

School Improvement Grants Application

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

Fiscal Year 2010

CFDA Number: 84.377A

State Name:Alabama



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



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Paperwork Burden Statement

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Purpose of the Program

School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools. Under the final requirements published in the *Federal Register* on October 28, 2010 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>), school improvement funds are to be focused on each State's "Tier I" and "Tier II" schools. Tier I schools are the lowest-achieving 5 percent of a State's Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, Title I secondary schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring with graduation rates below 60 percent over a number of years, and, if a State so chooses, certain Title I eligible (and participating) elementary schools that are as low achieving as the State's other Tier I schools ("newly eligible" Tier I schools). Tier II schools are the lowest-achieving 5 percent of a State's secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds, secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds with graduation rates below 60 percent over a number of years, and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible (participating and non-participating) secondary schools that are as low achieving as the State's other Tier II schools or that have had a graduation rate below 60 percent over a number of years ("newly eligible" Tier II schools). An LEA also may use school improvement funds in Tier III schools, which are Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not identified as Tier I or Tier II schools and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible (participating and non-participating) schools ("newly eligible" Tier III schools). (See Appendix B for a chart summarizing the schools included in each tier.) 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.

Availability of Funds

The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2010, provided \$546 million for School Improvement Grants in fiscal year (FY) 2010. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) estimates that, collectively, States have carried over approximately \$825 million in FY 2009 SIG funds that will be combined with FY 2010 SIG funds, for a total of nearly \$1.4 billion that will be awarded by States as part of their FY 2010 SIG competitions.

FY 2010 school improvement funds are available for obligation by SEAs and LEAs through September 30, 2012.

State and LEA Allocations

Each State (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas are eligible to apply to receive a School Improvement Grant. The Department will allocate FY 2010 school improvement funds in proportion to the funds received in FY 2010 by the States, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas under Parts A, C, and D of Title I of the ESEA. An SEA must allocate at least 95 percent of its school improvement funds directly to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>). The SEA may retain an amount not to exceed five percent of its allocation for State administration, evaluation, and technical assistance.

Appendix A provides guidance on how SEAs can maximize the number of Tier I and Tier II schools its LEAs can serve with FY 2009 carryover and FY 2010 SIG funds when making their LEA allocations for the FY 2010 competition. See Appendix A for a more detailed explanation.

Consultation with the Committee of Practitioners

Before submitting its application for a SIG grant to the Department, an SEA must consult with its Committee of Practitioners established under section 1903(b) of the ESEA regarding the rules and policies contained therein. The Department recommends that the SEA also consult with other stakeholders, such as potential external providers, teachers' unions, and business, civil rights, and community leaders that have an interest in its application.

FY 2010 Submission Information

Electronic Submission:

The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's FY 2010 School Improvement Grant (SIG) application electronically. The application should be sent as a Microsoft Word document, not as a PDF.

The SEA should submit its FY 2010 application to the following address: school.improvement.grants@ed.gov

In addition, the SEA must submit a paper copy of the cover page signed by the SEA's authorized representative to the address listed below under "Paper Submission."

Paper Submission:

If an SEA is not able to submit its application electronically, it may submit the original and two copies of its SIG application to the following address:

Carlas McCauley, Education Program Specialist
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in government processing of mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

Application Deadline

Applications are due on or before December 3, 2010.

For Further Information

If you have any questions, please contact Carlas McCauley at (202) 260-0824 or by e-mail at carlas.mccauley@ed.gov.

FY 2010 Application Instructions

Most of the FY 2010 SIG application is identical to the FY 2009 application. A new section for additional evaluation criteria (Section B-1) has been added and Section H on Waivers has been expanded. Section D on Descriptive Information (Section D – Part 1, Section D – Parts 2-8) has also been reformatted into two separate sections for the FY 2010 application, but all other parts of the application remain the same.

Consequently, except as provided below, an SEA must update only those sections that include changes from the FY 2009 application. In particular, the Department expects that most SEAs will be able to retain Section B on Evaluation Criteria, Section C on Capacity, and Section D (parts 2-8) on Descriptive Information, sections that make up the bulk of the SIG application. An SEA has the option to update any of the material in these sections if it so desires.

We are requiring SEAs to update some sections of the SIG application to ensure that each SEA focuses its FY 2010 SIG funds, including any funds carried over from FY 2009, on serving its persistently lowest-achieving schools in LEAs with the capacity and commitment to fully and effectively implement one of the four required school intervention models beginning in the 2011-2012 school year.

Note that while an SEA may be able to submit significant portions of its FY 2010 SIG application unchanged from FY 2009, we recommend that it review all sections of the FY 2010 application to ensure alignment with any required changes or revisions.

SEAs should also note that they will only be able to insert information in designated spaces (form fields) in the application because of formatting restrictions. Clicking on a section of the application that is restricted will automatically jump the cursor to the next form field which may cause users to skip over information in the application. Users may avoid this issue by using the scroll bar to review the application. However, due to these restrictions, the Department recommends that SEAs print a copy of the application and review it in its entirety before filling out the form.

APPLICATION COVER SHEET
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Legal Name of Applicant: Alabama Department of Education	Applicant's Mailing Address: P.O. Box 302101 Montgomery, AL 36130-2101
State Contact for the School Improvement Grant Name: Dr. Tommy Bice Position and Office: Deputy State Superintendent of Education, Instructional Services Division Contact's Mailing Address: P.O. Box 302101 Montgomery, AL 36130-2101 Telephone: (334) 242-8199 Fax: (334) 242-0496 Email address: tbice@alsde.edu	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Dr. Joseph B. Morton	Telephone: (334) 242-9700
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X	Date:
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.	

FY 2010 Application Checklist

Please use this checklist to serve as a roadmap for the SEA's FY 2010 application.

Please note that an SEA's submission for FY 2010 must include the following attachments, as indicated on the application form:

- Lists, by LEA, of the State's Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.
- A copy of the SEA's FY 2010 LEA application form that LEAs will use to apply to the SEA for a School Improvement Grant.
- If the SEA seeks any waivers through its application, a copy of the notice it provided to LEAs and a copy of any comments it received from LEAs as well as a copy of, or link to, the notice the SEA provided to the public.

Please check the relevant boxes below to verify that all required sections of the SEA application are included and to indicate which sections of the FY 2010 application the SEA has revised from its FY 2009 application.

SECTION A: ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS	<input type="checkbox"/> Definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" (PLA schools) is same as FY 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" (PLA schools) is revised for FY 2010
	<i>For an SEA keeping the same definition of PLA schools, please select one of the following options:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> SEA will not generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has five or more unserved Tier I schools from FY 2009 (SEA is requesting waiver) <input type="checkbox"/> SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has less than five unserved Tier I schools from FY 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> SEA elects to generate new lists	<i>For an SEA revising its definition of PLA schools, please select the following option:</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has revised its definition
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lists, by LEA, of State's Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools provided	
SECTION B: EVALUATION CRITERIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2010
SECTION B-1: ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Section B-1: Additional evaluation criteria provided	
SECTION C: CAPACITY	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2010
SECTION D (PART 1): TIMELINE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated Section D (Part 1): Timeline provided	
SECTION D (PARTS 2-8): DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as FY 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised for FY 2010
SECTION E: ASSURANCES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated Section E: Assurances provided	
SECTION F: SEA RESERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated Section F: SEA reservations provided	
SECTION G: CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated Section G: Consultation with stakeholders provided	
SECTION H: WAIVERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated Section H: Waivers provided	

PART I: SEA REQUIREMENTS

As part of its application for a School Improvement Grant under section 1003(g) of the ESEA, an SEA must provide the following information.

A. ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS: An SEA must provide a list, by LEA, of each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school in the State. (A State's Tier I and Tier II schools are its persistently lowest-achieving schools and, if the SEA so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible schools that are as low achieving as the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools or that have had a graduation rate below 60 percent over a number of years.) In providing its list of schools, the SEA must indicate whether a school has been identified as a Tier I or Tier II school solely because it has had a graduation rate below 60 percent over a number of years. In addition, the SEA must indicate whether it has exercised the option to identify as a Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III school a school that was made newly eligible to receive SIG funds by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010.

Each SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools based on the State's most recent achievement and graduation rate data to ensure that LEAs continue to give priority to using SIG funds to implement one of the four school intervention models in each of their persistently lowest-achieving schools, rather than using SIG funds to support less rigorous improvement measures in less needy schools. However, any SEA that has five or more Tier I schools that were identified for purposes of the State's FY 2009 SIG competition but are not being served with SIG funds in the 2010-2011 school year may apply for a waiver of the requirement to generate new lists.

An SEA also has the option of making changes to its FY 2009 definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools". An SEA that exercises this option must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Regardless of whether it modifies its definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" or generates new lists, along with its lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, an SEA must provide the definition that it used to develop these lists. The SEA may provide a link to the page on its Web site where its definition is posted, or it may attach the complete definition to its application.

<input type="checkbox"/> Definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) is same as FY 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (PLA schools) is revised for FY 2010
<p><i>For an SEA keeping the same definition of PLA schools, please select one of the following options:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. SEA will not generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools. SEA has five or more unserved Tier I schools from FY 2009 and is therefore eligible to request a waiver of the requirement to generate new lists of schools. Lists and waiver request submitted below.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> SEA is electing not to include newly eligible schools for the FY 2010 competition. (Only applicable if the SEA elected to add newly eligible schools in FY 2009.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has fewer than five unserved Tier I schools from FY 2009. Lists submitted below.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. SEA elects to generate new lists. Lists submitted below.</p>	<p><i>For an SEA revising its definition of PLA schools, please select the following option:</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. SEA must generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools because it has revised its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” Lists submitted below.</p>

Insert definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” or link to definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” here:

Alabama’s Persistently Lowest-achieving Schools Definition for FY2011

This definition defines an elementary school as a school with any combination of grades K – 8, but that does not contain a grade above 8 and a secondary school as a school with any combination of grades 5 – 12, but that must contain a grade above 8.

