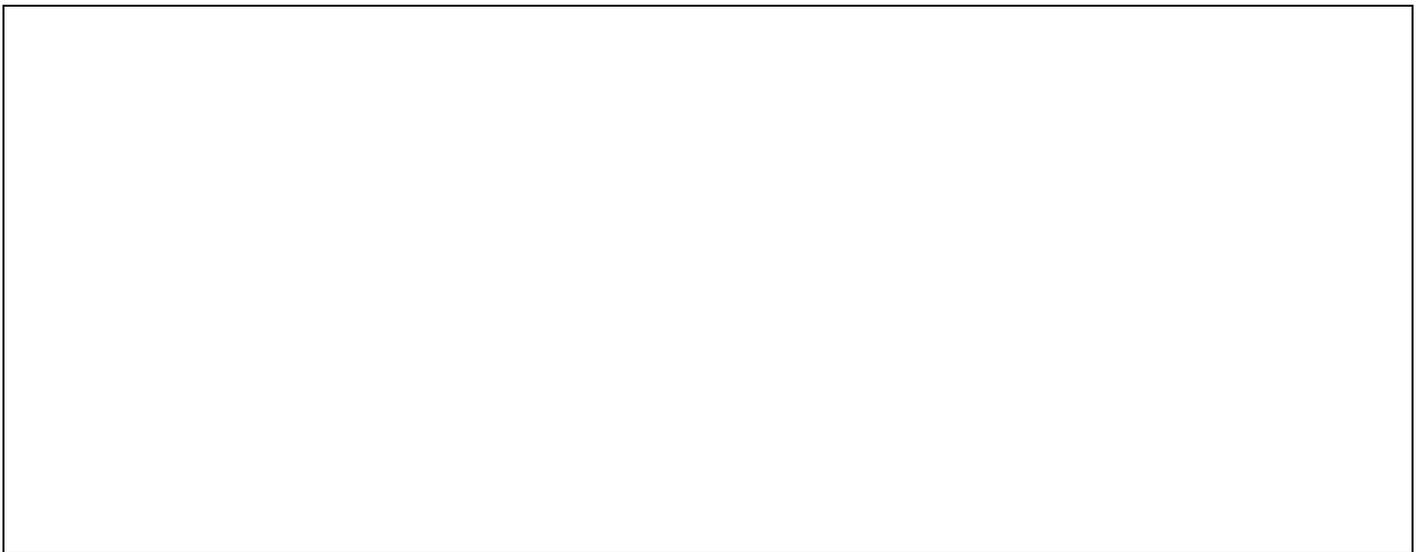
3. In which subjects are students experiencing the lowest achievement?



4. What characteristics of the student demographics should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners and/or providers?



5. What, if any, characteristics of the enrollment areas of the school should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners and/or providers?



