



Oklahoma State Department of Education School Improvement Grant (SIG) Guide



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Program Description

School Improvement Grants (SIGs), authorized under Title I section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants awarded to state educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive sub grants to local educational agencies (LEAs). Competitive sub grants are awarded to LEAs that demonstrate the greatest need for funds and strongest commitment to use these funds to provide adequate resources and raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools. The funds are typically three year awards used to meet the needs of the students and staff as determined by data.

In order to receive funds, states must first submit a SEA School Improvement Grant Application for section 1003(g) of the ESEA to the United States Department of Education (USDE). If the SEA SIG Application is approved, 1003(g) funds are available for obligation by LEAs for a maximum of 27 months after funds become available. They remain available for obligation by LEAs under the initial period of availability for 15 months. Under section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, any funds that remain unobligated may be carried over for obligation for an additional 12 months. When LEAs apply, they must indicate that they will implement one of the following four models in their persistently lowest achieving schools:

1. **Turnaround Model:** Replace the principal; screen existing school staff and rehire no more than half the teachers; adopt a new governance structure; and improve the school through curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.
2. **Restart Model:** Convert a school or close it and re-open it as a charter school or under an education management organization.
3. **School Closure:** Close the school and send the students to higher-achieving schools in the district.
4. **Transformation Model:** Replace the principal and improve the school through comprehensive curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.

Additional information regarding the SIG program may be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.

Eligibility

Oklahoma's definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools has evolved since the initial SEA School Improvement Grant was awarded in federal fiscal year 2009. Only schools meeting the established criteria for persistently lowest achieving schools in the SEA SIG Application are eligible to apply for the School Improvement Grant. For the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, sites were identified using the Tier I, II, and III definitions found in the federal fiscal year 2009 SEA Application and the federal fiscal year 2010 SEA Application. (SEA applications may be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.)

In the federal fiscal year 2011 SEA Application, Oklahoma's definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools changed based on the United States Department of Education (USDE) approving Oklahoma's ESEA Flexibility Waiver on February 9, 2012. In the waiver, Oklahoma included a list of Priority Schools which are the lowest performing in the state. The priority school definition (as modified from the ESEA Flexibility Waiver for Oklahoma) is a school that, based on scores on the most recent administrations as well as prior administrations of the state assessments in reading and mathematics used in the prior accountability system, has been identified as among the lowest-performing in the state. The total number of priority schools in the state must be at least five percent of the Title I schools in the state. Any sections that formally apply to Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools now apply to Priority Schools.

A Priority School is: **(1)** a Title I school among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the state based on the achievement of the “all students” group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, combined, and the school’s lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group; **(2)** a school among the lowest five percent of all schools in the state based on the achievement of the “all students” group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, combined, and the school’s lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group; **(3)** a Title I-participating, a Title I-eligible, and/or a non-Title I high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent for three consecutive years; or **(4)** all Tier I schools receiving SIG funds to implement a school intervention model .

Schools currently receiving the SIG grant are not eligible to apply for this competition.

Additional information regarding eligibility may be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.

SIG Recipients

Cohort 1 (2010-2011)

For the 2010-2011 school year, 15 eligible Oklahoma schools applied and ten (10) schools were awarded.

- Crutch Elementary (Crutch Public Schools)
- Douglass Middle School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- U.S. Grant High School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- F. D. Moon Academy (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- Central High School (Tulsa Public Schools)
- Clinton Middle School (Tulsa Public Schools)
- East Central High School (Tulsa Public Schools)
- Nathan Hale High School (Tulsa Public Schools)
- Gilcrease Middle School (Tulsa Public Schools) *
- Will Rogers High School (Tulsa Public Schools) *

*As a part of a new district initiative (Project Schoolhouse) in Tulsa Public Schools, Gilcrease Middle School and Will Rogers High School closed in the summer of 2011. Unexpended funds were made available for remaining Cohort 1 sites and new Cohort 2 sites who requested additional funds to carry out the intervention model.

Cohort 2 (2011-2012)

For the 2011-2012 school year, three eligible Oklahoma schools applied and all three schools were awarded.

- Justice Alma SeeWorth Academy (Oklahoma City Public Schools – Charter School)
- Oklahoma Centennial Middle School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- Oklahoma Centennial High School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)

Cohort 3 (2012-2013)

For the 2012-2013 school year, six eligible Oklahoma schools applied and three schools were awarded.

- Shidler Elementary School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- Roosevelt Middle School (Oklahoma City Public Schools)
- Butner Elementary School (Butner Public Schools)

LEA applications and budgets may be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.

Application Process

SEA Application Process

1. SEA receives notice from The Office of School Turnaround (OST) at USDE regarding Continuation and New Awards Application for SIG.
2. SEA staff reviews the Continuation and New Awards Application to determine eligibility.
3. SEA consults the Title I Committee of Practitioners to review the application and receive any comments.
4. SEA, with stakeholder involvement, completes the appropriate application (Continuation or New Award).
5. SEA completes any revisions necessary for the LEA Application template.
6. SEA submits the appropriate application with a copy of the LEA Application template (if necessary) to USDE.
7. If the application is approved, USDE will send SEA the grant award notification.

