Texas Education Agency

Texas Title I Priority Schools Grants

State Application

to

U. S. Department of Education

for
Federal School Improvement Grants
Section 1003(g) of the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act

CFDA Numbers: 84.377A; 84.388A

February 18, 2010
Revised March 19, 2010

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APPLICATION COVER SHEET

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

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Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X	Date: February 18, 2010

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.

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Acronyms

ARRA   American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

CCSRI   Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement

CFT   Communities Foundation of Texas

CMO   Charter Management Organization

CNA   Comprehensive Needs Assessment

COP   Committee of Practitioners

EMO   Educational Management Organization

ESC   Education Service Center

ESEA   Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965

FY   Fiscal Year

LEA   Local Education Agency

LEP   Limited English Proficient

NOGA   Notice of Grant Award

PSP   Professional Service Provider

QIR   Quarterly Implementation Report

RFQ   Request for Qualifications

SEA   State Education Agency

SES   Supplemental Educational Services

SIG   School Improvement Grant

SIRC   School Improvement Resource Center

TASA   Texas Association of School Administrators

TCDSS   Texas Center for District and School Support

TEA   Texas Education Agency

TLP   Turnaround Leader Program

TTIPS   Texas Title I Priority Schools Grant

TXCC   Texas Comprehensive Center

USDE   United States Department of Education

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Background Information

Purpose of the Program

School Improvement Grants, authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants, through State Educational Agencies (SEAs), to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) for use in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring 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 their students so as to enable the schools to make adequate yearly progress and exit improvement status. Under the final requirements, as amended through the interim final requirements published in the Federal Register in January 2010, school improvement funds are to be focused on each State's "Tier I" and "Tier II" schools. Tier I schools are a State's persistently lowest-achieving Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring and, if a State so chooses, certain Title I eligible elementary schools that are as low achieving as the State's other Tier I schools. Tier II schools are a State's persistently-lowest achieving secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible 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. An LEA may also use school improvement funds in Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools and, if a State so chooses, certain additional Title I eligible schools ("Tier III schools"). (See Appendix C 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.

TEA Response

The Texas Education Agency (TEA or Agency) is committed to turning around Texas's persistently lowest-achieving schools as well as improving the academic performance of all campuses eligible for Title I. To this end, Texas is submitting this application to participate in the School Improvement Grant, authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA). This grant will be named the Texas Title I Priority Schools Grant (TTIPS) School Improvement Grants (SIG) funded under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), referenced as TTIPS SIG hereafter.

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Application Process

TEA is establishing a two step application process. LEAs will first submit an LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1), which will be the basis for grant awards under this three-year grant program. The second step will be submission of a Model Selection and Description Report (Attachment 2), which will identify the school intervention model option selected by the LEA for each campus.

After discussion with the SIG program staff at the U. S. Department of Education (USDE), TEA will require each LEA with eligible Tier I, II, or III campuses to submit a separate grant application for each eligible campus. It is anticipated that several sections of the application related to LEA capacity, commitment, and support will contain very similar responses, with some variations for individual campus needs, for each eligible campus within the LEA. Each eligible campus application will be reviewed and scored separately.

Grant Timeline--Two Implementation Options

TEA staff have reviewed USDE's proposed/requested timeline for the implementation of this grant program. The agency has discussed this grant program and received input from Texas LEAs and various stakeholder groups. The agency has also reviewed several research citations on implementation of these types of school improvement interventions, reforms, and restructuring models.

Based on this information, TEA respectfully proposes two parallel paths for LEA implementation of the reform opportunities. For LEAs that have significant reforms underway to address the needs of their lowest performing campuses, technical assistance and resources will be provided to support their continued reform efforts (Option 1 on page 3). For LEAs in earlier stages of implementation of these more aggressive USDE intervention models, additional technical assistance is proposed that will provide the necessary information and support to ensure successful implementation (Option 2 on page 3). TEA cites research from the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement's (CCSRI) plan for school restructuring which indicates the need for high quality, high touch technical assistance to fully and effectively implement a restructuring model[*].

The technical assistance provided under the Option 2 implementation timeline (described below) will provide LEAs with sufficient time and resources to develop and implement their plans for establishing the selected model. Technical assistance will include the following types of activities:
- Analyzing the LEA decision making process
- Analyzing the campus' climate and performance
- Determining the need for major, focused changes
- Engaging outside experts or partners
- Setting campus goals, targets, and timelines for implementation
- Addressing implementation barriers

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[*] The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2009). *School restructuring: What works when? A guide for education leaders*. Washington, DC: Learning Point Associates.
http://www.centerforcsri.org/files/School_Restructuring_Guide.pdf

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- Identifying and utilizing resources to implement each strategy or activity
- Clarifying LEA and campus staff roles and responsibilities for school improvement

In addition to the activities above that should be completed as the foundation to full implementation of an aggressive school wide intervention, LEA/campuses that do not already have school improvement programs underway need appropriate time to make staffing decisions, especially in instances where campuses will implement turnaround or transformation. In Texas public schools, staffing decisions are typically made during February through March for the following school year. Under the USDE timeline for this grant program, these types of decisions would be made during the summer months, which is potentially late for effective school improvement, particularly if an LEA wants to ensure that the best teachers are employed at the Tier I and Tier II schools. An optional pathway for full implementation would also allow the agency time to engage in a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to solicit external providers and other appropriate contractors to support successful implementation of the program.

For these reasons, which are based substantially on comments provided by Texas LEAs, TEA proposes establishing two parallel timelines for implementing the TTIPS SIG program. Depending on where the eligible LEA/campus is regarding their implementation of an aggressive reform school improvement timeline, the eligible LEA/campus may select to apply for the TTIPS SIG grant and implement it on either of the following two timeline options.