**Step 3-B: Review of ADE Scholastic Audit and other School Data**

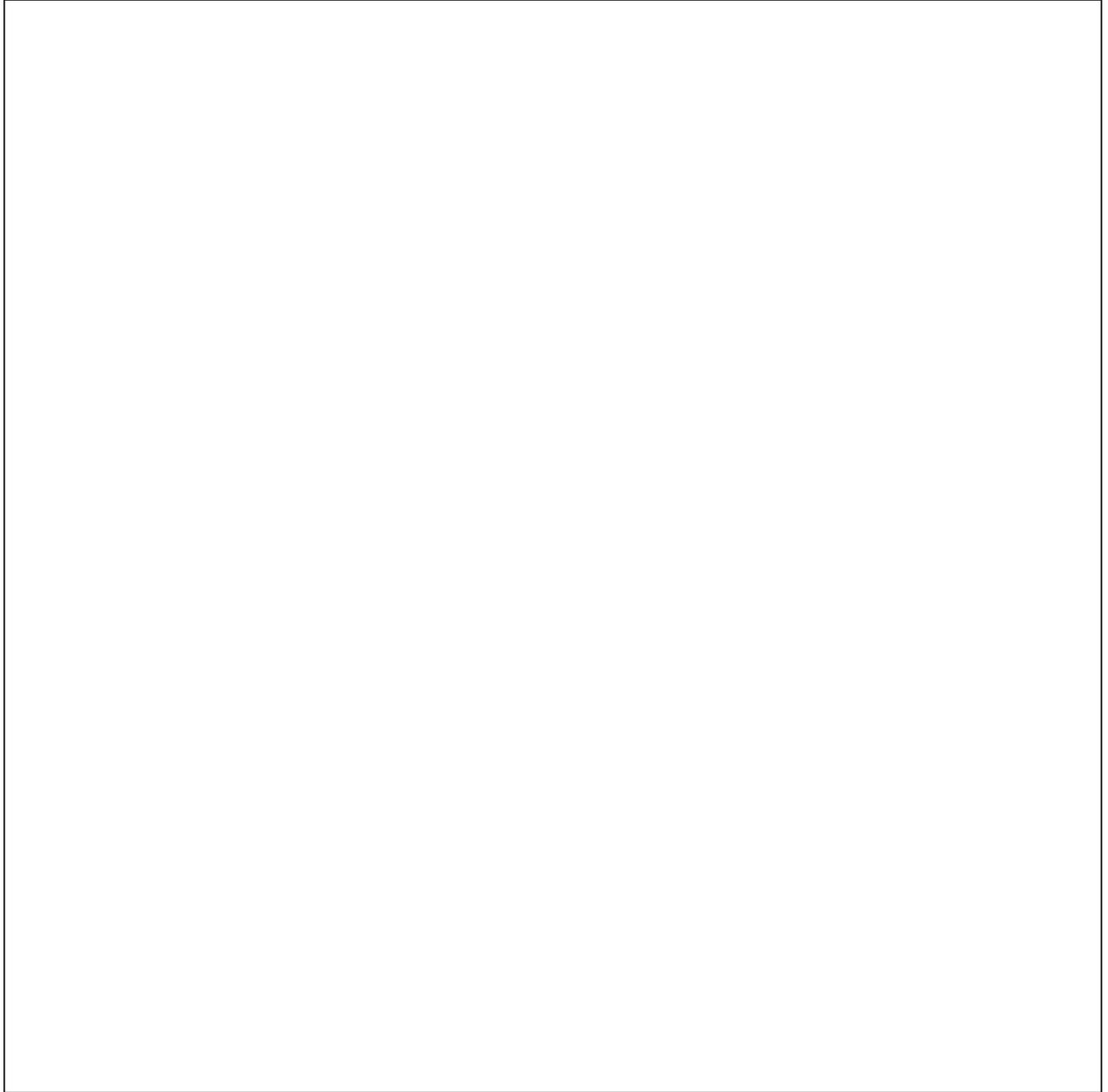
1. Provide a detailed summary of the schools progress relative to the Arkansas Standards and Indicators for School Improvement, (ADE Scholastic Audit):

- Discuss the specific findings that led to the “Recommendations”;
- LEA (Leadership) and/or school “Recommendations” identified for implementation;
- Implementation progress;
- Timeline of prioritized “Recommendations” and the
- Evaluation process.

The LEA level must address how the LEA will support the building in providing continuous school improvement at the building level. Additionally, the LEA will specifically address those items unique to the role of the LEA (i.e., board policy, supervising and guiding building level leadership).

The school must address those items unique to the roles and responsibilities of the school for providing continuous school improvement.

2. Provide a summary of other data sources used to supplement the needs assessment and the selection of an appropriate intervention model for each Tier I and Tier II school. (i.e. perceptual data from students, staff and parents, process data, improvement plan outcomes or results, professional development program outcomes or results, other).