LEA Application Process

1. SEA will distribute the LEA grant applications to all eligible LEAs.
2. SEA will request that any eligible LEAs interested in the SIG submit a letter of intent.
3. SEA will provide a technical assistance meeting for all LEAs that intend to submit an application. (Videoconference and/or Webinar)
4. SEA staff will offer a Videoconference and/or Webinar (Presentation, Question and Answer format) for SIG Principals and others.
5. The SEA will provide a Webinar for technical assistance with guidelines and applications.
6. Original copy of LEA application is due to the SEA.
7. SEA panel will review the application and feedback will be provided to the LEA.
8. LEA applications for three year awards will be approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education.
9. SEA will host the SIG Overview meeting to provide information on implementation.
10. All approved LEAs (applications and budgets) will be posted on the OSDE Website.
11. SEA and LEA collaborate to begin full implementation of the selected intervention model.

SEA and LEA applications may be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.

Support

The Office of School Support/School Improvement

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) offers support to all SIG recipients through multiple ways, but the Office of School Support/School Improvement (SSSI) leads the effort. While the SIG does not have a large SEA staff, members of the SSSI team share the responsibilities of administering the grant.

Assistant State Superintendent	OSDE Office of School Turnaround
State Director	OSDE Office of School Turnaround Programmatic aspects of SIG Grant
Coordinator II	Provides support to SIG Director with programmatic aspects of 1003(a) and 1003(g) programs
Grant Consultant	SIG grant award notifications, SIG allocation notices, and SIG Fiscal Management
Coordinator I	Provides support to Grants Consultant with fiscal aspects of 1003(a) and 1003(g)
Program Specialists	Provides support to designated SIG sites

School Support Team Leaders (SSTLs)

In addition to the staff members listed above, OSDE contracts with educational leadership coaches referred to as School Support Team Leaders. SSTLs provide regular on-site technical assistance to school sites depending on the identified areas of need. If the school requires any additional support, SSTLs are also responsible for coordinating with SEA staff.

For more information about the support available for SIG sites, please see The Oklahoma Story (pdf) available at <http://ok.gov/sde/school-improvement-grant-sig>.

Monitoring Process

School Improvement Plan (Ways to Improve School Effectiveness - WISE)

The Academic Development Institute's Center on Innovation and Improvement, in partnership with Oklahoma, established a Web-based system to sustain, track, and report improvement activities. In Oklahoma the indicators were aligned to the Title I Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Plan requirements under §1114 and §1115 respectively of the ESEA. The School Improvement Plan requirements under §1116 of the ESEA have also been included. Nationally the system is referred to as the Indistar© system while Oklahoma has opted to use the acronym WISE. The system allows schools to describe their current level of implementation, their vision for the future, and the plan for achieving their goal through the use of precise action steps. SEA staff will review the plan to ensure alignment with SIG model requirements.

For more information about WISE, please visit <http://ok.gov/sde/wise>.

Application and Expenditure Reimbursement Process

Each SIG school that is awarded 1003(g) funds must complete a budget through the Grants Management System (GMS). The budget will contain information regarding the allocation (including any carryover funds), details for proposed expenditures, and details for grant funded personnel. GMS ensures information on the personnel page aligns with School Personnel Records and the Highly Qualified Teacher System, as appropriate. SEA staff members review the budget to ensure that the proposed expenditures align with the current approved grant. **Any expenditure that was not approved in the original grant will be denied unless the LEA and school can provide justification in an amendment to the SIG Application.**

Once the budget is approved, the school will also use GMS to create and submit expenditure summary reports to receive reimbursements. SEA staff members peer-review the expenditure summary report to ensure that the expenditures align with the current approved budget.

Implementation Meetings

SEA staff requires each SIG school to participate in three implementation meetings throughout the course of the school year to ensure the selected model is implemented as required. At the meeting the SEA, LEA, and school site staff will discuss each model requirement in depth to determine the level of implementation. Additional agenda items will be added as necessary.

Data Reviews

SEA staff requires each SIG school to participate in three data reviews throughout the course of the school year to ensure data is utilized to inform practice. During the data review the SEA, LEA, and school staff review benchmark data that is aligned to state standards, teacher and student attendance data, behavior data, professional development implementation data, parent involvement data, and professional learning community data. LEAs and schools analyze data and discuss observations and trends and then develop theories related to meaningful changes in instruction.

SIG Requirement Report

LEA and site staff will submit the SIG Requirements Report to the SEA for review and approval three times a year to ensure that school sites are reviewing data to track progress.

The SIG Requirement Report contains the following information:

1. Statement of Assurance
2. Consultation Form
3. Parent Notification Letter and Web site posting
4. School Choice Form
5. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely (SMART) Goals
6. Baseline School Improvement Status Report (SISR)
7. Quarterly SISRs (September, October, January, and March)
8. SIG Intervention Model Implementation Report
9. WISE Plan (located in the WISE Online Planning Tool)
10. WISE Assurances

School Improvement Grant Advisory Board (SIGAB)

The SIGAB serves the SEA by reviewing district goals, model implementation, and annual progress. The SIGAB includes members from the Committee of Practitioners (COP), SEA representatives, and School Support Team Leaders (SSTLs). Each summer, the SIGAB members review documentation and presentations by schools that received the SIG. Each SIGAB member will complete the appropriate rubric during the review. After the review the SIGAB will determine if the schools will continue to receive funding.

Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

Each school will create a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) based on the feedback and recommendations from the SIGAB. SDE staff will review the school's CAP during each Implementation Meeting to ensure that the school is performing the agreed upon corrective actions.