Timeline	Option 1: For LEAs currently engaged in aggressive reform	Option 2: For LEAs in need of foundational technical assistance
February 2010	• Agency Submits State Application to USDE • Agency Releases Grant Eligibility List • USDE Awards Grant to State	• Agency Submits State Application to USDE • Agency Releases Grant Eligibility List • USDE Awards Grant to State

March—April 2010	• LEA Application Available, contingent upon timely USDE approval of state application
	• Technical Assistance: Overview Sessions
	• Technical Assistance: Four Models
	• Technical Assistance: Application
	• LEA Submits LEA/campus application for funding
	• RFA posted on the TEA website.
	  • Grant announced via the Texas Register and Texas Online.
	• Application due 6-8 weeks after posting.
	• Pre-screening of applications. (1 week)
		• LEA Application Available, contingent upon timely USDE approval of state application
		• Technical Assistance: Overview Sessions
		• Technical Assistance: Four Models
		• Technical Assistance: Application
		• LEA Submits LEA/campus application for funding
		• RFA posted on the TEA website.
		  • Grant announced via the Texas Register, and Texas Online.
		• Application due 6-8 weeks after posting.
		• Pre-screening of applications. (1 week)

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	• Reviewing & Scoring of applications (1-2 week). • Ranking of applications	• Reviewing & Scoring of applications (1-2 week). • Ranking of applications
May 2010	• TEA Awards LEA Grants • LEA/campus submits the Model Selection and Description Report for each campus to TEA • Technical Assistance: Special Topics (as described later in the application)	• TEA Awards LEA Grants • Technical Assistance: Research Models
June—July 2010	• TEA Negotiates Awarded Grants and Model Selection and Description Report	• TEA Negotiates Awarded Grants • On-going Technical Assistance
August 2010	• TEA issues Notice of Grant Awards (NOGAs) for 100% of three-year grant award • TEA releases 100% of first year grant award • LEA/campus begins full implementation of grant • On-going Technical Assistance Note: Tier III NOGAs will be awarded on October 1, 2010.	• TEA issues NOGAs for 100% of three-year grant award • TEA releases 25% of first year grant award • LEA/campus begins implementation of grant • On-going Technical Assistance Note: Tier III NOGAs will be awarded on October 1, 2010. Note: The LEA may submit to TEA the Model Selection and Description Report and receive the remaining 75% of the first year grant amount at any time between August 1, 2010, and February 1, 2011, and begin full implementation of the selected model.
November 2010	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
February 1, 2011	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• LEA submits Model Selection and Description Report; if not submitted previously • TEA releases remaining 75% of first year grant award upon successful submission of the Model Selection and Description Report to TEA
February— August 2011	• LEA/campus continues full implementation of intervention model	• LEA/campus implement state required procedures for 1) bidding, contracts, and procurement of services, and 2) evaluation and

	• On-going Technical Assistance	hiring of necessary staff to implement staffing requirements of model selected • On-going Technical Assistance
May 1, 2011	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
August 1, 2011	• End of Year 1 Implementation Report due to TEA	• End of Year 1 Implementation Report due to TEA • LEA/campus begins full implementation of the intervention model
August 1, 2011	• TEA evaluates LEA/campus performance on annual goals and meeting grant requirements and, as applicable, releases 100% of second year grant award	• TEA evaluates LEA/campus performance on annual goals and meeting grant requirements and, as applicable, releases 100% of second year grant award
November 1, 2011	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
February 1, 2012	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
May 1, 2012	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
August 1, 2012	• End of Year 2 Implementation Report due to TEA	• End of Year 2 Implementation Report due to TEA
August 1, 2012	• TEA evaluates LEA/campus performance on annual goals and meeting grant requirements and, as applicable, releases 100% of third year grant award	• TEA evaluates LEA/campus performance on annual goals and meeting grant requirements and, as applicable, releases 100% of third year grant award
November 1, 2012	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
February 1, 2013	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
May 1, 2013	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA	• Quarterly Implementation Report due to TEA
June 30, 2013	• LEA grant end date	• LEA grant end date
July 31, 2013	• Final Implementation Report due to TEA	• Final Implementation Report due to TEA

The Model Selection and Description Report and the Quarterly Implementation Reports (QIR) will be reviewed, negotiated, and approved by TEA grant staff. All required report submissions become part of the approved LEA/campus application for funding.

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Model Implementation Options

TEA is offering eligible LEA/campus grantees two options for implementing the selected intervention models. The LEA/campus may choose to implement the TEA Designed Model with technical assistance provided on behalf of TEA by the School Improvement Resource Center (SIRC). The SIRC technical assistance is described on page 8. The LEA/campus may also choose to implement its own intervention design, within the parameters/requirements required by the final federal regulations released by USDE. The LEA/campus will receive priority points for selecting the TEA Designed Model with technical assistance from SIRC; although, the LEA is not guaranteed selection and funding solely because it selects the TEA designed model.

In addition, TEA will implement the flexibility to allow a Tier I, Tier II, Tier III grantee campus that has implemented, in whole or in part, either the Turnaround, Restart, or Transformation models within the last two years to continue or complete the implementation of the intervention model with the TTIPS grant funds. For example, if a grantee campus has replaced its principal within the last two years, the LEA/campus will not be required to hire another new principal. An LEA/campus that receives TTIPS SIG funds in accordance with this flexibility must fully implement the selected model as required by the final federal requirements. In other words, if the school had been implementing the model only in part, it must use the funds it receives to expand its implementation so that it fully complies with the federal regulatory requirements.

TEA Designed Models for TTIPS SIG

The <u>TEA Designed Model for Turnaround</u> will be the Texas Turnaround Leader Program (TLP), which is a two-year program in partnership with institutions of higher education. Designed to serve the lowest performing campuses in Texas, the TLP will build LEA and campus-level capacity through the implementation of policies and practices that establish the necessary environment and support needed to effectively turnaround these campuses. Highlights of the program include: establishing a talent pool for the recruitment, selection and development of highly qualified and effective leaders; mentoring and coaching high-impact principals to develop the knowledge, skills, tools, resources and support necessary to accelerate and sustain dramatic increases in student achievement; and embedding research-based best practices in effective, extraordinary school turnaround resulting in the production of impressive and sustainable increases in student achievement in some of the most chronically underperforming campuses.

Participating campuses and LEA leadership teams will engage in research-based data analysis, strategic planning, and ongoing professional development and training delivered and supported by the higher education faculty, support teams at each of the twenty regional Education Service Centers (ESC), Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS) staff, and contracted partners.

The <u>TEA Designed Model for Restart</u> will support LEAs and campuses through the closure and restart process. Technical assistance and toolkits will be provided to assist LEAs with designing a comprehensive restart plan that includes community input and communication strategies for successful implementation. For LEAs working with individual campuses and those deciding to cluster schools under this model, SIRC will provide guidance and ongoing support for the LEA turnaround team. Partnerships with EMOs

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(approved through an RFQ process to ensure quality) will support LEAs and campuses choosing this option and will provide tools and resources for recruitment of quality turnaround leaders, including teachers.

By collaborating with multiple partners to support LEAs that select this option, TEA will provide technical assistance as participants address how to improve their readiness to learn, readiness to teach, and readiness to act based upon the research of high-performing high-poverty campuses.