**SECTION B, PART 2:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: LEA Capacity**

**Step 4-B: Determining Capacity – Self Assessment**

Review the followings attachments: Read and discuss the Elements of Intervention Models. Discuss as a team any statutes, policies or issues that may support or limit a particular intervention model. **Complete worksheets 1 – 5.**

1. Elements of Intervention Models, (Attachment # 1)
2. Develop Profiles of Available Intervention Models, (Capacity Worksheet # 1)
3. Develop Profiles of Available Partners, (Capacity Worksheet # 2)
4. Determine Best-Fit Model and Partners, Parts 1 & 2, (Capacity Worksheet # 3)
5. Define Roles and Develop Contracts, (Capacity Worksheet # 4)
6. Forge Working Relationships, (Capacity Worksheet # 5)

**Step 5-B: Statement of Need and Lack of Capacity to Serve**

The LEA Review team must thoroughly review the Needs Assessment Data, Scholastic Audit Findings and Recommendations, Elements of the Four Intervention Models and LEA Capacity Data and make a determination as to the intervention model most likely to generate success for each school it selects to serve. The statement of need must:

- Include the process the LEA utilized to complete the Needs Assessment;
- explain how the performance data informed the selection of an intervention model for each school;
- describe how the district analyzed the audit results and determined the resources and related support;
- identify multiple funding sources;
- identify school improvement efforts over the last 5 years;
- commitment of partners and stakeholders.
- a list of review team members and their positions.

Enter the selected intervention models in **Section A-2**. If the LEA has selected the Turnaround and/or Transformation models, explain how the LEA will assist schools in fulfilling the required activities for each school.

If the LEA is choosing NOT to serve each Tier I school, please provide a detailed explanation

indicating why the LEA has determined that it does not have the capacity to serve those schools. (Describe any key policies, processes, weaknesses, or issues that impact the lack of capacity.)

An LEA might demonstrate that it lacks sufficient capacity to serve one or more of its Tier I schools by documenting efforts such as its unsuccessful attempts to recruit a sufficient number of new principals to implement the turnaround or transformation model; the unavailability of CMOs or EMOs willing to restart schools in the LEA; or its intent to serve Tier II schools instead of all its Tier I schools (see H-9 – Non Regulatory Guidance). An LEA may not demonstrate that it lacks capacity to serve one or more of its Tier I schools based on its intent to serve Tier III schools. **Attach a separate sheet.**

**SECTION B, PART 3:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Annual Goals**

Describe the annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that the LEA has established in order to monitor its Tier I and Tier II schools that receive school improvement funds. Include other annual goals of the project – graduation rate/interim assessments , steps or procedures that will be taken to support systematic change, and how you will evaluate your progress in achieving your goals and objectives. Goals must be specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, and time- bound. Annual goals that an LEA could set might include making at least one year’s progress in reading/language arts and mathematics or reducing the percentage of students who are non-proficient on the State’s reading/language arts and mathematics assessments by 10 percent or more from the prior year; or meeting the goals the State. Note that the determination of whether a school meets the goals for student achievement established by the LEA is in addition to the determination of whether the school makes AYP as required by section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.

The LEA and school must support its annual goals for student achievement with its current Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP) priorities and actions. The ADE anticipates that applicants must update or otherwise adjust its ACSIP to accommodate rapid transformation and too secure the input of new leadership that may come into the LEA.

**Attachment 2**

**SECTION B, PART 4:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Proposed Activities**

Based on the data review and intervention model selected; provide a detailed description of actions the LEA has taken, or will take, to ensure the school receives ongoing technical assistance and support. Include **information** and **evidence** for the following areas: 1. Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements; 2. Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable to ensure their quality; 3. Align other resources with the interventions; 4. Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions

fully and effectively; and 5. Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends. **Attach a separate sheet and describe in narrative form.**

- Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements (i.e., strategies for implementation, funding for each strategy, timelines for each strategy, evaluation process, responsible staff member(s), process for LEA oversight).
- Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality (i.e., LEA request for proposals, memorandum(s) of understanding, provider contracts, and evaluation procedures – see attachment 8).
- Align other resources with the interventions (i.e., Local, State and Federal funding sources, Educational partnerships (Universities/Cooperatives/ERZ/STEM), other community and educational resources).
- Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively (i.e. LEA policies and practices that have or will be modified, possible impact of any changes, contractual agreements).
- Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends (i.e. ADE support, Stakeholder and Community Support). SIG funds provide LEAs with funding to implement and support selected interventions for the first three years. The expectation is that LEAs will develop plans to sustain reform efforts beyond these years. Describe how reform efforts will be sustained beyond year three.

