



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

August 11, 2011

Dear Fiscal Year 2009 School Improvement Sub-Grantees:

**CONDITIONAL APPROVAL OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT COHORT 1
FUNDING RENEWAL**

This letter summarizes the action taken by the State Board of Education (SBE) regarding the California Department of Education's (CDE) recommendation to approve the renewal of Year 2 funding to School Improvement Grant (SIG) Cohort 1 sub-grantees, as well as provide information and instruction regarding required action by applicable sub-grantees.

On July 13, 2011, the SBE took action on Item 3 regarding the renewal of funding for Year 2 of SIG Cohort 1 to conditionally approve the CDE's recommendation to move forward with funding renewals. Continued funding for each Cohort 1 SIG local education agency (LEA) is contingent on the LEA submitting a Corrective Action Plan to address school improvement model implementation concerns identified by CDE staff. The SBE item, titled "Elementary and Secondary Education Act: School Improvement Grant: Approval of Renewal of Funding for Year 2 of Cohort 1 Fiscal Year 2009 Local Educational Agencies and Schools for the Sub-Grants Under Section 1003(g)" is available on the CDE Agenda, July 13–14, 2011 Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr11/agenda201107.asp>.

The March 2011 federal monitoring visit by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and subsequent CDE staff review of Cohort 1 SIG LEAs indicated that many SIG Cohort 1 sub-grantees are not meeting the requirements of the grant as set forth in the SIG Cohort 1 request for applications and requirements as defined in Section 1003(g) of the Elementary Secondary Education Act. In order to qualify for a renewal of funding for Year 2 of Cohort 1, each LEA must provide a Corrective Action Plan that details how all required elements of the approved school intervention model will be addressed and includes revised SIG Implementation Charts and Budgets. Implementation concerns included items such as insufficient evidence of increased learning time (ILT), principal replacement, and staff replacement, as required by each applicable intervention model. To assist you in the development of the corrective action plan, we are providing additional clarifying information regarding federal ILT requirements.

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ILT Guidelines for SIG

Question A-31 in ED's February 23, 2011, SIG Guidance defines ILT with respect to SIG:

ILT means using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for:

- (a) instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography;
- (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and
- (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.

The definition indicates that the ILT should occur in each of the three areas.

The ED provides further guidance on ILT in its Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) N167 - SIG File Specifications for submission of the SIG leading indicators to the ED (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/eden/non-xml/n167-7-3.doc>). The EDEN Submission System is an electronic system that facilitates the efficient and timely transmission of data from State Education Agencies (SEAs) to the ED. The data collected using this file specification are used to monitor and report performance on the SIG program. (Note: The "Inactive" watermark on this guidance means that data files cannot be submitted at this time; however, the guidance contained within the specifications has been finalized and approved by ED.) The guidance states:

What constitutes "all students had the opportunity to participate?"

All students had the opportunity to participate if there was no selection process for the activity. For example, an afterschool program available only to a subset of students in the school, such as those who are failing a course, would not be included.

Are minutes from an activity that was not available to all students included?

No. Minutes are included only when the activity was available to all students.

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Increased Learning Time

Increases should be reported relative to the prior school year.

All students must have the opportunity to participate in the ILT; it must occur in core, enrichment, and teacher collaboration; and it must represent an increase relative to the prior school year, which is 2009–10 for Cohort 1.

Question E-12 from the SIG Guidance also states that ILT is more closely focused on increasing the number of instructional minutes in the school day or days in the school year.

With respect to extending learning into before- and after-school hours, Question A-32 in the SIG Guidance states:

Extending learning into before- and after-school hours can be difficult to implement effectively, but is permissible under this definition, although the Department encourages LEAs to closely integrate and coordinate academic work between in school and out of school. To satisfy the requirements in Section I.A.2(a)(1)(viii) of the turnaround model and Section I.A.2(d)(3)(i)(A) of the transformation model for providing ILT, a before- or after-school instructional program must be available to all students in the school.

An afterschool program available only to a subset of students in the school, such as those who are failing a course, would not be a form of ILT.

With respect to a minimum amount of ILT, Question A-32d in the SIG Guidance states:

Although research supports the effectiveness of increasing learning time by a minimum of 300 hours, the final requirements do not require that an LEA implementing either the turnaround model or the transformation model necessarily provide at least 300 hours of ILT. An LEA has the flexibility to determine precisely how to meet the requirement to establish schedules that provide ILT, and should do so with an eye toward the goal of increasing learning time enough to have a meaningful impact on the academic program in which the model is being implemented.

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Corrective Action Plan

Each applicable LEA is required to submit a Corrective Action Plan containing a (1) Cover Page which provides a summary of the implementation concerns and a narrative outlining the proposed resolution(s); (2) a corrected Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative; and (3) revised SIG Form 10 Implementation Chart that reflects the activities identified in the Corrective Action Plan and includes a list of any applicable documentation or evidence. Once received, an assigned CDE staff member will review the Corrective Action Plan and provide technical assistance to each LEA. Please note that pursuant to SBE action, Year 2 Grant Award Notifications and funding may not be released until all implementation concerns have been addressed and the LEA's Corrective Action Plan has been approved by the CDE.

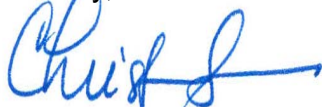
The proposed timeline of the Corrective Action Plan Review process is outlined below:

Important Events	Dates
Notification of Implementation Concerns provided to LEAs by CDE staff	August 15–26, 2011
Proposed Resolution of Implementation Concerns due to CDE	September 12, 2011
CDE Approval of Proposed Resolution of Implementation Concerns	September 21, 2011
Year 2 Grant Award Notifications released	September 23, 2011

The CDE is hosting a conference call for SIG Cohort 1 Superintendents and SIG Contacts this week. A follow-up e-mail will include the date, time, the toll telephone number, and access information.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Chad Portney, by phone at 916-324-3455 or by e-mail at CPortney@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Christine Swenson, Director
District and School Improvement Division

CS:jb