The TEA Designed Model for Transformation is based on three principles: improving student achievement and increasing college and career readiness by building the capacity of campus leaders and teachers; improving campus climate through social and emotional supports; and utilizing district support to transform systems. Key elements of the Transformation model include extensive training on using data and evaluation systems effectively, job-embedded professional development models, comprehensive needs assessment and campus processes, Positive Behavior Support, utilization of community partners, and maximizing extended learning time. Technical assistance will include a professional service provider/case manager, online professional development, ESC partners, and other resources and best practices.

Closure: Based on researched best practices and lessons learned from Pittsburgh, Chicago, Denver, and Portland public schools, TEA has designed a protocol of procedures to guide an LEA through communicating and implementing the closure of a campus and enrolling the students who attended the campus in other, higher-achieving campuses within the LEA. The protocol will provide technical assistance and training to the LEA in developing the following areas:
- Closure criteria based on LEA-wide data analysis
- Criteria for the selection of a closure committee
- Communication criteria and feedback process for the campus community and all stakeholders
- Guidelines for planning an in-depth data analysis for evaluating, selecting and building capacity of higher-achieving campuses
- Guidelines for decision-making processes and consensus
- Procedures and processes for the transition of students and personnel

Funding Priorities

TEA is prioritizing Tier I and Tier II campus, Tier III regular instructional campuses, campuses incorporating Supplemental Educational Services (SES) into their intervention model, and the use of the TEA Designed Model in the application for funding. TEA will award the following priority points (maximum of 18 points allowable) to applications that implement school improvement models for the following eligible campuses.

Point Value	Eligible LEA/campus
10 points	Tier I or Tier II campus
5 points	Tier III traditional or charter school regular instructional campus
3 points	Incorporating SES into the intervention model or enhancing and expanding current SES program (Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III)
5 points	Implementing the TEA Designed Model with technical assistance provided by SIRC on behalf of TEA (Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III)

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Supplement, Not Supplant

The TTIPS SIG grant program will require an LEA that receives TTIPS SIG funds to serve one or more Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III campuses (whether the campus receives Title I, Part A funds or not) to ensure that each campus receives all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of the SIG funds. As a result, an LEA must provide a TTIPS SIG grantee campus all of the non-Federal funds the campus would have received were it not a TTIPS SIG grantee campus, and TTIPS SIG funds must supplement the *amount* of those non-Federal funds. Note, however, that the campus does not need to demonstrate that TTIPS SIG funds are used only for activities that supplement those activities the campus would otherwise provide with non-Federal funds.

Title I Schoolwide Campus
For a Title I campus operating a schoolwide program, this means the LEA may use Title I, Part A funds, other Federal education funds, and TTIPS SIG funds only to supplement the *amount* of non-Federal funds that the campus would otherwise have received if it were not operating a schoolwide program, including those funds necessary to provide services required by law for students with disabilities and limited English proficient (LEP) students.

Therefore, an LEA must provide a Title I campus operating a schoolwide program all of the non-Federal funds the school would have received were it not a schoolwide campus, and TTIPS SIG funds, like Title I, Part A and other Federal education funds, must supplement the *amount* of those non-Federal funds. Note, however, that the campus does not need to demonstrate that TTIPS SIG funds are used only for activities that supplement those activities the campus would otherwise provide with non-Federal funds. (See NCLB, Section 1114(a)(2)(B).)

Title I Targeted Assistance Campus
For a Title I school operating a targeted assistance program with TTIPS SIG funds, this means that the Title I supplement, not supplant provision in section 1120(b) for targeted assistance campuses (requiring that the LEA must ensure that the Title I, Part A funds the campus receives are used only for activities that supplement those that would be available from non-Federal funds for Title I participating students in the absence of the Title I, Part A funds) does not apply to TTIPS SIG funds because TTIPS SIG funds are not funds available under Title I, Part A.

However, the general supplement, not supplant requirement above would apply. Also, an LEA is obligated to ensure that all of its Title I campuses, including those operating a targeted assistance program, are comparable to its non-Title I campuses in accordance with section 1120A(c) of the ESEA.

Technical Assistance and Support

The School Improvement Resource Center (SIRC), housed at Region XIII Education Service Center (ESC) in Austin, is TEA's Title I-funded technical assistance provider to campuses identified as needing improvement. SIRC exists as part of the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS) which provides support and technical assistance to campuses staged in intervention status in both the state and

federal accountability systems. In general, SIRC will provide the following types of support and technical assistance to all grantee LEAs and schools.

- Training on grant intervention model options
- Training, assistance, and support to grantees implementing the four improvement models and the Tier III program
- Support for implementation of grantee's District Turnaround Office
- On-site technical assistance via Professional Service Provider (PSP)
- Pre-assessment of the LEA's' readiness, capacity, and commitment to implement the grant program
- Needs assessment of the LEA's systems of support, formative assessment processes, use of data, and professional development
- Assistance for grantees with awareness and communications around the grant
- On-going technical assistance to LEA and campuses, including, but not limited to, phone communication, online resources, face to face mentoring/training, webinars, teleconferencing or discussion boards.

All TTIPS SIG grantees will be required to participate in certain technical assistance and support activities. SIRC may provide other professional development opportunities to TTIPS SIG grantee campuses at a fee for service. TTIPS grantees may also receive discounted price services from SIRC upon request of the LEA/campus.

Texas' Tier III Grant Program

Eligible Tier III LEA/campuses may apply for a Tier III grant only if the LEA/campus agrees to implement one of the four intervention models required in the final federal regulations <u>or</u> the agency's designed Tier III Transformation program. Based on public input, TEA has altered the Tier I/II Transformation Model slightly as described in the LEA/campus application for funding in Schedule #4—Program Requirements (Attachment 1). Basically, the Tier III Transformation model requires the evaluation of the effectiveness of the campus principal with the evaluation results determining whether the principal should be replaced or retained or needs to receive leadership coaching and professional development; rather than requiring the replacement of the principal.

Performance Goals and Evaluation

All grantees will be held accountable for meeting the LEA's Annual Performance Goals approved by TEA through the application process and the Agency's Performance Assessment and Evaluation targets. See Schedule #4C—Performance Assessment and Evaluation; Part 3: Annual Performance Goals and Part 4: Grant Data Collection and Evaluation of the LEA/campus application for funding. Regardless of the intervention model selected by the LEA/campus or the timeline for implementation, the expected end result of the three year grant will be the same. However, LEAs selecting to implement the Option 2 implementation timeline will be expected to approve annual performance goals that are realistic to the

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implementation timeline and base those goals on the additional intervention activities that will be added to the model program to be selected.

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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.

Along with its list of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, the SEA must provide the definition that it used to develop this list of schools. If the SEA's definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools that it makes publicly available on its Web site is identical to the definition that it used to develop its list of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, it may provide a link to the page on its Web site where that definition is posted rather than providing the complete definition.