**SECTION B, PART 5:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Timeline**

Provide a timeline indicating the steps the LEA will take to implement the basic elements of the selected intervention model for each Tier I and Tier II school being served. **Attachment 3**

**SECTION B, PART 6 – 7:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Services for Tier III schools**

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. Describe the goals and establish a timeline, in order to hold accountable each Tier III school that receives funds. For example, the LEA might establish for its Tier III schools the same student achievement goals that it establishes for its Tier I and Tier II schools, or it might establish for its Tier III schools goals that align with the already existing AYP requirements, such as meeting the State’s annual measurable objectives or making

AYP through safe harbor. Note that the goals that the LEA establishes must be approved by ADE. These services must be provided by the LEA, or with the approval of the LEA, or by other external providers. **Attachment 4**

**SECTION B, PART 8:**

**B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: LEA Consultation**

Describe how the LEA consulted with relevant stakeholders, including the local board, and personnel associations, regarding the LEAs application and implementation of school improvement model(s) in its Tier I and Tier II schools. Please provide copies of agendas, minutes, sign-in-sheets , letters of support or other documentation that such consultation has occurred. This response will be reviewed in conjunction with worksheet # 5 – Forge Working Relationships. **Attach a separate sheet.**

**SECTION C:**

**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 and Tier II school it commits to serve.**

The LEA must provide a budget (**see attachments 5-7**) that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year to –

- Implement the selected model in each Tier I and Tier II school it commits to serve
- Conduct LEA-level activities designed to support implementation of the selected school intervention models in the LEA’s Tier I and Tier II schools; and
- Support school improvement activities, at the school or LEA level, for each Tier III school identified in the LEA’s application.

A preliminary 3-year budget is required for each school competing for SIG funds. Please estimate the amount of funds that will be needed to implement and support the various requirements of the intervention model selected. The minimum annual amount per school is \$50,000 and the maximum annual amount per school is \$2,000,000.

A budget justification narrative must accompany the budget for each Tier I or Tier II school for which funding is sought. The application will not be considered without the budget justification narrative.

**Complete a three-year budget for the LEA and each school selected for services .**

**SECTION D:**

**D. WAIVERS: If the SEA 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.

- Extending the period of availability of school improvement funds.

Note: If an SEA has requested and received a waiver of the period of availability of school improvement funds, that waiver automatically applies to all LEAs in the State.

**The Arkansas Department of Education has requested a waiver to extend the period of availability of school improvement funds to September 30, 2013.**

**Applicants must indicate which, if any, of the waivers below it intends to implement.**

- "Starting over" in the school improvement timeline for Tier I schools implementing a turnaround or restart model.
- Implementing a schoolwide program in a Tier I school that does not meet the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold.

Note: If an SEA has not requested and received a waiver of any of these requirements, an LEA may submit a request to the Secretary.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES**

***SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDS - TITLE I, PART 1 SECTION 1003(g)***

By the signature of the Superintendent of \_\_\_\_\_

(district) the LEA assures that it will –

1. Use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II 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 that it serves with school improvement funds;
3. If it implements a restart model in a Tier I or Tier II school, include in its contract or agreement terms and provisions to hold the charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization accountable for complying with the final requirements;  
and
4. Report to the SEA the school-level data required under section III of the final requirements.

Applicants receiving funding under the School Improvement Grant program must report to the ADE the following school-level data:

1. Number of minutes within the school year;
2. Student participation rate on State assessments in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup;
3. Dropout rate;
4. Student attendance rate;
5. Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., AP/IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes;
6. Discipline incidents,
7. Truants,
8. Distribution of teachers by performance level on an LEA’s teacher evaluation system;  
and
9. Teacher attendance rate.

