

School Improvement Grants

Application for Fiscal years 2015 and 2016 New Awards Competition

**Section 1003(g) of the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left
Behind Act of 2001**

CFDA Number: 84.377A

State Name: Maryland



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

OMB Number: 1810-0682
Expiration Date: September 30, 2016

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 100 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (authorized under section 1003(g) of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind (ESEA). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1810-0682. Note: Please do not return the completed School Improvement Grant application to this address.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Purpose of the Program

School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind (Title I or ESEA), are grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools. The Department published final requirements for the SIG program in the *Federal Register* on October 28, 2010 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>). In 2015, the Department revised the final requirements to implement language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, and the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, that allows LEAs to implement additional interventions, provides flexibility for rural LEAs, and extends the grant period from three to five years. The revisions to the requirements also reflect lessons learned from four years of SIG implementation. Finally, since the final requirements for the SIG program were published in 2010, 44 SEAs received approval to implement ESEA flexibility, pursuant to which they no longer identify Title I schools for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. To reflect this change, the revised requirements make an LEA with priority schools, which are generally a State's lowest-achieving Title I schools, and focus schools, which are generally the schools within a State with the largest achievement gaps, eligible to receive SIG funds. The SIG final requirements, published on February 9, 2015, are available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/02/09/2015-02570/final-requirements-school-improvement-grants-title-i-of-the-elementary-and-secondary-education-act>.

Availability of Funds

The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, provided approximately \$506 million for School Improvement Grants in fiscal year (FY) 2015 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 provided approximately \$450 million in FY 2016.

State and LEA Allocations

Each State (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas is eligible to apply to receive a SIG grant. The Department will allocate FY 2015 and FY 2016 SIG funds in proportion to the funds received in FY 2015 and FY 2016 by the States, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the outlying areas under Parts A, C, and D of Title I of the ESEA. An SEA must allocate at least 95 percent of its SIG funds directly to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements. The SEA may retain an amount not to exceed five percent of its allocation for State administration, evaluation, and technical assistance.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Electronic Submission:

The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's FY 2015/2016 SIG application electronically. The application should be sent as a Microsoft Word document, **not** as a PDF.

Each SEA should submit its FY 2015/2016 application to its individual State mailbox address at: [OSS.\[State\]@ed.gov](mailto:OSS.[State]@ed.gov)

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

Paper Submission:

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

Michael Wells, Group Leader
Office of State Support, OESE
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W103
Washington, DC 20202-6132

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

Application Deadline

Applications are due no later than May 27, 2016.

For Further Information

If you have any questions, please contact your OSS State contact or Michael Wells at (202) 453-6689 or by e-mail at Michael.Wells@ed.gov. Additional technical assistance, including webinars for State staff, will be provided in the spring.

APPLICATION COVER SHEET
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Legal Name of Applicant: Maryland State Department of Education	Applicant's Mailing Address: Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building 200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595
State Contact for the School Improvement Grant Name: Dr. Christy Thompson Position and Office: Executive Director Division of Student, Family, and School Support Contact's Mailing Address: Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building 4 th Floor 200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595 Telephone: 410.767.0292 Fax: 410.333.8010 Email address: Christy.thompson@maryland.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Jack R. Smith, Ph.D. Interim State Superintendent	Telephone: 410.767.0462
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: (PAPER COPY WILL BE MAILED SEPARATELY)	Date:
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement Grants program, including the assurances contained herein and the conditions that apply to any waivers that the State receives through this application.	

PART I: SEA REQUIREMENTS

The directions below indicate information an SEA must provide in its application for a School Improvement Grant. Where relevant, these directions distinguish between the information that must be provided by SEAs that have approved requests for ESEA flexibility and those that do not. For any section that is not applicable to a particular SEA, the SEA should write “Not Applicable.”

A. ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS

For SEAs not approved for ESEA Flexibility: Definition of Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools and Eligible Schools: As part of its FY 2015/2016 application, an SEA must provide a list, by LEA, of each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school in the State. 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. Not Applicable.