LEA NAME, NCES ID #						
SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE	NEWLY ELIGIBLE[1]

> *An SEA should attach a table with this information to its School Improvement Grant application. If an SEA is providing the definition it used to develop its list of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools rather than a link to its definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools, it should also attach the definition to its application.*

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[1] As noted above, an SEA must identify newly eligible schools on its list only if it chooses to take advantage of this option.

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TEA Response

See Attachment 3 for the state's eligibility list for the TTIPS SIG. Utilizing the additional flexibility offered in the 2010 USDE Appropriations Act, 1644 campuses in 611 LEAs are eligible for the grant program, with the majority being eligible in Tier III.

See Attachment 4 for the definition and methodology for identification of the eligibility list. The "persistently lowest achieving" schools group of eligible campuses for this grant is the same as submitted in the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Part 2 application and is posted at
http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=7354&menu_id=798.

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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.

(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 how it will 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.

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TEA Response

Part 1

Overall:

To ensure that LEAs complete the three actions listed in Part I prior to submitting their grant applications, SIRC will provide training on grant intervention model options and conduct a pre-assessment of LEA grantees' readiness, capacity, and commitment to implementing the TTIPS SIG program in eligible Tier I and Tier II campuses before and during the time that the LEA/campus is completing their grant application. The LEA/campus will describe the process it used to complete these three actions in its application for funding submitted to TEA. The application will be then be scored by a peer review panel according to the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

Action (1)—LEA Analysis of Needs

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), which collects the numbers of students enrolled in each grade level on the campus, the data sources to be reviewed as part of the CNA process, the process to be followed by the LEA to conduct the CNA, and the groups of participants to be included in the process. Eligible applicants are advised in the instructions document to consider following the campus CNA process that is provided by TEA through the regional ESCs. The archived webinar of this training on the CNA process is available on the Texas Comprehensive Center (TXCC) web site at http://txcc.sedl.org/resources/webinars/material/webinar2/index.html. The campus specific CNA tool referenced in the training is available to LEA/campuses at http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/NCLB/CNA.htm. The CNA schedule will be scored as a part of the competitive grant review process according to the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

By February 1, 2011, the LEA/campus is also required to submit the Model Selection and Description Report (Attachment 2), which becomes incorporated into the LEA/campus approved application for funding. TEA staff will review and approve the report. In the Model Selection and Description Report, the LEA/campus is required to describe the needs it identified through the CNA process according to the Critical Success Factors (CSF). The CSFs and Milestones described below on pages 17-18, are essential for the TTIPS SIG program to succeed in meeting the goals and objectives defined for the program.

In the Model Selection and Description Report, the LEA will also submit the specific intervention model selected, whether the LEA/campus will implement the TEA Designed Model or design its own model, and an activity timeline. The LEA/campus will be required to report progress related to the activity timeline in the quarterly implementation reports (Attachment 6).

TEA staff will approve Model Selection and Description Reports that meet the following criteria:
- Intervention model selected addresses the needs identified in the CNA process
- Budget aligns with the needs identified in the CNA
- Intervention description addresses fully all the federal requirements

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- Intervention description describes an appropriate model that will allow the campus to meet the goals of the grant
- Intervention description describes a model that can be implemented with the budget included in the Application for funding

See Attachment 7 for the Review Rubric for the Model Selection and Description Report.

Action (2)—LEA Capacity to Support School Improvement

The LEA/campus' application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management, which contains multiple questions related to the LEA's capacity to provide adequate resources and support to eligible Tier I, II, and III campuses. Specifically, the LEA/campus will address the question, *"Describe the LEA's capacity to use grant funds to provide adequate resources and related services/support to the campus to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model."* This schedule will be scored as a part of the competitive grant review process according to the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

Action (3)—Sufficient Budget for School Improvement

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) also contains Schedule #5—Program Budget Summary and Supporting Budget Schedules 5B-5G. These budget schedules, along with the question, *"Describe the LEA's capacity to use grant funds to provide adequate resources and related services/support to the campus to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model."* will address the sufficiency of grant funds to implement the selected intervention model.

Budget guidelines will be provided to applicants and the peer review committee who score the applications. All budget requests will be reviewed and approved based on the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5), but this guidance will be provided to reviewers as an appropriate range of funding based on the model and the size of the campus.

Model	1-200 Students	201-500 Students	501-1300 Students	1301 Students
Turnaround	$50,000 – 1,000,000 per year	$1,000,000 – 1,250,000 per year	$1,250,000 – 1,750,000 per year	$1,750,000 – 2,000,000 per year
Closure	$50,000 – 75,000 one year only	$50,000 – 75,000 one year only	$100,000 – 150,000 one year only	$150,000 – 200,000 one year only
Restart	$50,000 – 1,000,000 per year	$1,000,000 – 1,250,000 per year	$1,250,000 – 1,750,000 per year	$1,750,000 – 2,000,000 per year
Transformation	$50,000 – 1,000,000 per year	$1,000,000 – 1,250,000 per year	$1,250,000 – 1,750,000 per year	$1,750,000 – 2,000,000 per year
Tier III Transformation	$50,000 – 1,000,000 per year	$1,000,000 – 1,250,000 per year	$1,250,000 – 1,750,000 per year	$1,750,000 – 2,000,000 per year

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Part 2

The LEA/campus' description of its commitment to meet the actions in Part 2 will be submitted by the LEA/campus to TEA in the LEA/campus application for funding. After the grants are awarded, TEA will continue to assess the commitment of grantees to these actions by tracking grantee progress toward milestones and critical success factors described later in this section.

<u>Assessment of LEA/campus' Commitment to Part 2 Actions *prior to* Grant Award</u>

Action (1)—Implement Interventions Consistent with Federal Requirements

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4A—Program Abstract; Part 2: Grant Program Summary where the applicant will describe the intervention program to be implemented on the campus. In Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model; Part 1, the applicant will indicate the intervention model being considered for implementation and whether the campus will implement the TEA Designed Model with technical assistance from SIRC or design their own program model within the parameters mandated by the final federal regulations. The applicant will also describe the process (limited to five pages) to be conducted to select the intervention model that aligns to the campus' identified needs. Also to be included is a list of the groups who will participate in the intervention selection process and program development.

In Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model; Part 3: Other Improvement Activities of the LEA/campus application, the applicant will describe the other school improvement activities that will be incorporated with the intervention model selected. Applicants will also provide the underlying rationale and supporting research for the other improvement activities that were selected. In Part 3, the applicant will provide the timeline for the implementation of the other improvement activities to be implemented. Both this schedule and Schedule #4A will be scored by reviewers according to the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

In the Model Selection and Description Report (Attachment 2), which becomes incorporated as part of the approved LEA/campus application for funding upon submission by the LEA/campus and approval by TEA according to the criteria outlined in TEA's Response to Part 1, the LEA/campus will describe how it will meet each requirement from the final federal regulations for the intervention model selected. Additionally, the LEA/campus will provide a timeline delineating the steps the campus will take to implement the selected intervention model and other improvement activities chosen.

Action (2)—Selecting External Providers

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management which contains the question, "*External Providers – Describe how the LEA will recruit, screen, and select external providers to ensure their quality.*" The applicant will provide a one-page description describing how the LEA will recruit, screen, and select external providers with whom the

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LEA/campus will partner. This description will include all external providers and partners and is not limited to the Charter Management Organization (CMO) or Educational Management Organization (EMO) when the Restart Model is selected. This schedule will be scored by reviewers using the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

Action (3)—Align Other Resources

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management which contains the question, "*Resource Management – Describe how the LEA/campus will align other resources with the school improvement intervention."* The applicant will provide a one-page description of how the LEA/campus will align other resources with the intervention model selected and other intervention activities. This schedule will be scored by reviewers using the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

When the LEA/campus submits the Model Selection and Description Report (Attachment 2), it will also enter the percentage of grant funds and *other state and local funds* budgeted for each of the Critical Success Factors and Milestones. The Model Selection and Description Report will be reviewed and approved by TEA according to the criteria listed in TEA's Response to Part 1 of this section.

Action (4)—Modifying Practices

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management which contains the question, *"Management of Grant Activities – Describe how the LEA and campus will modify its practices and/or policies, as necessary, to ensure its implementation of the intervention(s) fully and effectively."* The applicant will provide a one-page description of how the LEA/campus will modify existing practices or policies in order to fully and effectively implement the intervention model selected as required by the final federal regulations. This schedule will be scored by reviewers using the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

Action (5)—Sustaining the Reforms

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management which contains the question, *"Program Continuation and Sustainability – Describe how the LEA will sustain the campus reforms after the funding period ends."* The applicant will provide a one-page description of how the LEA/campus will provide continued funding and support to sustain the interventions and student performance that resulted from the implementation of the TTIPS SIG grant program. This schedule will be scored by reviewers using the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5).

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<u>Assessment of LEA/campus' Commitment to Part 2 Actions *after* Grant Award</u>

After the peer review panel scores the applications and awards grants to LEAs/campuses, TEA will continue to assess the LEA's commitment to the actions listed in Part 2 of this section by tracking progress toward Critical Success Factors (CSF) and milestones through the QIRs.

CSFs reflect behavioral changes that must be demonstrated by students at the campus or by adults working on their behalf. CSFs are essential for the TTIPS SIG program to succeed in meeting the goals and objectives defined for the program. Each CSF is monitored using measurable indicators, and these indicators enable TEA to determine whether grantees are on track to successfully achieve the desired outcomes:

- Improve Academic Performance
- Increase Teacher Quality
- Improve School Climate
- Increase Leadership Effectiveness
- Increase the Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction
- Increase Parent/Community Involvement
- Increase Learning Time

Milestones are the key strategies that establish the foundation on which the CSFs are built. The applicant must develop activities that ensure each of the milestones is met. The milestones for each CSF include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Improve Academic Performance
  - Data-driven instruction
  - Curriculum Alignment (both horizontal and vertical)
  - On-going Monitoring of Instruction

- Increase Teacher Quality
  - Locally Developed Appraisal Instruments
  - On-going Job Embedded Professional Development
  - Recruitment/Retention Strategies

- Improve School Climate
  - Increased Attendance
  - Decreased Discipline Referrals
  - Increased Involvement in Extra/Co-Curricular Activities

- Increase Leadership Effectiveness
  - On-going Job Embedded Professional Development
  - Operational Flexibility
  - Resource/Data Utilization

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- Increase the Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction
  - Data Disaggregation /Training
  - Data-driven Decisions
  - On-going Communication

- Increase Parent/Community Involvement
  - Increased Opportunities for Input
  - Effective Communication
  - Accessible Community Services

- Increase Learning Time
  - Flexible Scheduling
  - Instructionally-focused Calendar
  - Staff Collaborative Planning

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 a school intervention model in each Tier I school. The SEA must also explain what it will do if it determines that an LEA has more capacity than the LEA demonstrates.

TEA Response

The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management which contains multiple questions related to the LEA's capacity to provide adequate resources and support to eligible Tier I, II, and III campuses. Specifically, the LEA/campus will address the question, *"Describe the LEA's capacity to use grant funds to provide adequate resources and related services/support to the campus to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model."* In the question, *"LEA Support – Describe how the LEA will structure and implement an individual or office with responsibility for supporting the campus' school improvement efforts."* the applicant will describe how the LEA will designate an individual or office with primary responsibilities for supporting the LEA/campus' school improvement efforts. This individual/office will have primary responsibility and authority for ensuring the effective implementation of the grant option approved by TEA; serve as the district liaison to TEA and those providing technical assistance and/or contracted service to the LEA/campus as part of the approved grant.

Grant peer reviewers and TEA staff will review the responses provided by the applicant LEA to the two above questions in the application for funding along with the response to the question, *"Lack of Capacity -- If the LEA is not applying to serve each Tier I school (is not applying for grant funding for each Tier I school), provide a detailed explanation of why the LEA lacks capacity to serve each Tier I school."* If the LEA has not submitted an application for funding (indicating the capacity to serve) for each of its Tier I campuses, the applicant LEA will provide a detailed one-page description of why the LEA lacks the capacity to serve each eligible Tier I campus within the LEA at the time the LEA submits the LEA/campus applications for funding.

The peer review committee scoring the grant applications for TEA will use the Scoring Rubric (Attachment 5) to evaluate the responses of each LEA/campus applicant. In the event that the agency determines that an LEA has more capacity to serve Tier I schools than it demonstrates in its application for funding, then TEA staff will negotiate either 1) reducing the awarded LEA/campus budgets by an appropriate amount, or 2) requiring the LEA to submit additional LEA/campus grant applications for funding for additional Tier I campuses in the next cycle (USDE Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations) of grant awards.

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

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

(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 if one or more Tier I or Tier II schools in the LEA 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 if one or more Tier III schools in the LEA 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.[2]

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[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.

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TEA Response

(1) Process and Timeline

In implementing the TTIPS SIG grant, TEA will follow the competitive grant process outlined by the TEA Division of Discretionary Grants (Attachment 8). All discretionary, competitive grants awarded by TEA follow this same process.