Performance Measures

The performance measures for the definitions of Tier I and Tier II are the graduation rates under 60% for three consecutive years and the three-year sum of percentages of tested students in the “all students” group who were enrolled in the same school for a “full academic year” scoring proficient or higher in reading and mathematics on the *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT)*, the *Alabama High School Graduation Examination (AHSGE)*, and the *Alabama Alternative Assessment (AAA)* as required by Section 1111(b)(3) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. For the purpose of the FY 2011 definition, the years that will be used to determine the three-year sum of percentages of tested students will be the FY 2008 (2007-2008), FY 2009 (2008-2009) and FY 2010 (2009-2010) school years. The years that will be used to determine the graduation rates under 60% will be the FY 2008 (2007-2008), FY 2009 (2008-2009) and FY 2010 (2009-2010) school years.

Lack of Progress Measure

The lack of progress measure for the definitions of Tier I and Tier II is failing to make adequately yearly progress for two (2) consecutive years, which, as a result, places a school in any one of the School Improvement categories. For the purpose of the FY 2011 definition, the years that will be used to determine lack of progress will be the FY 2009 (2008-2009) and FY 2010 (2009-2010) school years.

Lowest-achieving Schools

Lowest-achieving schools are those schools with the lowest three-year sum or those schools that have graduation rates under 60% for three consecutive years utilizing the Performance Measure and Lack of Progress above.

Tier I

A school that is in the lowest-achieving five percent (5%) or lowest-achieving five (5) schools, whichever is greater, of the group of schools that (a) are Title I-served schools and (b) are identified in any one of the School Improvement categories as defined in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 20 U.S.C. secs. 6301 et seq., or its successor.

Or

A school whose graduation rate, based on the state’s approved graduation rate calculation, is less than sixty percent (60%) for three (3) consecutive years, in the group of schools that (a) contain a grade of 12 and (b) are Title I served schools.

Tier II

A school that is in the lowest-achieving five percent (5%) or lowest-achieving five (5) schools, whichever is greater, of the group of schools that (a) have any combination of grades, but contains a grade above 8, (b) are eligible for, but do not receive Title I funds, and (c) have at least a poverty level of 35% or greater, or (d) an eligible, but not identified Tier I secondary school, that has not made AYP for two (2) consecutive years, which, as a result places the school in any one of the School Improvement categories, as defined in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 20 U.S.C. secs. 6301 et seq., or its successor.

Or

A school whose graduation rate, based on the state’s approved graduation rate calculation, is less than sixty percent (60%) for three (3) consecutive years, in the group of schools that (a) contain a grade of 12, (b) are eligible for, but do not receive Title I funds, and (c) have at least a poverty level of 35% or greater, as defined in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 20 U.S.C. secs. 6301 et seq., or its successor.

Tier III

All schools that (a) are Title I-served schools, (b) are identified in any one of the school improvement categories as defined in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 20 U.S.C. secs. 6301 et seq., or its successor, (c) are not included in the definitions of Tier I above and (d) have an n-count below 40 that would have been identified in the lowest-achieving five percent (5%) or lowest-achieving five (5), whichever is greater, in Tier I or Tier II.

Weights are not applied to schools in this part for the purpose of excluding potential applicants from the pool of eligible schools.

Determining Tier I Schools

Tier I schools were chosen from a pool of 66 Title I-served schools in any category of School Improvement. Choosing five percent (5%) of the schools in this pool would result in 3 or 4 schools. Therefore, five schools (5) were chosen because it is greater than five percent (5%) of the pool. Tier I schools were chosen from the pool based on the lowest three-year sum of percentages of tested students in the “all students” group who were enrolled in the same school for a “full academic year” scoring proficient or higher in reading and mathematics on the *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT)*, the *Alabama High School Graduation Examination (AHSGE)*, and the *Alabama Alternative Assessment (AAA)* as required by Section 1111(b)(3) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Alabama did not have any schools whose graduation rate, based on the state’s approved graduation rate calculation, was less than sixty percent (60%) for three (3) consecutive years, in the group of schools that (a) contain a grade of 12 and (b) are Title I served schools.

Determining Tier II Schools

Tier II schools were chosen from a pool of 160 Title I-eligible, but non-served schools containing a grade above 8. Also added to this pool were 48 Title I-served schools in any category of School Improvement containing a grade above 8. This is a total pool of 208 schools. Choosing five percent (5%) of the schools in this pool would result in 11 schools. Therefore 11 schools were chosen because five percent (5%) of the pool is greater than five (5). Tier II schools were chosen from the pool based on the lowest three-year sum of percentages of tested students in the “all students” group who were enrolled in the same school for a “full academic year” scoring proficient or higher in reading and mathematics on the *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT)*, the *Alabama High School Graduation Examination (AHSGE)*, and the *Alabama Alternative Assessment (AAA)* as required by Section 1111(b)(3) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Alabama did not have any schools whose graduation rate, based on the state’s approved graduation rate calculation, was less than sixty percent (60%) for three (3) consecutive years, in the group of schools that (a) contain a grade of 12, (b) are eligible for, but do not receive Title I funds, and (c) have at least a poverty level of 35% or greater, as defined in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 20 U.S.C. secs. 6301 et seq., or its successor.

Determining Tier III Schools

Tier III schools were made up of the remaining Title I-served schools in any category of School Improvement that were not chosen as Tier I or Tier II schools, as well as n-count schools that would have been selected in the bottom 5% or bottom five, where appropriate, in Tier I or Tier II.

An SEA must attach two tables to its SIG application. The first table must include its lists of all Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools that are eligible for FY 2010 SIG funds. The second table must include its lists of all Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools that were served with FY 2009 SIG funds.

Please create these two tables in Excel and use the formats shown below. Examples of the tables have been provided for guidance.

SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE FOR FY 2010 SIG FUNDS								
LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE	NEWLY ELIGIBLE ¹

SCHOOLS SERVED WITH FY 2009 SIG FUNDS							
LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE

EXAMPLE:

SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE FOR FY 2010 SIG FUNDS								
LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE	NEWLY ELIGIBLE
LEA 1	##	HARRISON ES	##	X				
LEA 1	##	MADISON ES	##	X				
LEA 1	##	TAYLOR MS	##			X		X
LEA 2	##	WASHINGTON ES	##	X				
LEA 2	##	FILLMORE HS	##			X		
LEA 3	##	TYLER HS	##		X		X	
LEA 4	##	VAN BUREN MS	##	X				
LEA 4	##	POLK ES	##			X		

EXAMPLE:

¹ “Newly Eligible” refers to a school that was made eligible to receive SIG funds by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010. A newly eligible school may be identified for Tier I or Tier II because it has not made adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years; is in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on State’s assessments; and is no higher achieving than the highest-achieving school identified by the SEA as a “persistently lowest-achieving school” or is a high school that has a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years. For complete definitions of and additional information about “newly eligible schools,” please refer to the FY 2010 SIG Guidance, questions A-20 to A-30.

SCHOOLS SERVED WITH FY 2009 SIG FUNDS							
LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE
LEA 1	##	MONROE ES	##	X			
LEA 1	##	JEFFERSON HS	##		X		X
LEA 2	##	ADAMS ES	##	X			
LEA 3	##	JACKSON ES	##	X			

Please attach the two tables in a separate file and submit it with the application.

SEA has attached the two tables in a separate file and submitted it with its application.

B. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Part 1: The three actions listed in Part 1 are ones that an LEA must take prior to submitting its application for a School Improvement Grant. Accordingly, the SEA must describe, with specificity, the criteria the SEA will use to evaluate an LEA’s application with respect to each of the following actions:

- (1) The LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA’s application and has selected an intervention for each school.
- (2) 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.
- (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).

Part 2: The actions in Part 2 are ones that an LEA may have taken, in whole or in part, prior to submitting its application for a School Improvement Grant, but most likely will take after receiving a School Improvement Grant. Accordingly, an SEA must describe the criteria it will use to assess the LEA’s commitment to do the following:

- (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 it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.
- (5) Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

SEA is using the same evaluation criteria as FY 2009.

SEA has revised its evaluation criteria for FY 2010.

Insert response to Section B Evaluation Criteria here:

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

Part 1

The three actions listed in Part 1 are ones that an LEA must take prior to submitting its application for a School Improvement Grant. Accordingly, the SEA must describe, with specificity, the criteria the SEA will use to evaluate an LEA's application with respect to each of the following actions:

(1) The LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application and has selected an intervention for each school.

The SIG Needs Assessment is designed to be an ongoing reflection of the school's actions in response to student achievement challenges. The State Department of Education (SDE), Federal Programs Section, is responsible for monitoring and supporting this process. To aid in this process, all SIG Needs Assessments will be a required attachment of the SIG Application. The needs assessment will be reviewed as explained in the SEA Scoring Rubric.

The SDE will require each LEA to submit the following data for each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school:

- (a) School data which includes staffing decisions, administrator and teacher evaluations, as well as program implementation plans.
- (b) School assessment data which includes students achievement data for the state's assessments
- (c) School culture-related data which includes demographic and perception information.
- (d) Goals to address academic needs
- (e) Goals to address Annual Measurable Objectives and English Proficiency needs
- (f) Strategies to address school safety, classroom management, discipline, and supportive learning environments
- (g) List of identified root causes
- (h) List of prioritized needs

Failure to demonstrate a process or plan, provide recent examples of success, and/or provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of "inadequate".