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.

Directions: SEAs that generate new lists should create this table in Excel using the format shown below and attach the list to this application. An example of the table has been provided for guidance.

EXAMPLE:

SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE FOR FY 2015/2016 SIG FUNDS

LEA NAME	LEA NCES ID #	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL NCES ID#	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	GRAD RATE	NEWLY ELIGIBLE ¹
LEA 1	##	HARRISON ES	##	X				
LEA 1	##	MADISON ES	##	X				
LEA 2	##	TAYLOR MS	##			X		X

¹ “Newly Eligible” refers to a school that was made eligible to receive SIG funds by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016. A newly eligible school may be identified for Tier I or Tier II because it has not made adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years; is in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on State’s assessments; and is no higher achieving than the highest-achieving school identified by the SEA as a “persistently lowest-achieving school” or is a high school that has a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years.

For SEAs approved for ESEA flexibility: Eligible Schools List: Each SEA should provide a link to the page on its Web site or a link to the specific page(s) in its approved ESEA flexibility request that includes a list of its current priority and focus schools. That list should clearly indicate which schools are SIG-eligible (*i.e.*, meet the definition of priority or focus school in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*).

http://archives.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea_flex/docs/PriorityFocus20162017Schools.pdf

For all SEAs: Awards not renewed, or otherwise terminated: All SEAs are required to list any LEAs with one or more schools for which funding under previously awarded SIG grants will not be renewed for the 2016-2017 school year. For each such school, note the date of nonrenewal or termination, reason for nonrenewal or termination, the amount of unused remaining funds, and explain how the SEA or LEA plans to use those funds. **If all schools have been renewed, please indicate not applicable (“N/A”) in the chart:**

LEA NAME	SCHOOL NAME	DATE OF NONRENEWAL OR TERMINATION	REASON FOR NONRENEWAL OR TERMINATION	DESCRIPTION OF HOW REMAINING FUNDS WERE OR WILL BE USED	AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS
N/A					
TOTAL AMOUNT OF REMAINING FUNDS:					

B. STATE-DETERMINED MODEL (OPTIONAL)

An SEA may submit one State-determined model for the Secretary’s review and approval. Submission of a state-determined model is not required. An SEA that previously submitted, and received approval for, a State-determined model need not re-submit that model. (*Check applicable box below*)

SEA is submitting a State-determined model for review and approval. (Please attach to the application.) Maryland included a copy of the State-determined intervention model in LEA Application portion of this application. **Approved May 20, 2016.**

SEA is not submitting a State-determined model.

To be approved, a State-determined model must meet the definition of whole-school reform

model:

A whole-school reform model is a model that is designed to:

- (a) Improve student academic achievement or attainment;
- (b) Be implemented for all students in a school; and
- (c) Address, at a minimum and in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, each of the following:
 1. School leadership
 2. Teaching and learning in at least one full academic content area (including professional learning for educators).
 3. Student non-academic support.
 4. Family and community engagement.

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

The actions listed in this section are ones that an LEA must take to receive 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 these criteria. MSDE will require the LEA to **select an intervention model using the following process:**

- The LEA will establish the **LEA Central Support Team (CST)**
LEAs that accept Title I 1003(g) school improvement funds **agree to establish a Central Support Team** to oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority schools as well as the strategies that the LEA will implement in Focus schools. The Title I office must be represented on the Central Support Team. The team will coordinate the support, as well as monitor, and assess the progress for each of the identified schools.
- The LEA will establish an **LEA Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST)**
LEAs that accept Title I 1003(g) school improvement funds **agree to establish a Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST)** to oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority schools. The TEST will have decision making authority to oversee budget, staffing, policy modifications, partnerships, and data that drive the full implementation of the reforms models to ensure greater student achievement in each its schools it selects to serve. The Title I office must be represented on the TEST.