This data must be collected and reported at least annually. Data in items 2 through 7 must be disaggregated to the student subgroup level for each school within an LEA, with results for schools receiving School Improvement Funds reported in contrast to results for each other school within the LEA. Data for item 1 must be disaggregated to the grade level for each school within the LEA and reported in contrast to results for each other school within the LEA. Data for items 8 and 9 must be disaggregated to the individual teacher level for all teachers in schools receiving School Improvement Grant funding, and reported in contrast to results for each other school within the LEA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent’s Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## LEA Application Checklist - SIG ARRA

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ LEA #: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION A -1

#### General Information

\_\_\_\_\_ LEA Contact Information and Certification

### SECTION A-2

#### Schools to be Served

\_\_\_\_\_ Selection of Identified Schools

\_\_\_\_\_ Identification of Intervention Models

### SECTION B, PART 1

#### Needs Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ Develop a Profile of the School's Contest

\_\_\_\_\_ Develop a Profile of the School's Performance

### SECTION B, PART 2

#### LEA Capacity

\_\_\_\_\_ Determining Capacity – Self Assessment (Include Attachments)

\_\_\_\_\_ Statement of Need and Lack of Capacity to Serve

### SECTION B, PART 3

\_\_\_\_\_ Annual Goals

### SECTION B, PART 4

\_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Activities

### SECTION B, PART 5

\_\_\_\_\_ Timeline

### SECTION B, PART 6 – 7

\_\_\_\_\_ Services for Tier III Schools

### SECTION B, PART 8

\_\_\_\_\_ LEA Consultation

### SECTION C

\_\_\_\_\_ Budget

### SECTION D

\_\_\_\_\_ Waiver

## Additional Resources

The following is a series of resources, which might be accessed to support writing for ARRA SIG funds.

[http://www.scholastic.com/economicrecovery/pdfs/school\\_improvement\\_funds-ARRA.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/economicrecovery/pdfs/school_improvement_funds-ARRA.pdf)

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/faq.html>

<<http://www.centerii.org>>.

<http://www.centeroninstruction.org>

[http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document\\_ext.showDocumentByID](http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document_ext.showDocumentByID) <[http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document\\_ext.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=300](http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document_ext.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=300)>

&nodeID=1&DocumentID=300 <[http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document\\_ext.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=300](http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document_ext.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=300)>

## Reading Research Links

### National Reading Panel

Publications

<http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/publications.htm>

### Center on Instruction

[http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=&grade\\_start=&grade\\_end](http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=&grade_start=&grade_end)

### Learning Point Associates

Focus on Adolescent Literacy instruction

<http://www.learningpt.org/literacy/adolescent/instruction.php>

### International Reading Association

Adolescent Literacy focus

[http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/focus\\_adolescent.html](http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/focus_adolescent.html)

### The National Council of Teachers of English

*A Research Brief on Adolescent Literacy* available at

<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/PolicyResearch/AdollitResearchBrief.pdf>

### Council of Chief State School Officers

Adolescent Literacy toolkit available at

[http://www.ccsso.org/projects/secondary\\_school\\_redesign/Adolescent\\_Literacy\\_Toolkit/](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/secondary_school_redesign/Adolescent_Literacy_Toolkit/)

*Content Area Literacy Guide available at*

[http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/FINAL%20CCSSO%20CONTENT%20AREA%20LITERACY%20GUIDE\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/FINAL%20CCSSO%20CONTENT%20AREA%20LITERACY%20GUIDE_FINAL.pdf)

**Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC)**

Adolescent Literacy toolkit available at

<http://www.arcc.edvantia.org/resources.php?toolkit=63>

**The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance**

*Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classrooms and Intervention Practices available at*

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/adlit\\_pg\\_082608.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/adlit_pg_082608.pdf)

*Literacy Issues in Secondary Education: An Annotated Bibliography* compiled by Donna Alvermann, University of Georgia, available at

<http://www.tcdsb.org/library/Professional%20Library/AnBiblioProf.html>