An LEA/School Application that receives a score of "inadequate" in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be substantiated to the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

An LEA/School that does not complete or submit all portions of the application may be disqualified from the competition for receiving SIG funds at the discretion of the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored, but does not rank within the range of tiered funding, will be disqualified from receiving funds and will not be asked to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach.

(2) 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.

The SDE expects each LEA to demonstrate the capacity to use SIG Section 1003(g) funds, and other federal, state, and local funds to fully and effectively implement the selected intervention(s) identified for each school in the LEA's application. The LEA is required to identify a chosen intervention model for each Tier I and Tier II school and provide a description of the process for analyzing the potential effectiveness of the chosen intervention model. Within the description of capacity, the LEA will be expected to align program coherence, structural support, change agents, leadership, instructional practices, cultural practices, and efficacy and expectations with the selected intervention model and interventions. A clear description will have elements of success and commitment to improving school structures in order to make the SIG process successful.

An LEA and school application should reflect all of the elements of a total school reform model. An LEA is strongly encouraged to choose an external provider to assist with School Improvement processes within any of the selected Tier I and Tier II intervention models. However, the SDE does not require an LEA to select a specific external provider in order to receive SIG funds. The LEA should include the name of the external provider under consideration, information pertaining to availability of staff to serve the selected school(s), the consultants' educational background, and detailed experiences of the staff hired by the external provider.

The LEA must also provide information regarding the external provider's levels of success in persistently lowest-achieving schools based on state assessments, examples of benchmark testing indicating progress monitoring, and minutes of grade-level/subject-level data meetings to substantiate the external provider's ability to use data effectively.

If the LEA chooses to write an application for any Tier III schools, the LEA will be expected to fully explain each School Improvement activity it plans to deploy in the Tier III school and include relevant research regarding the School Improvement activity. Once each model or activity has been named, the LEA will list specific support and resources to be used in conjunction with SIG funds to assist each school. The SDE does not require an LEA to select a specific external provider in order to receive SIG funds.

The SDE will further evaluate the capacity to implement a school model, intervention, and/or School Improvement activities in each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school by requiring the LEA to:

- (a) Clearly demonstrate the extent to which the LEA can recruit qualified new staff to effectively implement grant and model requirements and School Turnaround interventions (i.e., ability to recruit and retain personnel; district-level policies regarding movement of personnel).
- (b) Clearly demonstrate a commitment of the LEA, school board, school staff, and stakeholders to support the implementation of educational reform in the district.
- (c) Clearly align the School Turnaround process to identified school needs to ensure effective short-term and long-term implementation of the selected intervention model or School Turnaround activities (i.e., equitable teacher practices; instructional practices; ability to provide equitable education to all students; perceptions of school staff, LEA personnel, students, parents, and the community; ability to coordinate improvement efforts; program coherence; district-level policies).
- (d) Clearly align federal, state, and/or local resources to identified school needs to ensure short-term and long-term support of the selected intervention model or School Turnaround activities (i.e., flexibility

and efficiency of technical and professional resources; district-level policies).

- (e) Provide a clear description of how capacity (time, personnel, resources, etc.) will be implemented to ensure the initial fundamentals of the intervention are effective and efficient (i.e., ability to coordinate turnaround efforts; ability to implement critical change in adequate time; program coherence).
- (f) Provide a clear description of how the availability of all other necessary resources unique to each intervention model or School Turnaround activity will be implemented to ensure timely transition of protocol (i.e., the requirements of the grant and each of the four models; the availability of external providers, EMOs, Turnaround Specialists, and personnel to service the schools; program coherence; district-level policies).
- (g) Clearly align the School Turnaround process to identified school needs to ensure timely implementation by the selected external provider.
- (h) Provide a clear description of how grant and model requirements will be aligned and implemented with the commitment and capacity of all involved stakeholders, including parents and the community (see SIG Final Requirements).

Failure to demonstrate a process or plan, provide recent examples of success, and/or provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of “inadequate”.

An LEA/School Application that receives a score of “inadequate” in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be substantiated to the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

An LEA/School that does not complete or submit all portions of the application may be disqualified from the competition for receiving SIG funds at the discretion of the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored, but does not rank within the range of tiered funding, will be disqualified from receiving funds and will not be asked to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach.

(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).

Schools, with the assistance of LEAs, requesting SIG funding will complete the Budget for School section in the application, as well as the Summary of Expenditures for Schools section which will be a summary of personnel, services, materials, supplies, and any other expenditures being paid with SIG funds for each fiscal year. School budgets will be rated based on amount of requested funds compared to the size of the school, as well as thorough alignment with needs of the school to support the implementation of the selected model, interventions and/or School Improvement activities (refer to the SIG Scoring Rubric).

LEAs applying for SIG funds for multiple schools will be required to complete the Budget for Local Education Agencies in addition to the school Budget for Schools. Failure to complete the Budget for Local Education Agencies will result in an incomplete application and will not be scored. Because individual school budgets

will be rated, the Budget for Local Education Agencies will not have a point value.

The SDE will further review all LEA and school budgets, before awarding, to assure that they have sufficient funds to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively by requiring the LEA and school to:

- (a) Submit a budget of \$50,000 - \$2,000,000 per year for each school, not to exceed \$6,000,000 over three years, including expenditures for the LEA.
- (b) Submit a budget that is appropriately aligned with the sizes of the schools and the necessary needs of the schools to support full implementation of the selected intervention models and interventions/activities.
- (c) Provide a clear description in the summary areas of the application of each of the expenditures listed in the budget including all necessary information.
- (d) Clearly match activities and interventions, including needed personnel, services, travel, and materials/supplies, with budget expenditures in the budget summary areas.
- (e) Clearly demonstrate a plan regarding high-level transparency of accounting procedures and processes (i.e., timesheets, appropriate labeling of hardware).
- (f) Clearly align federal, state, and local resources to ensure short-term and long-term support of the selected interventions or School Improvement activities. (Sustainability)
- (g) Clearly demonstrate a commitment to providing a high level of transparency from the LEA regarding accounting procedures and processes through the use of Alabama's Electronic Grant Application Process (eGAP) which includes both budget planning and funding information.

The Federal Programs Director is responsible for final approval of all federal budgets. All budget revisions will be done in eGAP. Documents posted in eGAP are available for public viewing. The SDE also has the ability to view and track expenditures to match them to the approved budget.

Failure to demonstrate a process or plan, provide recent examples of success, and/or provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of "inadequate".

If an LEA is awarded two or more School Improvement Grants, the LEA will be required to complete the LEA Budget for Multiple Schools. This process is designed to alleviate duplicate LEA expenditures and may change the originally submitted allocations of each school. This process will only be for LEAs that receive awards for multiple schools and will, therefore, take place after the awarding period.

An LEA/School Application that receives a score of "inadequate" in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be substantiated to the SDE. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

An LEA/School that does not complete or submit all portions of the application may be disqualified from the competition for receiving SIG funds at the discretion of the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored, but does not rank within the range of tiered funding, will be disqualified from receiving funds and will not be asked to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach.

Part 2

The actions in Part 2 are ones that an LEA may have taken, in whole or in part, prior to submitting its application for a School Improvement Grant but, most likely, will take after receiving a School Improvement Grant. Accordingly, an SEA must describe how it will assess the LEA's commitment to do the following:

- (a) Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements.
- (b) Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality.
- (c) Align other resources with the interventions.
- (d) Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.
- (e) Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

The LEA/School Application requires each participating LEA and school to explain the selected intervention model and external provider selection processes consistent with grant requirements, as well as alignment of other resources to support the proposed intervention(s). An LEA and school are strongly encouraged to choose an external provider if they select the turnaround and transformation models and implement grant requirements as stated in the SIG Final Requirements document. The SDE will conduct a screening process for external providers and develop a list of SDE approved providers that LEAs/schools may or may not choose to provide services.

LEAs are permitted to work with individual schools to assist in the selection of interventions and external providers that match the needs of the schools. LEAs should, however, be careful about budgeting for what can be accomplished in a single school year and remember the importance of spreading School Improvement activities out over the three-year period to avoid overwhelming the faculty and to assist in providing efficiency in achieving progress. LEAs and schools also should be aware of the optional pre-implementation activities that may take place as a part of year-one expenditures.

Recognizing that LEA and school commitment is paramount to successful implementation, the SEA has designed a rubric that will include critical criteria in all five areas of commitment. These areas will be carefully reviewed and scored during the SIG application review phase.

1. Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements.

The SDE will assess the LEA's commitment to design and implement an appropriate intervention model and School Improvement activities by requiring the LEA to:

- (a) Clearly identify and prioritize needs through a completed and comprehensive SIG School Needs Assessment.
- (b) Clearly align the capacity (staff, resources, time, etc.) with the implementation of specific interventions and School Turnaround activities.
- (c) Clearly align School Turnaround processes with the designed interventions.
- (d) Clearly align other resources to support the design and implementation efforts of selected interventions.
- (e) Clearly engage stakeholders (staff, parents, community, etc.) to provide input into the design and implementation process of School Turnaround activities.

- (f) Provide a clear description of how regular (at least biweekly) data meetings will be scheduled to identify school/teacher/student weaknesses and to adjust plans for supports to address assessed weaknesses.
- (g) Clearly communicate with potential external provider(s) to plan and develop professional development and support based on assessed needs (at least biweekly).
- (h) Provide a clear description of how accurate documentation of meetings and communications will be maintained and used in the School Turnaround process.
- (i) Provide a clear description of how schedules, goals, and timelines will be revised as needed.
- (j) Provide a clear description of how data/forms will be submitted to the SDE and/or USDE in accordance to established timelines.
- (k) Provide a clear description of how grant and model requirements will be aligned and implemented with the design and implementation of School Turnaround interventions (see SIG Final Requirements).