- School and/or the LEA will conduct a **needs assessment**
- School/LEA will conduct a rigorous review of the intervention models with stakeholders, including teachers, other staff, parents, community members and central office staff
- School/LEA will select an intervention model for each identified school based on documented input from teachers, other staff, parents, community members
- School/LEA will develop and submit the Intervention Plan (Model) for each identified school
- School/LEA will develop a five year budget for pre-implementation, implementation, and sustainability
- School/LEA will align instructional programs in the intervention plan to the Maryland Career and College Ready State Standards
- School/LEA will select/hire additional staffing, if applicable
- School/LEA will create a professional development plan aligned to the comprehensive needs assessment.

If applicable, the SEA should attach an LEA application review rubric that it will use to evaluate each of the actions listed below. If a rubric is attached, provide relevant page numbers below and a description if needed. If a rubric is not attached, provide a description of the evaluation criteria to be used.

X *Check here if an LEA application review rubric is attached.*

- The LEA has analyzed the needs of each Tier I and Tier II school, or **each priority and focus school**, as applicable, identified in the LEA's application and has selected an intervention for each school that is designed to meet the specific needs of the school, based on a needs analysis that, among other things, analyzes the school improvement needs identified by families and the community, and takes into consideration family and community input in selecting the intervention for each school.

Maryland will assure that the LEA has analyzed the needs of identified school(s) in the LEA's application and has selected an intervention for each school by requiring the LEA to complete a comprehensive needs assessment as part of the application process for each school it elects to serve with SIG funds. The needs assessment requires the LEA to analyze data pertinent to each school. The LEA is required to review and analyze the following data sets: student and staff profiles; student achievement data; curriculum;

instructional programs; assessments; school culture and climate; student, family and community support; organizational structure; professional development and effective planning; and effective leadership. The LEA will **prioritize** needs for each school and demonstrate the use of the school's prioritized needs in selection of the intervention model for each school. The intervention plan developed for each school will link the strategies and activities to the prioritized needs of each school based on the comprehensive needs assessment and any recent school audit recommendations of the school.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, pages 124-127*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has designed and will implement interventions consistent with the SIG requirements.

Using the templates attached for each of the SIG intervention models the LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take to design and implement each intervention model consistent with the final requirements. The LEA application contains the intervention model requirements embedded in each template.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, pages 128-131*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated it will use the School Improvement Grants funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each school it commits to serve in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention on the first day of the first school year of full implementation.

Maryland received a Waiver from the US Department of Education on August 4, 2015 to carryover FY 2014 SIG funds in the amount of \$6,632,348 to enable the State to award those funds to LEAs through a competition to be conducted during the 2015-2016 school year. Based on the amount of the Federal award, Maryland anticipates awarding sub-grants to approximately five (5) eligible schools whose LEA have demonstrated the strongest need and have the capacity to provide

support to the identified schools. Maryland will use FY 2015 and 2016 grant funds as a multi-year award to the schools that received sub-grant awards from FY 2014 funds.

FY 2014 Funds – distributed over 2 years

Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,632,348
 5% Administration: \$331,617
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$6,300,731
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

August 2016	Pre-Implementation	SY 2016-2017
July 2017	Implementation- Year 1	SY 2017-2018

FY 2015 Funds-distributed over 1 year

Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,547,772
 5% Administration: \$327,388
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$6,220,384
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

July 2018	Implementation-Year 2	SY 2018-2019
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FY 2016 Funds-distributed over 2 years

Estimated Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,316,518
 5% Administration: \$315,825
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$5,999,693
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

July 2019	Implementation- Year 3	SY 2019-2020
July 2020	Sustainability	SY 2020-2021

- LEA must complete a thorough needs assessment for each identified school it chooses to serve.
- The LEA must select an intervention model that aligns to the needs of the school.
- The LEA must demonstrate that it has involved relevant stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, teachers unions (if appropriate), parents, students, and outside community members in activities related to decision making prior to choosing an intervention model, and/or development of the model’s design for each of the schools. These meetings and input sessions must be documented and ongoing.
- LEAs with planning and pre-implementation activities must submit a written monthly status report of completed planning and pre-implementation activities to the SEA which includes status on budget, hiring, and other activities designed to prepare the schools for full implementation in the 2016-2017 school year. These monthly updates will be added as an agenda item during the monthly Central Support Team meetings.
- The LEA must design and implement activities for each intervention model,

develop a timeline, identify a person/position designated to provide leadership for each requirement of the intervention.