Depending on an LEA/campus' readiness for aggressive reform, the eligible LEA/campus may select to apply for the TTIPS SIG grant and implement it according to the two timeline options.

(2) and (3)—Reviewing Goals for Tier I and II and Tier III Schools

TEA will follow the same procedure for reviewing the LEA's annual goals for student achievement for Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III campuses. The LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1) contains Schedule #4C—Performance Assessment and Evaluation. In Part 1, the applicant will describe the following:
  (1) LEA/campus' process for providing on-going monitoring of grant activities to ensure continuous improvement;
  (2) LEA/campus' process for formative evaluation, including how the results of the evaluation will be used to improve the grant program; and
  (3) The data collection methods to be implemented by the LEA/campus and how the data will be disaggregated and used to improve instruction and obtain continuous improvement results.

In Part 2, the LEA/campus will submit the LEA's process for developing the annual performance goals, and in Part 3, the applicant will submit the approved Annual Performance Goals to which the LEA is holding the campus accountable and the Progress Targets for each of the three years of the grant program. Part 4 of the schedule consists of Grant Data Collection and Evaluation to be conducted by TEA.

TEA will require the submission of corresponding actual performance data for Parts 3 and 4 of the Performance Assessment and Evaluation Schedule each August as a condition for the releasing of year two and year three funding awards. TEA will review the achievement data annually and use the following criteria to determine whether the next year's funding award will be released.
  (1) The grantee has met the year's annual performance target for student achievement or made a minimum of 70% progress toward the targeted goal in the year of the grant period.
  (2) The grantee has met the year's annual performance targets for the state's identified critical success factors and milestones or made a minimum of 70% progress toward the targeted goal in the year of the grant period.

TEA will review grantee performance data that is submitted to TEA to ensure that grantees have met both the two criteria above. TEA will also monitor the implementation of the intervention model by assessing the grantee's progress toward the critical success factors and milestones for the grant. This monitoring process is described on the next page. Decisions regarding renewal of grant funding will be based on both grantee progress toward performance targets and effective and full implementation of the grant.

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(4) Monitoring

For all applicants, Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III, TEA will follow the same procedure for monitoring the grantees' implementation of the intervention model.   TEA will require the submission of Quarterly Implementation Reports (QIR) which will be reviewed upon submission. These implementation reports will assess grantee progress toward the critical success factors and milestones for the grant. (See pages 17-18 for a list of critical success factors and milestones.) TEA staff will review the QIRs and will identify grantees that are not making adequate progress toward milestones and critical success factors. Grantees that are not making progress will be required to submit Program Improvement Plans.   Also, in the program requirements and assurances to the LEA/campus application for funding, the LEA/campus will agree to provide access for onsite visits to the LEA and campus by TEA, SIRC and its contractors. Grantees will receive onsite visits from TEA, SIRC, or its contractors each year of the grant award. Staff from SIRC or their contractors will validate the implementation reports during annual site visits. Staff will also conduct interviews and complete implementation checklists to measure progress toward critical success factors and milestones. The completed implementation checklists will become part of the LEA's application file.

(5) Prioritization of School Improvement Grants

If the agency has insufficient TTIPS SIG funds to serve all eligible campuses for which each LEA applies, the agency will not award TTIPS SIG funds to an LEA for any Tier III campuses unless, and until, the agency has awarded funds to support the full and effective implementation of grants in Tier I and Tier II campuses. The agency will also give priority to Tier I and Tier II campuses by adding 10 priority points to the total score (100 points possible, awarded by the peer review committee) to each LEA/campus application for funding that is properly submitted for consideration in the discretionary competitive review process.

If the agency is unable, through the competitive review process, to fund all Tier I LEA/campus applications for funding that were properly submitted in the grant competition, the agency will carry over 25 percent of its Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 funds to award along with its FY 2010 SIG funds, before awarding any Tier III LEA/campus applicants. TEA will further ensure that the funded LEAs have implemented the required LEA priorities as listed below.

If an LEA has one or more eligible …	In order to receive TTIPS SIG funds, the LEA must commit to serve …
Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools	Each Tier I school it has capacity to serve; at a minimum, at least one Tier I school *OR* at least one Tier II school[3]
Tier I and Tier II schools, but no Tier III schools	Each Tier I school it has capacity to serve; at a minimum, at least one Tier I school *OR* at least one Tier II school[1] Note that the number of Tier I schools an LEA has capacity to serve may be zero if, and only if, the LEA is using all of the capacity it would otherwise use to serve its Tier I schools in

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[3] The number of Tier I schools an LEA has capacity to serve may be zero if, and only if, the LEA is using all of the capacity it would otherwise use to serve its Tier I schools in order to serve Tier II schools.

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	order to serve Tier II schools.
Tier I and III schools, but no Tier II schools	Each Tier I school it has capacity to serve; at a minimum, at least one Tier I school
Tier II and Tier III schools, but no Tier I schools	The LEA has the option to commit to serve as many Tier II and Tier III schools as it wishes
Tier I schools only	Each Tier I school it has capacity to serve
Tier II schools only	The LEA has the option to commit to serve as many Tier II schools as it wishes
Tier III schools only	The LEA has the option to commit to serve as many Tier III schools as it wishes

(6) Prioritization of Tier III

Tier III campuses will be prioritized based on the scores the LEAs/campuses receive from the peer review committee as a result of the competitive review process. In addition, the agency will give priority to traditional and charter campuses implementing a regular instructional program in awarding grants to Tier III campuses by adding 5 priority points to the total score (100 points possible, awarded by the peer review committee) to each LEA/campus application for funding that is properly submitted by a Tier III regular instructional campus for consideration in the discretionary competitive review process.

(7) and (8) State Take Over and State Direct Services

At the time of this submission of the state application, the agency does not intend to take over any Tier I or Tier II campuses. The agency has not yet determined whether it will provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover. However, if the agency later decides that it will provide such services, it agrees to amend this application to provide the required information.

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

By submitting this application, the Texas Education Agency assures that it will do the following:

☑ Comply with the final requirements and ensure that each LEA carries out its responsibilities.

☑ Award each approved LEA a School Improvement Grant in an amount that is of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school that the SEA approves the LEA to serve.

☑ Apportion its school improvement funds in order to make grants to LEAs, as applicable, that are renewable for the length of the period of availability, taking into account any waivers that may have been requested and received by the SEA or an individual LEA to extend the period of availability.