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

The SDE will assess the LEA's commitment to recruit, screen, and select external providers by requiring the LEA to:

- (a) Provide a clear description of how external providers will be identified based on each school's SIG needs.
- (b) Provide a clear description of how external providers will be interviewed and analyzed to determine evidence-based effectiveness, experience, expertise, and documentation to assure quality and efficiency of each external provider based on each school's identified SIG needs.
- (c) Provide a clear description of how external providers will be selected based upon the provider's commitment of timely and effective implementation and the ability to meet school needs.
- (d) Clearly align existing efficiency and capacity of the external provider with LEA and school resources, specifically time and personnel.
- (e) Provide a clear description of how communication with the selected external provider(s) will ensure that supports are taking place and are adjusted according to the school's identified needs and short-term results.
- (f) Provide a clear description of how the selected external provider will utilize multiple sources of data to evaluate the effectiveness of the supports provided (at least biweekly) and reporting the results to the SDE.
- (g) Provide a clear description of how the selected external provider will report the results to the school, LEA and SDE.
- (h) Provide a clear description of how records for quality and frequency of supports provided by the selected external provider(s) will be monitored..
- (i) Provide a clear description of how an in-school presence of the external provider will be implemented to monitor the interactions of the school administration, faculty, and staff to ensure the full implementation of School Turnaround activities.
- (j) Provide a clear description of how progress of the school will be recorded and disseminated for efficient use.
- (k) Provide a clear description of how Tier III school interventions and or School Improvement activities will be aligned by priority, based on needs (Tier III schools not using a model).
- (l) Provide a clear description of how each of the grant and model requirements will be aligned and

implemented with School Turnaround resources and actions steps of the selected external provider (see SIG Final Requirements).

3. Align other resources with the interventions.

The SDE will assess the LEA's commitment to align other resources with the interventions by requiring the LEA to:

- (a) Clearly identify resources currently being utilized in an academic support capacity to assist with the efforts of the School Improvement Grant.
- (b) Clearly identify additional and/or potential resources that may be utilized in an academic support capacity to assist with the efforts of the School Improvement Grant.
- (c) Clearly align federal, state, and local resources based on evidence-based effectiveness and impact with the design of interventions.
- (d) Clearly align federal, state, and local resources with the goals and timeline of the grant (e.g., fiscal, personnel, time allotments/scheduling, curriculum, instruction, technology resources/equipment).
- (e) Provide a clear description of how regularly scheduled reviews of the resource alignment will be conducted to ensure all areas are operating fully and effectively to meet the intended outcomes or making adjustments as necessary.
- (f) Provide a clear description of how resources that are not being used to support the School Turnaround process will be redirected.
- (g) Provide a clear description of how the implementation of the interventions by school administration, faculty, and staff, as well as interactions with the potential external provider(s), will be monitored and evaluated to ensure the full implementation of supports
- (h) Provide a clear description of how each of the grant and model requirements will be aligned and implemented with available resources (see SIG Final Requirements).

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

The SDE will assess the LEA's commitment to modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively by requiring the LEA to provide strong evidence in the following areas:

- (a) Clearly identify LEA and school barriers that may slow or halt the School Improvement Grant implementation process.
- (b) Clearly develop strategies to overcome identified barriers to fully implement the School Improvement Grant implementation process.
- (c) Clearly design and implement a policy modification protocol for the applying SIG school(s) that may include input from local education agency administrators, board members, and SIG school personnel.
- (d) Clearly develop an ongoing process to assess policy and process modification for SIG school administrator, faculty and support staff hiring and transfer procedures.
- (e) Clearly develop an ongoing process to assess policy and process modification for SIG school teacher-performance rewards and incentives.
- (f) Clearly develop an ongoing process to assess policy and process modification for altering the traditional school day and/or school calendar year to include additional instructional and planning

time for the applying SIG school(s).

- (g) Provide a clear description of how grant and model requirements will be aligned and implemented with the modified practices and policies (see SIG Final Requirements).

5. Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

The SDE will assess the LEA's commitment to sustain the reforms after the funding period ends by requiring the LEA to provide strong evidence in the following areas:

- (a) Clearly develop a plan that supports sustainability of the School Turnaround processes and interventions.
- (b) Clearly develop a plan to effectively train school administrators, faculty, and support staff about the implementation of interventions into operating flexibility of the school.
- (c) Clearly develop a plan to effectively train school administrators, faculty, and support staff about implementation of interventions into the classroom curriculum and activities.
- (d) Clearly identify alternative funding sources to sustain operational protocol that may require financial support.
- (e) Clearly identify needs-based professional development for school administrators, faculty, and support staff that supports short-term and long-term sustainability of School Turnaround processes.
- (f) Clearly develop a plan that demonstrates a commitment to the continuous development of teacher knowledge and skills to incorporate changes into their instruction as evidenced by an extensive action plan after the granting period has ended.
- (g) Clearly develop an evaluation system to measure short-term, long-term, and multi-level implementation of interventions.
- (h) Clearly develop an evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of supporting initiatives and policy.
- (i) Clearly develop a process to embed School Turnaround interventions and activities in an extensive strategic long-term plan to sustain gains in student achievement.
- (j) Clearly develop an evaluation system to monitor strategic checkpoints and end-of-the-year results and outcomes to inform and assist practitioners with problem-solving and decision-making that supports short-term and long-term educational fidelity.
- (k) Clearly develop a plan to sustain the alignment of resources with the applying SIG school's mission, goals, and needs.
- (l) Clearly develop a growth model for both the fiscal and human capital within the LEA for implementation and sustainability of School Turnaround interventions and activities.
- (m) Clearly establish an accountability process that provides effective oversight of the School Turnaround interventions and activities, financial management, and operations of the school.
- (n) Provide a clear description of how each of the grant and model requirements will be aligned and implemented with sustainability efforts

Failure to demonstrate a process or plan, provide recent examples of success, and/or provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of "inadequate".

An LEA/School Application that receives a score of "inadequate" in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be

substantiated to the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

An LEA/School that does not complete or submit all portions of the application may be disqualified from the competition for receiving SIG funds at the discretion of the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored, but does not rank within the range of tiered funding, will be disqualified from receiving funds and will not be asked to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach.

B-1. ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA: In addition to the evaluation criteria listed in Section B, the SEA must evaluate the following information in an LEA's budget and application:

Please note that Section B-1 is a new section added for the FY 2010 application.

(1) How will the SEA review an LEA's proposed budget with respect to activities carried out during the pre-implementation period² to help an LEA prepare for full implementation in the following school year?

(2) How will the SEA evaluate the LEA's proposed activities to be carried out during the pre-implementation period to determine whether they are allowable? *(For a description of allowable activities during the pre-implementation period, please refer to section J of the FY 2010 SIG Guidance.)*

² "Pre-implementation" enables an LEA to prepare for full implementation of a school intervention model at the start of the 2011–2012 school year. To help in its preparation, an LEA may use FY 2010 and/or FY 2009 carryover SIG funds in its SIG schools after the LEA has been awarded a SIG grant for those schools based on having a fully approvable application, consistent with the SIG final requirements. As soon as it receives the funds, the LEA may use part of its first-year allocation for SIG-related activities in schools that will be served with FY 2010 and/or FY 2009 carryover SIG funds. For a full description of pre-implementation, please refer to section J of the FY 2010 SIG Guidance.

Insert response to Section B-1 Additional Evaluation Criteria here:

B-1. ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA: In addition to the evaluation criteria listed in Section B, the SEA must evaluate the following information in an LEA's budget and application:

(1) How will the SEA review an LEA's proposed budget with respect to activities carried out during the pre-implementation period to help an LEA prepare for full implementation in the following school year?

LEAs requesting SIG funding for pre-implementation will complete a budget in the Electronic Grant Application Process (eGAP). Included, however, in written SEA notification of SIG acceptance will be information pertaining to regional eGAP training. After completion of training, the completed LEA budget will be located in the SIG portion of the eGAP. eGAP includes two locations for grant information: Improvement Planning and Funding Application. The Improvement Planning side provides the opportunity to list goals, strategies, and action steps for each anticipated SIG pre-implementation expenditure, as well as the various federal funds that will be utilized to support the pre-implementation of the selected intervention model. Also, the pre-implementation period will be voluntary and will not have a specific start or ending date.

The SDE will further review all LEA/school proposed pre-implementation budgets to assure that they have sufficient funds to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively and that activities are appropriate by requiring the LEA to provide strong evidence in the following areas:

- (a) Submit a budget of \$50,000 - \$2,000,000 per year for each school, not to exceed \$6,000,000 over three years, including pre-implementation activities in the first year.

- (b) Submit a budget that is appropriately aligned with the sizes of the schools and the necessary needs of the schools to support pre-implementation of the selected intervention models and interventions/activities.
- (c) Provide a clear description in the summary areas of the application of each of the pre-implementation expenditures listed in the budget including all necessary information.
- (d) Clearly match pre-implementation activities, including needed personnel, services, travel, and materials/supplies, with budget expenditures in the budget summary areas.
- (e) Clearly demonstrate a plan regarding high-level transparency of accounting procedures and processes (i.e., timesheets, appropriate labeling of hardware).
- (f) Clearly align federal, state, and local resources to ensure short-term and long-term support of the selected interventions, School Improvement activities and pre-implementation activities. (Sustainability)
- (g) Clearly demonstrate a commitment to providing a high level of transparency from the LEA regarding accounting procedures and processes through the use of Alabama's Electronic Grant Application Process (eGAP) which includes both budget planning and funding information.