- The LEA must develop five-year budgets that directly align to the activities and the strategies stated in the implementation plan for each model the LEA chooses to implement. Budgets will be reviewed annually and adjusted, based on progress of program implementation or reevaluation of needs.
- The LEA must develop a monitoring plan that encompasses multiple visits to each school and requires intermediate evidence of student academic success.
- The LEA must demonstrate it has made a commitment to expand teachers' and principals' capacity and expertise through job-imbedded professional development and ongoing professional collaboration.
- The LEA must identify a 1003(g) Central Support Team that meets monthly with MSDE's Priority/ SIG Team to discuss progress of schools. Central Support Teams must be staffed with highly knowledgeable staff with specialized skills and knowledge in school improvement, understanding of culture and climate, and relate well to stakeholders.
- The LEA must identify a 1003(g) Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST) that will meet at least quarterly with MSDE's Priority/SIG Team. This core executive team will have targeted discussions and make decisions on staffing, funding concerns, policy, response to data, contracts, partnerships, and other issues beyond the larger Central Support Team. The Chief Executive Officer or their appointee will be required to participate in TEST meetings. The TEST will allow the LEA to respond quickly to any course corrections needed to ensure timely and full implementation of the intervention models. Central Support Teams must also demonstrate that they communicate regularly with the LEA's TEST team and document how the CST has supported the identified schools in their improvement efforts.
- The LEA and MSDE Priority/SIG Team will work with the Maryland State Breakthrough Center to determine if support services are needed in the areas of student services, leadership or instruction from the Breakthrough Center.
- The LEAs must demonstrate, through past grant applications, that they have sound fiscal management with limited audit findings. The SEA will examine single audit reports over the past two years. The SEA will use a risk assessment tool to determine effective program fiscal management.
- The LEA must complete a self-assessment of its own capacity to design, support, monitor, and assess the implementation of the models and strategies that it selects for its identified schools.
- The LEA must demonstrate that it has a performance management process.
- The LEA must complete the grant application within the timelines set forth in the application.
- The LEA must submit signed assurances with the application.

X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, pages 123-146

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how it has, or will, recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality, and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.
- The LEA will demonstrate that it has developed procedures and a timeline to recruit, screen and select external providers. The process must include a variety of stakeholders.
- LEAs must select providers that can address specific priority needs that the LEA identified via the SIG application. These procedures will be articulated in the planning tool located in the LEA application. SEA's evaluation criteria for quality external providers includes reviewing the MOU between the external provider, the LEA, and the school for:
 - Alignment to the school's needs assessment
 - Identification of goals and achievement indicators
 - Alignment of the MOU deliverables
 - LEA's monitoring procedures for MOU deliverables
 - Specific plan with a timeline of activities the LEA will use to hold the external provider accountable for non-performance, including its process for non-renewal and early termination of the contract.

Note: Maryland does not evaluate providers or provide LEAs with a list of approved providers. Maryland's procedure for reviewing the LEA's process for selecting and evaluating the quality of providers is located in the LEA application.

X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 132

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how it will align other resources with the selected intervention.
- The initial detailed budget narrative the LEA submits with its LEA application will include budgets for planning, and pre-implementation activities. Subsequent years' budgets will include implementation activities and sustainability activities.
- The detailed budget narrative the LEA submits will provide evidence of how other resources are aligned with the selected intervention model. Additional

resources may include but not limited to: State and local funding; Title I, Part A; Title II; Title III; Title I, 1003(a); 21st Century Community Learning Centers; Early Learning Initiative Grant funds; etc.