☑ Carry over 25 percent of its FY 2009 school improvement funds, combine those funds with FY 2010 school improvement funds, and award those funds to eligible LEAs consistent with the final requirements if not every Tier I school in the State receives FY 2009 school improvement funds to implement a school improvement model in the 2010-2011 school year (unless the SEA does not have sufficient school improvement funds to serve every Tier I school in the State).

☑ Ensure, if the SEA is participating in the Department's differentiated accountability pilot, that its LEAs will use school improvement funds consistent with the final requirements.

☑ Monitor each LEA's implementation of the interventions supported with school improvement funds.

☑ To the extent a Tier I or Tier II school implementing the restart model becomes a charter school LEA, hold the charter school operator or charter management organization accountable, or ensure that the charter school authorizer holds the respective entity accountable, for meeting the final requirements.

☑ Post on its Web site, within 30 days of awarding School Improvement Grants, all final LEA applications and a summary of the grants that includes the following information: name and NCES identification number of each LEA awarded a grant; amount of the grant; name and NCES identification number of each school to be served; and type of intervention to be implemented in each Tier I and Tier II school.

☑ Report the specific school-level data required in section III of the final requirements.

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	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.

TEA Response

TEA will reserve the allowable five percent of SIG funds for state level administration, evaluation, and technical assistance. Of the five percent reservation, one percent will be used for TEA administrative costs, one percent will remain at TEA currently unbudgeted, and three percent will be allocated to the School Improvement Resource Center (SIRC) housed at Region XIII Education Service Center in Austin, Texas.

The one percent for TEA administration will be expended for additional staffing and costs to administer and monitor the TTIPS SIG grant program in the state. The one percent in unbudgeted funds will be allocated either to SIRC, TEA program evaluation staff, or a contractor for program evaluation services. Once the method of evaluation and amount of needed funding is determined, the remainder of the funds will be used as needed for TEA administration and additional technical assistance provided by SIRC.

SIRC is TEA's Title I-funded technical assistance provider to campuses identified as needing improvement. SIRC exists as part of the Texas Center for District and School Support which provides support and technical assistance to campuses staged in intervention status in both the state and federal accountability systems. On behalf of TEA, SIRC will provide assistance in ten basic areas to TTIPS grantees, funded from the three percent allocation provided to SIRC.

1	Provide technical assistance to all grantees regarding their capacity and commitment to implement a TTIPS grant.
2	Provide technical assistance to all grantees regarding their LEA level of support and capacity to implement a TTIPS grant.
3	Provide technical assistance to all grantees regarding communications, marketing, and stakeholder and community involvement of school reform options selected.
4	Provide technical assistance to all grantees regarding LEA and campus leadership capacity to implement a TTIPS grant.
5	Provide technical assistance to Tier I or Tier II grantees selecting to implement the Turnaround Model of school reform.
6	Provide technical assistance to Tier I and Tier II grantees selecting to implement the School Closure Model of school reform.
7	Provide technical assistance to Tier I and Tier II grantees selecting to implement the Restart Model of school reform.
8	Provide technical assistance to Tier I and Tier II grantees selecting to implement the Transformation

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	Model of school reform.
9	Provide technical assistance to Tier III grantees implementing the agency's approved Tier III model of school reform.
10	Provide technical assistance to Tier III grantees selecting to implement either the Turnaround, Closure, Restart, or Transformation models of school reform.

Specifically, SIRC will provide the following activities and assistance tied to the ten areas above.

Ongoing technical assistance and support to grantees including but not limited to, the following (Areas #1, 2, 3, 10 above):

- Provide training on grant intervention model options
- Provide training, assistance, and support to grantees implementing the four improvement models and the Tier III program
- Support implementation of grantee's LEA-level efforts of reform
- Provide on-site technical assistance via a PSP
- Conduct pre-assessment of LEA grantees' readiness, capacity, and commitment
- Establish needs assessment of LEA's systems of support, formative assessment processes, use of data, and professional development
- Assist grantees with marketing and communications around the school intervention model selected
- Conduct on-going technical assistance to LEA and campus grantees, including, but not limited to, phone communication, online resources, face to face mentoring/training, webinars, teleconferencing or discussion boards

Closure (Areas #2, 3, 6, 10 above)

- Conduct extensive training on Closure Option
- Provide onsite technical assistance via PSP
- Provide public relations/communication processes and protocols for Closure
- Implement processes and protocols for implementation of Closure model based on research
  - Checklists/Rubrics
  - Communication time line
  - Human Resources (HR) issues
- Create 90 day action plans with the LEA to support Closure process
- Offer support to the LEA, school board, campus and community in the form of presentations about the Closure process and implementation
- Conduct on-site technical assistance and site visits to support the LEA during the Closure process

Restart (Areas #2, 3, 7, 10 above)

- Conduct extensive training on Restart Option
- Provide onsite technical assistance via PSP
- Provide public relations/communication processes and protocols for Restart
- Assist grantees in establishing processes and protocols for implementation of Restart
  - Selecting quality CMO/EMO
  - Setting benchmarks
  - Developing authorization agreements

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- o Community outreach-communication toolkits
- Create 90 day action plans with the LEA to support the new campus
- Support the application process for selecting an approved CMO/EMO
- Provide training on facilitating effective communication between the LEA and the CMO/EMO
- Conduct on-site technical assistance and site visits to both the LEA and the new Campus to support the Restart process
- Establish evaluation and monitoring processes
- Provide orientation for CMO/EMO

Turnaround (Areas #2, 3, 4, 5, 10 above)
- Conduct extensive training on Turnaround Option
- Provide onsite technical assistance via PSP
- Provide comprehensive two year executive training model for LEA and Campus
- Support recruitment and selection of an effective turnaround principal
- Provide tools, checklists, programs to help with Turnaround implementation
- Provide SIRC specialists for support
- Provide training to assist LEA with developing 90 day action plans to establish systems and sustain Turnaround efforts
- Conduct on-site technical assistance and site visits to both the LEA and Campus to support Turnaround option
- Establish evaluation and monitoring processes

Transformation (Areas #2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10 above)
- Conduct extensive training on Transformation Option
- Provide in-depth training in systems, professional development and organization for LEA and campus staff
- Support implementing positive behavior support systems
- Assist in identifying teacher leaders and building the capacity of these leaders on the campus to improve the quality of instruction
- Help LEAs establish data and evaluation systems to monitor progress toward Critical Success Factors, milestones, and performance targets
- Facilitate cohort groups of principals/leaders to create networking opportunities for participating campuses
- Support community outreach and involvement
- Provide data and research to best utilize the extended instructional time
- Conduct site visits to both the LEA and campus to support the Transformation process
- Provide case management for Tier I and II schools, including site visits
- Establish extended learning opportunities for Tier I and II schools

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

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 <u>LEA and ESC administrators and other interested parties and organizations.</u>

TEA Response

Title I Committee of Practitioners

TEA staff presented the draft federal regulations to the state's Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP) on November 10, 2009, at the COP's regularly scheduled meeting. See Attachment 9 for the meeting minutes. In addition, TEA staff presented the final federal regulations to the COP through a webinar meeting on December 14, 2009. The archived file of the webinar is available at http://txcc.sedl.org/resources/webinars/material/sigcop/.