The Federal Programs Director is responsible for final approval of all federal budgets. No expenditures will be paid without eGAP approval. All budget revisions will be done in eGAP. Documents posted in eGAP are available for public viewing. The SDE also has the ability to view and track expenditures to match them to the approved budget.

Failure to provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of "inadequate". An LEA/School Application that receives a score of "inadequate" in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be substantiated to the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

(2) How will the SEA evaluate the LEA's proposed activities to be carried out during the pre-implementation period to determine whether they are allowable? (For description of allowable activities during the pre-implementation period, please refer to Section J of the FY 2010 SIG Guidance.)

Anticipated amounts will be required to specify intended and appropriate uses of SIG funds for the pre-implementation period. Proposed pre-implementation activities will be assessed based on activity that promotes efforts to prepare the LEA and school for full implementation of one of the four school improvement models, within the guidelines of the SIG Final Requirements. Permitted activities may include, but are not limited to professional development activities, hiring additional personnel, analyzing student data, preparation of outgoing material to parents and community agencies, review of external providers, as well as activities outlined and allowed in the SIG Guidance, dated February 23, 2011, section J. Added activities not in the list of activities above must be reasonable in scope and must assist the LEA and school with preparation for full implementation of one of the four intervention models. Activities outside of these guidelines will impact the score and could result in placement in revision status of the LEA/School Application.

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.

An LEA that applies for a School Improvement Grant must serve each of its Tier I schools using one of the four school intervention models unless the LEA demonstrates that it lacks sufficient capacity to do so. If an LEA claims it lacks sufficient capacity to serve each Tier I school, the SEA must evaluate the sufficiency of the LEA's claim. Claims of lack of capacity should be scrutinized carefully to ensure that LEAs effectively intervene in as many of their Tier I schools as possible.

The SEA must explain how it will evaluate whether an LEA lacks capacity to implement any of the school intervention models in its Tier I school(s). The SEA must also explain what it will do if it determines that an LEA has more capacity than the LEA demonstrates.

SEA is using the same evaluation criteria for capacity as FY 2009.

SEA has revised its evaluation criteria for capacity for FY 2010.

Insert response to Section C Capacity here:

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 will evaluate lack of capacity by taking several variables into consideration that may include, but are not limited to: quality of leadership; equitable teacher practices; instructional practices; ability to provide equitable education to all students; perceptions of school staff, LEA personnel, students, parents, and the community; ability to coordinate improvement efforts; program coherence; flexibility, efficiency, and sufficiency of technical and professional resources; ability to implement critical change in adequate time; ability to recruit and retain personnel; district-level policies; the requirements of each of the four models; and the availability of external providers, EMOs, Turnaround Specialists, and personnel to service the schools.

The SDE will evaluate the lack of capacity to implement a school model, intervention, and/or School Improvement activities in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school by requiring the LEA to provide strong evidence in the following areas:

- (a) Clearly demonstrate the extent to which the LEA cannot recruit qualified new staff to effectively implement grant and model requirements and School Improvement interventions in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district (i.e., ability to recruit and retain personnel, district-level policies regarding movement of personnel, etc.).
- (b) Clearly demonstrate a lack of commitment by the LEA, school board, school staff, and stakeholders to support the implementation of grant and model requirements and School Improvement interventions in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district.
- (c) Clearly demonstrate the inability to align the School Improvement process with the identified school needs to ensure effective short-term and long-term implementation of the selected intervention model or School Improvement activities in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district (i.e., equitable teacher practices; instructional practices; ability to provide equitable education to all students; perceptions of school staff, LEA personnel, students, parents, and the community; ability to coordinate improvement efforts; program coherence; district-level policies).
- (d) Clearly demonstrate the lack of federal, state, and/or local resources to ensure short-term and long-term

support of the selected intervention model or School Improvement activities in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district (i.e., flexibility and efficiency of technical and professional resources; district-level policies).

- (e) Clearly demonstrate the lack of capacity (time, personnel, resources, etc.) to ensure the initial fundamentals of the intervention are implemented effectively and efficiently in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district (i.e., ability to coordinate improvement efforts; ability to implement critical change in adequate time; program coherence).
- (f) Clearly demonstrate the unavailability of other necessary resources unique to each intervention model or School Improvement activity to ensure timely transition of implementation protocol in all of the identified Tier I schools in the district (i.e., the requirements of each of the four models; and the availability of external providers, EMOs, Turnaround Specialists, and personnel to service the schools; program coherence; district-level policies).

If an LEA claims that it lacks capacity to serve all Tier I schools, the LEA will be required to document in the application the areas where the lack of capacity could potentially exist. This area will be reviewed and carefully assessed by outside readers by using the application scoring rubric.

If there is disagreement about whether or not additional capacity exists for the LEA to serve additional Tier I schools, the SEA will provide an opportunity for the LEA to meet with SDE personnel to present their case. If the SEA determines that additional capacity exists and the LEA still refuses to serve additional Tier I schools, the SEA will not award funding for the LEA to serve identified Tier II or Tier III schools. If the SEA determines that a lack of capacity exists for an LEA that wants to serve more than one of its Tier I schools, additional Tier I schools will not be given SIG awards.

Failure to demonstrate a process or plan, provide recent examples of success, and/or provide required information for the LEA/School Application criteria, may result in a score of “inadequate”.

An LEA/School Application that receives a score of “inadequate” in one or more sections may be required to revise the application at the request of the reviewing outside readers, if the cause for the request can be substantiated to the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored and ranked within the range of tiered funding also may be required to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach at the discretion of the SEA.

An LEA/School that does not complete or submit all portions of the application may be disqualified from the competition for receiving SIG funds at the discretion of the SEA. An LEA/School Application that has been scored, but does not rank within the range of tiered funding, will be disqualified from receiving funds and will not be asked to revise portions of its application to strengthen the overall SIG program approach.

D (PART 1). TIMELINE: An SEA must describe its process and timeline for approving LEA applications.

Please note that Section D has been reformatted to separate the timeline into a different section for the FY 2010 application.

Insert response to Section D (Part 1) Timeline here:

(1) Describe the SEA's process and timeline for approving LEA applications.

Each SIG application will be given a unique identifier so that applications will be anonymous to outside reviewers. Each SIG application will be independently reviewed by internal and/or external readers. The readers will score the Tier I and Tier II applications using a scoring rubric that will assess intervention design, intervention processes and procedures, intervention activities, as well as alignment with other School Improvement activities, and alignment of proposed pre-implementation and annual budgets with the overall intervention design. Tier III applications will be accepted and reviewed based on available funding after awarding funds to Tier I and Tier II schools. The Tier III application will be a condensed version of the Tier I and Tier II application. All applications will be read by the same number of readers and an average will be calculated as a final application score. The rank of applications will be determined by the resulting average score of each application. Schools will be selected based on the rank of the application and will be notified after the selection process has been completed (see application timeline).

December 2012

- SIG State Application development
- SIG State Application due to USDOE

January/February 2012

- Receive grant approval from USDOE

March 2012

- Announces awards for Tier I, Tier II and eligible Tier III schools implementing one of the four school turnaround models
- Provide information to award schools for revising applications (timelines, budgets, programs, etc.)
- Awarded Tier I, Tier II and eligible Tier III schools submit revised applications
- Review of revised applications
- SEA-guided review of Tier III SIG applications (based on funding availability)
- SEA conducts scoring and ranking of Tier III applications (based on funding availability)

April 2012

- Announce awards for Tier III schools (based on funding availability)
- Provide mandatory SIG Award School training (webinar) to all eligible LEAs and schools (eGAP SIG application procedures, SIG Guidance, SIG Final Requirements, SIG Evaluations, etc.).
- LEAs submit eGAP SIG applications (budgets)

- Review, revise, and approve eGAP SIG applications (budgets)

May 2012

- SIG pre-implementation begins for award schools
- Make funds available for LEAs and schools
- Review, revise, and approve eGAP SIG applications (budgets)
- Continue to provide technical assistance to award schools

June 2012

- Posts all reviewed applications on Web site (funded and non-funded)
- Begins setting up data collection and evaluation processes
- Continue to provide technical assistance to award schools

July 2012

- Continue to provide technical assistance to award schools

August 2012

- SIG implementation begins for award schools
- Continue to provide technical assistance to award schools

D (PARTS 2-8). DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION:

(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.

(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.

(4) Describe how the SEA will monitor each LEA that receives a School Improvement Grant to ensure that it is implementing a school intervention model fully and effectively in the Tier I and Tier II schools the LEA is approved to serve.

(5) Describe how the SEA will prioritize School Improvement Grants to LEAs if the SEA does not have sufficient school improvement funds to serve all eligible schools for which each LEA applies.

(6) Describe the criteria, if any, that the SEA intends to use to prioritize among Tier III schools.

(7) If the SEA intends to take over any Tier I or Tier II schools, identify those schools and indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school.

(8) If the SEA intends to provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, identify those schools and, for Tier I or Tier II schools, indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school and provide evidence of the LEA’s approval to have the SEA provide the services directly.³

³ If, at the time an SEA submits its application, it has not yet determined whether it will provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, it may omit this information from its application. However, if the SEA later decides that it will provide such services, it must amend its application to provide the required information.

SEA is using the same descriptive information as FY 2009.

SEA has revised its descriptive information for FY 2010.

Insert response to Section D (Parts 2-8) Descriptive Information here:

(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.

During the course of grant implementation, each Tier I and Tier II school will follow the School Improvement timeline for monthly Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) reviews that are held seven times during the school year. Beginning in August of each year, these monthly reviews conducted by the LEA and school staff (with the assistance of the SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist) provide the opportunity to review program fidelity of implementation for both the LEA and school, as well as benchmark progress for academic interventions. Toward the end of the school year, focus shifts to planning for the next school year.