TEA staff discussed the TTIPS SIG application and timeline at the January 27, 2010, COP meeting. The standing rules of the COP were suspended to take comment from the audience in attendance as well as committee members. See Attachment 10 for the meeting minutes.

Stakeholder Input

TEA staff conducted two public meetings to obtain comments from practitioners in addition to the COP meetings. A public meeting was conducted on January 27, 2010, as part of the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Midwinter Administrators Conference in Austin, Texas. Twenty-two LEA and ESC administrators attended the meeting and provided comments. See Attachment 11 for the meeting agenda. A webinar was conducted on February 2, 2010, to ensure accessibility to the entire state. See Attachment 12 for the webinar minutes and comments. TEA anticipates soliciting stakeholder feedback regarding the implementation and continuous improvement of this grant program regularly throughout the three year life of the grant.

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

The <u>Texas Education Agency</u> requests a waiver of the requirements it has listed below. These waivers would allow any local educational agency (LEA) in the State that receives a School Improvement Grant to use those funds in accordance with the final requirements for School Improvement Grants and the LEA's application for a grant.

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

☑ Waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2013.

☑ Waive section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Tier I and Tier II Title I participating schools that will implement a turnaround or restart model to "start over" in the school improvement timeline.

☑ Waive the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold in section 1114(a)(1) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to implement a schoolwide program in a Tier I or Tier II Title I participating school that does not meet the poverty threshold.

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

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

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

The State assures that, if it is granted one or more of the waivers requested above, it will submit to the U.S. Department of Education a report that sets forth the name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing a waiver, including which specific waivers each LEA is implementing.

TEA Response

TEA agrees to the assurances contained above. All campuses wishing to implement the above waivers must request the waivers in the campus application. See Schedule #4B—Program Description: Waiver Requests of the attached LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1).

LEAs in the state were provided notice of the agency's intent to apply for the above waivers by electronic mail and posting on the TEA website on January 22, 2010. See Attachment 13 for the LEA notification. Comments were received from LEAs through February 2, 2010. See Attachment 14 for comments received. Comments were also taken through the public meeting, COP meetings, and statewide webinar. See Attachments 10, 11, and 12 respectively. A public notice of the agency applying for the waivers as part of the state's application for TTIPS SIG funding will also post in the *Texas Register*.

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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.

> **The SEA must attach its LEA application form to its application to the Department for a School Improvement Grant.**

TEA Response

See Attachment 1 for the LEA/campus application for funding. The Model Selection and Description Report, which is incorporated into the LEA/campus application for funding upon receipt and approval by TEA, is included in Attachment 2.

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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.

TEA Response

Each LEA will submit a separate application for each eligible Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III campus. The eligible applicant campus is reflected on Schedule #1—General Information, Part 3: Applicant Information of the LEA/campus application for funding. See Attachment 1.

LEAs will indicate whether the campus is Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III on Schedule #4A—Program Abstract, Part 1: Grant Eligibility. LEAs will indicate which model they are considering on Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model, Part 1. LEAs will indicate the actual model selected and will provide a full description of how the model will be implemented in the Model Selection and Description Report (Attachment 2), which will be incorporated into the LEA/campus application for funding upon receipt and approval by TEA.

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| 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.

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TEA Response

See the chart below for where in the LEA/campus application the federal requirement is addressed.

Requirement	Schedule in LEA/campus Application
(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.	(1) • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Model Selection and Description Report • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management
(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.	(2) Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management
(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.	(3) • Schedule #4A—Program Abstract; Part 2: Grant Program Summary; Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model; Part 1; and Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model; Part 3: Other Improvement Activities and Model Selection and Description Report • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management • Schedule #4B—Program Description: Project Management
(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	(4) Schedule #4B—Program Description: Other Improvement Activities, Part 3: Intervention Model, and Model Selection and Description

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identified in the LEA's application.	Report
(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.	(5) Schedule #4C—Performance Assessment and Evaluation, Part 3: Annual Performance Goals
(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.	(6) Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model, Part 1:Intervention Model Selection Process, and Model Selection and Description Report
(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.	(7) Schedule #4C—Performance Assessment and Evaluation, Part 3: Annual Performance Goals
(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.	(8) Schedule #4B—Program Description: Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Part 4: Groups of Participants and Schedule #4B—Program Description: Intervention Model, Part 2: Groups of Participants

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 must cover the period of availability, including any extension granted through a waiver, 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.
>
> 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.

TEA Response

LEAs will provide a budget that meets the federal requirements above in the LEA/campus Application for funding on Schedule #5—Budget Summary and the subsequent budget support schedules. See Attachment 1 for the LEA/campus application for funding.

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> 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.

TEA Response

The applicant LEA/campus provides the above assurances on Schedule #4—Program Requirements, Part 3: Statutory/Regulatory Program Assurances and Schedule #6F—Program-Specific Provisions and Assurances. See Attachment 1 for the LEA/campus application for funding.

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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.

☑ Extending the period of availability of school improvement funds.

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

☑ "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.

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

TEA Response

All campuses wishing to implement the above waivers must request the waivers in the campus application. See Schedule #4B—Program Description: Waiver Requests of the attached LEA/campus application for funding (Attachment 1).

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Appendix 1: List of Attachments

Attachment 1   Draft Copy of the LEA/campus Application for Funding

Attachment 2   Model Selection and Description Report

Attachment 3   List of Campuses Eligible for Grant

Attachment 4   Definition and Methodology for Identifying Eligible Campuses

Attachment 5   Scoring Rubric for Peer Review Committee

Attachment 6   Quarterly Implementation Report

Attachment 7   Approval Rubric for Model Selection and Description Report

Attachment 8   Division of Discretionary Grants Competitive Review Process

Attachment 9   November 10, 2009 Committee of Practitioners Minutes

Attachment 10   January 27, 2010 Committee of Practioners Minutes

Attachment 11   January 27, 2010 Midwinter Administrator's Conference Public Meeting Agenda

Attachment 12   February 2, 2010 Webinar Public Meeting Comments

Attachment 13   January 22, 2010 Notification to LEAs of Waiver Applications

Attachment 14   Comments Received on Waiver Applications

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