The SDE will review annual goals, which describe the annual percentage gains expected based on intervention strategies and School Improvement activities implemented in the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, at the end of each year. Annual goals will be analyzed by comparing expectations provided in the application with actual gains in student achievement scores. Failure of an LEA and or school to reach expected goals will be cause to analyze root causes of failure.

Each LEA that receives SIG funds also will be evaluated based on “leading indicators,” which will be measured from baseline information received at the beginning of the grant process. The following leading indicators will be used to evaluate and further monitor SIG implementation processes and procedures for each school:

1. Number of minutes within the school year
2. Student participation rates on state assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics, by student group
3. Dropout rate
4. Student attendance rate
5. Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework, 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
9. Teacher attendance rate

Data will be collected from LEAs and schools on a quarterly basis. While collection of data will be maintained by specific LEAs and the SDE, this portion of the evaluation will be mainly conducted by an outside evaluator. The outside evaluator sends the SDE the data and progress is tracked through the Progress Monitoring Specialist.

LEAs receiving SIG funds must comply with all reporting requirements as stated in the SIG Final Requirements document, *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA), and the state’s SIG application for SIG funds. Additional data reporting may be required.

Renewal/Non-Renewal of School Improvement Grants to Schools

SIG schools will be expected to make quick gains in student achievement scores over the granting period. As a result, renewal of SIG funds will be heavily determined based on LEAs and schools hitting targeted measures of annual goals, moving in a reasonably appropriate direction on leading indicators, and making

reasonable achievement gains in “lower-achieving” subgroups.

Other measures that may be taken into consideration when determining renewal may include implementation of activities and strategies, LEA/school ability to cohesively manage School Turnaround efforts, unauthorized fiscal spending by the LEA/school, and the LEA/school ability to fully implement one of the four school improvement models as required by the final requirements. These areas will be used to further justify renewal decisions.

Failure of an LEA/school to make appropriate gains in critical areas which include, annual goals, leading indicators, and student achievement gains could result in the nonrenewal of SIG funds.

If the system is awarded a grant, the SDE will review LEA/school budgets to determine strengths and weaknesses of year two and year three services, personnel, materials and supplies before allocating funds to the district.

(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 SEA’s process for reviewing goals an LEA establishes for its Tier III schools will be much as described above. There will be local monthly reviews conducted by the LEA and school administration to provide the opportunity to assess school progress toward LEA goal attainment. An evaluation will be used by the SEA in conjunction with quarterly CIP reviews to assess progress towards goals. Tier III schools found to be having implementation difficulties will be offered extended support through the LEA and the SDE.

Renewal of SIG Grant to Schools

Several measures will be taken into consideration to determine whether or not an LEA/school’s grant will be renewed. These areas include, but are not limited to: annuals goals, leading indicators, student assessment scores, ability to coordinate school improvement activities, fiscal responsibility and transparency, ability to fully implement one of the four school improvement models as required by the final requirements or the selected school improvement activities. Failure to show progress in these areas may result in the non-renewal of a school’s SIG funding. Annual goals, leading indicators, and grant and model requirements will be weighted heavier than all other criteria. Other criteria will be weighted equally.

(4) Describe how the SEA will monitor each LEA that receives a School Improvement Grant to ensure that it is implementing a school intervention model fully and effectively in the Tier I and Tier II schools the LEA is approved to serve.

The SEA will hire or contract services for a SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist to monitor the progress of student achievement and assure proper and appropriate implementation of final requirements and selected interventions for LEAs that have committed to implementing a SIG intervention model. The LEA will be required, in conjunction with the SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist, to provide timely monitoring in every school approved to implement one of the four intervention models. The specialist will keep a log of progress on each school and will report that information back to the SEA. Each review will be followed by a debriefing

between the SEA SIG Coordinators and the SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist. The SEA will track progress and make adjustments, according to the data and information provided by the Progress Monitoring Specialist.

The LEA and the selected EMO will identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and develop appropriate processes and procedures (i.e., professional development, coaching, etc.). If a school is having difficulty with implementation, the LEA will be taught how to deal with lack of implementation through planning actions to be taken with the SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist. The Progress Monitor will be advised by School Improvement leaders when needed. This position(s) will be one fulltime person or two part-time persons.

The frequency of monitoring will be bi-weekly to bi-monthly. Initially, monitoring will take place on a monthly basis. As schools begin to show accountability with implementation of grant requirements and intervention strategies and progress through indicators and benchmarks, monitoring could be scaled back. For systems, that require more intervention and capacity building from the SEA, monitoring could take place on a bi-weekly basis.

The SDE will further monitor each LEA that receives a School Improvement Grant to ensure that it is implementing a school intervention model fully and effectively in the Tier I and Tier II schools the LEA is approved to serve by requiring the LEA, and school when appropriate, to:

- (a) Submit documentation regarding the grant and model requirements.
- (b) Administer CIP midyear reviews.
- (c) Assess amended Continuous Improvement Plans, timelines, and the School Improvement activities, as well as the implementation of intervention model activities as required though the SIG final requirements.
- (d) Assess the fiscal accountability of SIG funds.
- (e) Assess the trajectory of student achievement, annual goals and leading indicators.

In addition, the SDE will work with the Center on Innovation and Improvement to pilot an evaluation tool to monitor and evaluate Transformations and Turnarounds in eligible schools.

(5) Describe how the SEA will prioritize School Improvement Grants to LEAs if the SEA does not have sufficient School Improvement funds to serve all eligible schools for which each LEA applies.

Schools will be prioritized for funding by using the following criteria:

- (a) Tier I and Tier II schools will receive priority over Tier III schools
- (b) Ranked rubric application scores
- (c) Demonstrated ability to successfully move students to levels of proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics on the state's assessments.
- (d) Student achievement and graduation rate data.
- (e) School longitudinal data.
- (f) Other funding, resources, and programs already in place.
- (g) Other successful implementations of academic and/or behavioral interventions.

All criteria will be applied to all schools. Tier ranking, rubric application scores, and ability to move students to levels of proficiency will be weighted heavier than all other criteria. Other criteria will be weighted equally. Other criteria will be used in the case of applications showing, at the most, a 5-point difference in rubric applications scores.

If the SDE does not have sufficient SIG funds to serve all eligible schools for which each LEA applies, priority will be given to LEAs seeking funds for Tier I and Tier II schools.

(6) Describe the criteria, if any that the SEA intends to use to prioritize among Tier III schools.

Priority will be assessed according to the following:

- (a) Tier III schools applying to implement one of the four intervention models
- (b) Tier III schools applying to implement a School Improvement activity
- (c) Ranked rubric application scores
- (d) Demonstrated ability to successfully move students to levels of proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics on the state's assessments.
- (e) Student achievement and graduation rate data.
- (f) School longitudinal data.
- (g) Other funding, resources, and programs already in place.
- (h) Other successful implementations of academic and/or behavioral interventions.

All criteria will be applied to all schools. Schools implementing an intervention model will be weighted heavier than schools implementing School Improvement activities. Rubric application scores and demonstrated ability to move students to levels of proficiency will be weighted over the remaining criteria. The remaining criteria will be weighted equally. Remaining criteria will be used in the case of applications showing, at the most, a 5-point difference in rubric applications scores.

(i) If the SEA intends to take over any Tier I or Tier II schools, identify those schools and indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school.

The SEA does not intend to take over any Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III schools.

(j) If the SEA intends to provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, identify those schools and, for Tier I or Tier II schools, indicate the school intervention model the SEA will implement in each school, and provide evidence of the LEA's approval to have the SEA provide the services directly.²

The SDE does not intend to provide any services directly to any schools. The SDE does, however, intend to

² If, at the time an SEA submits its application, it has not yet determined whether it will provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, it may omit this information from its application. However, if the SEA later decides that it will provide such services, it must amend its application to provide the required information.

provide ongoing professional development to LEA School Improvement Specialists and/or School Turnaround Specialists in the areas of school turnaround, capacity building, sustainability, federal obligations, and other areas that may arise as a result of progress monitoring and implementation.

E. ASSURANCES

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that it will do the following (check each box):

- 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.
- 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 "rigorous review process" of recruiting, screening, and selecting external providers as well as 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; total amount of the three year grant listed by each year of implementation; 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: The SEA may reserve an amount not to exceed five percent of its School Improvement Grant for administration, evaluation, and technical assistance expenses.

The SEA must briefly describe the activities related to administration, evaluation, and technical assistance that the SEA plans to conduct with any State-level funds it chooses to reserve from its School Improvement Grant allocation.

Insert response to Section F SEA Reservation here:

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 SEA must briefly describe the activities related to administration, evaluation, and technical assistance that the SEA plans to conduct with the state-level funds it has received from its School Improvement Grant.

The state of Alabama plans to use the reserved five percent of the SIG funds for the following purposes:

- Partially fund an education administrator to provide oversight of the management of SIG
- Fund an educational grant specialist to assist with the management of SIG funds , LEA technical assistance and SEA monitoring processes;
- Fund a part-time administrative assistant to support SIG administration
- Hire a SIG Progress Monitoring Specialist to monitor student achievement progress, monitor appropriate implementation of selected intervention models, and monitor appropriate alignment of implementation processes and procedures with SIG final requirements.
- Consult with an outside agency to perform appropriate evaluation processes.

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

Before submitting its application for a School Improvement Grant to the Department, the SEA must consult with its Committee of Practitioners established under section 1903(b) of the ESEA regarding the rules and policies contained therein.

The SEA has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its application.

The SEA may also consult with other stakeholders that have an interest in its application.

The SEA has consulted with other relevant stakeholders, including State Superintendents Association (SSA), Council for Leaders in Alabama (CLAS), Alabama Association of School Boards, Alabama Education Association

H. WAIVERS: SEAs are invited to request waivers of the requirements set forth below. An SEA must check the corresponding box(es) to indicate which waiver(s) it is requesting.

WAIVERS OF SEA REQUIREMENTS

Enter State Name Here Alabama requests a waiver of the State-level requirements it has indicated below. The State believes that the requested waiver(s) will increase its ability to implement the SIG program effectively in eligible schools in the State in order to improve the quality of instruction and raise the academic achievement of students in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 1: Tier II waiver

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2010 competition, waive paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and incorporation of that definition in identifying Tier II schools under Section I.A.1(b) of those requirements to permit the State to include, in the pool of secondary schools from which it determines those that are the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the State, secondary schools participating under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for at least two consecutive years or are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined.

Assurance

The State assures that it will include in the pool of schools from which it identifies its Tier II schools all Title I secondary schools not identified in Tier I that either (1) have not made AYP for at least two consecutive years; or (2) are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined. Within that pool, the State assures that it will identify as Tier II schools the persistently lowest-achieving schools in accordance with its approved definition. The State is attaching the list of schools and their level of achievement (as determined under paragraph (b) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools”) that would be identified as Tier II schools without the waiver and those that would be identified with the waiver. The State assures that it will ensure that any LEA that chooses to use SIG funds in a Title I secondary school that becomes an eligible Tier II school based on this waiver will comply with the SIG final requirements for serving that school.

Note: An SEA that requested and received the Tier II waiver for its FY 2009 definition of “persistently lowest achieving schools” should request the waiver again only if it is generating new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier

III schools.

Waiver 2: n-size waiver

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2010 competition, waive the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and the use of that definition in Section I.A.1(a) and (b) of those requirements to permit the State to exclude, from the pool of schools from which it identifies the persistently lowest-achieving schools for Tier I and Tier II, any school in which the total number of students in the “all students” group in the grades assessed is less than **[Please indicate number]** 40.

Assurance

The State assures that it determined whether it needs to identify five percent of schools or five schools in each tier prior to excluding small schools below its “minimum n.” The State is attaching, and will post on its Web site, a list of the schools in each tier that it will exclude under this waiver and the number of students in each school on which that determination is based. The State will include its “minimum n” in its definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” In addition, the State will include in its list of Tier III schools any schools excluded from the pool of schools from which it identified the persistently lowest-achieving schools in accordance with this waiver.

Note: An SEA that requested and received the n-size waiver for its FY 2009 definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” should request the waiver again only if it is generating new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 3: New list waiver

Because the State neither must nor elects to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, waive Sections I.A.1 and II.B.10 of the SIG final requirements to permit the State to use the same Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III lists it used for its FY 2009 competition.

Assurance

The State assures that it has five or more unserved Tier I schools on its FY 2009 list.

WAIVERS OF LEA REQUIREMENTS

Enter State Name Here Alabama requests a waiver of the requirements it has indicated 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, Tier II, or Tier III schools. The four school intervention models are specifically designed to raise substantially the achievement of students in the State’s Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 4: School improvement timeline waiver

Waive section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III Title I participating schools that will fully implement a turnaround or restart model beginning in the 2011–2012 school year to “start over” in the school improvement timeline.

Assurances

The State assures that it will permit an LEA to implement this waiver only if the LEA receives a School Improvement Grant and requests the waiver in its application as part of a plan to implement the turnaround or restart model beginning in 2011–2012 in a school that the SEA has approved it to serve. As such, the LEA may only implement the waiver in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, as applicable, included in its application.

The State assures that, if it is granted this waiver, it will submit to the U.S. Department of Education a report that sets forth the name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing a waiver.

Note: An SEA that requested and received the school improvement timeline waiver for the FY 2009 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2010 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

Schools that started implementation of a turnaround or restart model in the 2010-2011 school year cannot request this waiver to “start over” their school improvement timeline again.

Waiver 5: Schoolwide program waiver

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, Tier II, or Tier III Title I participating school that does not meet the poverty threshold and is fully implementing one of the four school intervention models.

Assurances

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

The State assures that, if it is granted this waiver, it will submit to the U.S. Department of Education a report that sets forth the name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing a waiver.

Note: An SEA that requested and received the schoolwide program waiver for the FY 2009 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2010 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY WAIVER

Enter State Name Here Alabama requests a waiver of the requirement indicated below. The State believes that the requested waiver will increase its ability to implement the SIG program effectively in eligible schools in the State in order to improve the quality of instruction and improve the academic achievement of students in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools.

Waiver 6: Period of availability of FY 2009 carryover funds waiver

Waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2009 carryover school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2014.

Note: This waiver only applies to FY 2009 carryover funds. An SEA that requested and received this waiver for the FY 2009 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver to apply to FY 2009 carryover funds in order to make them available for three full years for schools awarded SIG funds through the FY 2010 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

ASSURANCE OF NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD – APPLIES TO ALL WAIVER REQUESTS

(Must check if requesting one or more waivers)

The State assures that, prior to submitting 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 its waiver request(s) 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 the above waiver request(s) 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.

PART II: LEA REQUIREMENTS

An SEA must develop an LEA application form that it will use to make subgrants of school improvement funds to eligible LEAs. That application must contain, at a minimum, the information set forth below. An SEA may include other information that it deems necessary in order to award school improvement funds to its LEAs.

Please note that for FY 2010, an SEA must develop or update its LEA application form to include information on any activities, as well as the budget for those activities, that LEAs plan to carry out during the pre-implementation period to help prepare for full implementation in the following school year.

The SEA must submit its LEA application form with its application to the Department for a School Improvement Grant. The SEA should attach the LEA application form in a separate document.

LEA APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

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

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	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.

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

- (1) For each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that—
 - The LEA has analyzed the needs of each school and selected an intervention for each school; and
 - The LEA 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 required activities of the school intervention model it has selected.
- (2) If the LEA is not applying to serve each Tier I school, the LEA must explain why it lacks capacity to serve each Tier I school.
- (3) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to—
 - Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements;
 - Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality;
 - Align other resources with the interventions;
 - Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively; and
 - Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
- (4) The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA’s application.
- (5) The LEA must describe the annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that it has established in order to monitor its Tier I and Tier II schools that receive school improvement funds.
- (6) 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.
- (7) The LEA must describe the goals it has established (subject to approval by the SEA) in order to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.
- (8) As appropriate, the LEA must consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA’s application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools.

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

The LEA must provide a budget 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.

Note: An LEA’s budget should cover three years of full implementation and be of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected school intervention model in each Tier I and Tier II school the LEA commits to serve. Any funding for activities during the pre-implementation period must be included in the first year of the LEA’s three-year budget plan.

An LEA’s budget for each year may not exceed the number of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools it commits to serve multiplied by \$2,000,000 or no more than \$6,000,000 over three years.

Example:

LEA XX BUDGET					
	Year 1 Budget		Year 2 Budget	Year 3 Budget	Three-Year Total
	Pre-implementation	Year 1 - Full Implementation			
Tier I ES #1	\$257,000	\$1,156,000	\$1,325,000	\$1,200,000	\$3,938,000
Tier I ES #2	\$125,500	\$890,500	\$846,500	\$795,000	\$2,657,500
Tier I MS #1	\$304,250	\$1,295,750	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$4,800,000
Tier II HS #1	\$530,000	\$1,470,000	\$1,960,000	\$1,775,000	\$5,735,000
LEA-level Activities	\$250,000		\$250,000	\$250,000	\$750,000
Total Budget	\$6,279,000		\$5,981,500	\$5,620,000	\$17,880,500

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

The LEA must assure that it will—

- (1) Use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school 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, and establish goals (approved by the SEA) to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive 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.

E. 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.

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

APPENDIX A

SEA ALLOCATIONS TO LEAS AND LEA BUDGETS

Continuing Impact of ARRA School Improvement Grant Funding in FY 2010

Congress appropriated \$546 million for School Improvement Grants in FY 2010. In addition, most States will be carrying over a portion of their FY 2009 SIG allocations, primarily due to the requirement in section II.B.9(a) of the SIG final requirements that if not every Tier I school in a State was served with FY 2009 SIG funds, the State was required to carry over 25 percent of its FY 2009 SIG allocation, combine those funds with the State's FY 2010 SIG allocation, and award the combined funding to eligible LEAs consistent with the SIG final requirements. In FY 2009, the combination of \$3 billion in School Improvement Grant funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and \$546 million from the regular FY 2009 appropriation created a unique opportunity for the program to provide the substantial funding over a multi-year period to support the implementation of school intervention models. In response to this opportunity, the Department encouraged States to apply for a waiver extending the period of availability of FY 2009 SIG funds until September 30, 2013 so that States could use these funds to make three-year grant awards to LEAs to support the full and effective implementation of school intervention models in their Tier I and Tier II schools. All States with approved FY 2009 SIG applications applied for and received this waiver to extend the period of availability of FY 2009 SIG funds and, consistent with the final SIG requirements, are using FY 2009 funds to provide a full three years of funding (aka, "frontloading") to support the implementation of school intervention models in Tier I and Tier II schools.

The Department encouraged frontloading in FY 2009 because the extraordinary amount of SIG funding available in FY 2009 meant that, if those funds had been used to fund only the first year of implementation of a school intervention model, *i.e.*, to make first-year only awards, there would not have been sufficient funding for continuation awards in years two and three of the SIG award period (*i.e.*, SIG funding in FY 2009 was seven times the amount provided through the regular appropriation). Similarly, the estimated nearly \$1.4 billion in total SIG funding available in FY 2010 (an estimated \$825 million in FY 2009 SIG carryover funds plus the \$546 million FY 2010 SIG appropriation) is larger than the expected annual SIG appropriation over the next two fiscal years; if all funds available in FY 2010 were used to make the first year of three-year awards to LEAs for services to eligible Tier I and Tier II schools, there would not be sufficient funds to make continuation awards in subsequent fiscal years.

Maximizing the Impact of Regular FY 2010 SIG Allocations

Continuing the practice of frontloading SIG funds in FY 2010 with respect to all SIG funds that are available for the FY 2010 competition (FY 2009 carryover funds plus the FY 2010 appropriation) would, in many States, limit the number of Tier I and Tier II schools that can be served as a result of the FY 2010 SIG competition. For this reason, the Department believes that, for most States, the most effective method of awarding FY 2010 SIG funds to serve the maximum number of Tier I and Tier II schools that have the capacity to fully and effectively implement a school intervention model is to frontload FY 2009 carryover funds while using FY 2010 SIG funds to make first-year only awards.

For example, if a State has \$36 million in FY 2009 carryover SIG funds and \$21 million in FY 2010 funds, and awards each school implementing a school intervention model an average of \$1 million per year over three years, the SEA would be able to fund 12 schools with FY 2009 carryover funds (*i.e.*, the \$36 million would cover all three years of funding for those 12 schools), plus an additional 21 schools with FY 2010 funds (*i.e.*, the \$21 million would cover the first year of funding for each of those schools, and the second and third years would be funded through continuation grants from subsequent SIG appropriations). Thus, the State would be able to support interventions in a total of 33 schools. However, if the same State elected to frontload all funds available for its FY 2010 SIG competition (FY 2009 carryover funds and its FY 2010 allocation), it would be able to fund interventions in only 19 schools (\$57 million divided by \$3 million per school over three years).

LEAs that receive first-year only awards would continue to implement intervention models in Tier I and Tier II schools over a three-year award period; however, second- and third-year continuation grants would be awarded from SIG appropriations in subsequent fiscal years. This practice of making first-year awards from one year's appropriation and continuation awards from funds appropriated in subsequent fiscal years is similar to the practice used for many U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant programs.

States with FY 2009 SIG carryover funds are invited to apply, as in their FY 2009 applications, for the waiver to extend the period of availability of these funds for one additional year to September 30, 2014. States that did not carry over FY 2009 SIG funds, or that carried over only a small amount of such funds, need not apply for this waiver; such States will use all available FY 2010 SIG funds to make first-year awards to LEAs in their FY 2010 SIG competitions.

Continuation of \$2 Million Annual Per School Cap

For FY 2010, States continue to have flexibility to award up to \$2 million annually for each participating school. This flexibility applies both to funds that are frontloaded and those that are used for first-year only awards. As in FY 2009, this higher limit will permit an SEA to award the amount that the Department believes typically would be required for the successful

implementation of the turnaround, restart, or transformation model in a Tier I or Tier II school (e.g., a school of 500 students might require \$1 million annually, whereas a large, comprehensive high school might require the full \$2 million annually).

In addition, the annual \$2 million per school cap, which permits total per-school funding of up to \$6 million over three years, reflects the continuing priority on serving Tier I or Tier II schools. An SEA must ensure that all Tier I and Tier II schools across the State that its LEAs commit to serve, and that the SEA determines its LEAs have capacity to serve, are awarded sufficient school improvement funding to fully and effectively implement the selected school intervention models over the period of availability of the funds before the SEA awards any funds for Tier III schools.

The following describes the requirements and priorities that apply to LEA budgets and SEA allocations.

LEA Budgets

An LEA's proposed budget should cover a three-year period and should take into account the following:

1. The number of Tier I and Tier II schools that the LEA commits to serve and the intervention model (turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation) selected for each school.
2. The budget request for each Tier I and Tier II school must be of sufficient size and scope to support full and effective implementation of the selected intervention over a period of three years. First-year budgets may be higher than in subsequent years due to one-time start-up costs.
3. The portion of school closure costs covered with school improvement funds may be significantly lower than the amount required for the other models and would typically cover only one year.
4. The LEA may request funding for LEA-level activities that will support the implementation of school intervention models in Tier I and Tier II schools.
5. The number of Tier III schools that the LEA commits to serve, if any, and the services or benefits the LEA plans to provide to these schools over the three-year grant period.
6. The maximum funding available to the LEA each year is determined by multiplying the total number of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools that the LEA is approved to serve by \$2 million (the maximum amount that an SEA may award to an LEA for each participating school).

SEA Allocations to LEAs

An SEA must allocate the LEA share of school improvement funds (*i.e.*, 95 percent of the SEA's allocation from the Department) in accordance with the following requirements:

1. The SEA must give priority to LEAs that apply to serve Tier I or Tier II schools.
2. An SEA may not award funds to any LEA for Tier III schools unless and until the SEA has awarded funds to serve all Tier I and Tier II schools across the State that its LEAs commit to serve and that the SEA determines its LEAs have capacity to serve.
3. An LEA with one or more Tier I schools may not receive funds to serve only its Tier III schools.
4. In making awards consistent with these requirements, an SEA must take into account LEA capacity to implement the selected school interventions, and also may take into account other factors, such as the number of schools served in each tier and the overall quality of LEA applications.
5. An SEA that does not have sufficient school improvement funds to allow each LEA with a Tier I or Tier II school to implement fully the selected intervention models may take into account the distribution of Tier I and Tier II schools among such LEAs in the State to ensure that Tier I and Tier II schools throughout the State can be served.
6. Consistent with the final requirements, an SEA may award an LEA less funding than it requests. For example, an SEA that does not have sufficient funds to serve fully all of its Tier I and Tier II schools may approve an LEA's application with respect to only a portion of the LEA's Tier I or Tier II schools to enable the SEA to award school improvement funds to Tier I and Tier II schools across the State. Similarly, an SEA may award an LEA funds sufficient to serve only a portion of the Tier III schools the LEA requests to serve.
7. Note that the requirement in section II.B.9(a) of the SIG requirements, under which an SEA that does not serve all of its Tier I schools must carry over 25 percent of its FY 2009 SIG allocation to the following year, does not apply to FY 2010 SIG funds.

An SEA's School Improvement Grant award to an LEA must:

1. Include not less than \$50,000 or more than \$2 million per year for each participating school (*i.e.*, the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools that the LEA commits to serve and that the SEA approves the LEA to serve).
2. Provide sufficient school improvement funds to implement fully and effectively one of the four intervention models in each Tier I and Tier II school the SEA approves the LEA to serve or close, as well as sufficient funds for serving participating Tier III schools. An

SEA may reduce an LEA's requested budget by any amounts proposed for interventions in one or more schools that the SEA does not approve the LEA to serve (*i.e.*, because the LEA does not have the capacity to serve the school or because the SEA is approving only a portion of Tier I and Tier II schools in certain LEAs in order to serve Tier I and Tier II schools across the State). An SEA also may reduce award amounts if it determines that an LEA can implement its planned interventions with less than the amount of funding requested in its budget.

3. Consistent with the priority in the final requirements, provide funds for Tier III schools only if the SEA has already awarded funds for all Tier I and Tier II schools across the State that its LEAs commit to serve and that the SEA determines its LEAs have capacity to serve.
4. Include any requested funds for LEA-level activities that support implementation of the school intervention models.
5. Apportion any FY 2009 carryover school improvement funds so as to provide funding to LEAs over three years (assuming the SEA has requested and received a waiver to extend the period of availability to September 30, 2014).
6. Use FY 2010 school improvement funds to make the first year of three-year grant awards to LEAs (unless the SEA has received a waiver of the period of availability for its FY 2010 funds). Continuation awards for years 2 and 3 would come from SIG appropriations in subsequent fiscal years.

APPENDIX B

	Schools an SEA MUST identify in each tier	Newly eligible schools an SEA MAY identify in each tier
Tier I	Schools that meet the criteria in paragraph (a)(1) in the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” [§]	Title I eligible ^{**} elementary schools that are no higher achieving than the highest-achieving school that meets the criteria in paragraph (a)(1)(i) in the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” <u>and</u> that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the bottom 20% of all schools in the State based on proficiency rates; <u>or</u> • have not made AYP for two consecutive years.
Tier II	Schools that meet the criteria in paragraph (a)(2) in the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.”	Title I eligible secondary schools that are (1) no higher achieving than the highest-achieving school that meets the criteria in paragraph (a)(2)(i) in the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” or (2) high schools that have had a graduation rate of less than 60 percent over a number of years <u>and</u> that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the bottom 20% of all schools in the State based on proficiency rates; <u>or</u> • have not made AYP for two consecutive years.
Tier III	Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not in Tier I. ^{††}	Title I eligible schools that do not meet the requirements to be in Tier I or Tier II <u>and</u> that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the bottom 20% of all schools in the State based on proficiency rates; <u>or</u> • have not made AYP for two years.

[§] “Persistently lowest-achieving schools” means, as determined by the State--

(a)(1) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that--

- (i) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or
- (ii) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and

(2) Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that--

- (i) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or
- (ii) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years.

^{**} For the purposes of schools that may be added to Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III, “Title I eligible” schools may be schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds or schools that are Title I participating (i.e., schools that are eligible for and do receive Title I, Part A funds).

^{††} Certain Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not in Tier I may be in Tier II rather than Tier III. In particular, certain Title I secondary schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not in Tier I may be in Tier II if an SEA receives a waiver to include them in the pool of schools from which Tier II schools are selected or if they meet the criteria in section I.A.1(b)(ii)(A)(2) and (B) and an SEA chooses to include them in Tier II.