- The LEA must ensure that the school receives all of the State and local funds it would receive in the absence of the school improvement funds and that those resources are aligned with the interventions.

X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 133

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how it will modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively.
- The LEA will provide minutes of meetings and local Board of Education agendas that support the modification of policies or practices that will enable it to fully implement the intervention models effectively, if applicable.

X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 134

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how it will provide effective oversight and support for implementation of the selected intervention for each school that it proposes to serve, such as by creating an LEA turnaround office.
- LEAs with SIG schools are required to establish a turnaround office with adequate staffing to coordinate the implementation of its schools' reform plans. The turnaround office will monitor the implementation of the individual school's plan and oversee the LEA's differentiated supports to each school. The LEA will provide a detailed description of how it plans to monitor and assess the impact of the selected intervention model on a quarterly basis. For each quarter, the LEA will provide information on how the LEA will monitor and provide oversight of the implementation actions (aligned with the requirements of the specific intervention selected) to be taken by the school and the LEA, as well as the ways

in which the school's progress will be assessed. Quarterly reports will be submitted to MSDE within 30 days after the quarter ends. (October, January, April, June) The LEA must demonstrate that they plan to use evidence-based implementation strategies, such as implementation science to ensure and to monitor implementation of strategies over time.

- The LEA will create an organizational structure designed to support all SIG schools. The LEA organizational structure must include the institution of an LEA Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST) that must meet a minimum of 3 times per year with MSDE's Title I Office and representation from Maryland's Breakthrough Center. The Turnaround Executive Support Team will oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority and SIG schools and will have decision-making authority to oversee budget, staffing, policy modifications, partnerships, and data that drive the full implementation of the reform models to ensure greater student achievement in each of its SIG Schools. The TEST will ensure schools are receiving differentiated technical assistance in the areas where the schools' performance results in the Core Value areas of achievement, growth, school and college and career readiness are deficient.
- The LEA will convene a Central Support Team (CST) to oversee the implementation of the select models and strategies that the LEA will implement in their Priority Schools. The team will coordinate support, as well as, monitor and assess progress of each Priority School. The CST is charged with the coordination of differentiated support for principals, teachers and staff in each Priority School. The CST will meet monthly with MSDE's Title I Office and representation from Maryland's Breakthrough Center to discuss ongoing progress, challenges and successes, data and other coordinated and differentiated support provided by the LEA and MSDE. Oversight and management structures of support to SIG Schools must be approved by MSDE.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 135*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how it will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the selected intervention on an ongoing basis.
 - Within the LEA application, the LEA will describe how it will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the selected intervention models by conducting an annual assessment of

the needs of families and the community. Based on the needs assessment, the LEA/school will develop strategies, that will be included in the annual Title I family engagement plan to engage families and the community in activities that are designed to support classroom instruction, and increase student achievement. The plan shall include an annual budget, approved by families who attend the school.

- The LEA/school will gather family/community data for the needs assessment. Data may be gathered in a variety of formats: community-wide forums to identify the major factors that significantly affect the academic achievement of students in the school, inventory of resources in the community and the school that could be aligned, integrated and coordinated to address challenges, holding public meetings to review school performance, use surveys to gauge family and community satisfaction, etc.
- Each school receiving funds from this grant will be required to have a dedicated family involvement liaison with sufficient time and funds to ensure meaningful family and community engagement and two-way communication.
- The LEA's Title I family/community engagement liaison/coordinator will attend all monthly CST meetings and provide an update on the progress of the implementation of strategies for each school.
- X *The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.*

Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 135

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has described how it will sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
- Within the LEA proposal the LEA is required to provide a narrative of how it identifies its actions to support identified schools' implementation of the selected interventions. The LEA is asked to describe how it will ensure that improvement efforts can be sustained once this funding ends in each school plan, including but not limited to, policy creation/revision, and human capital strategies to recruit and retain staff.
- The FY 2020-2021 budget will reflect the sustainability year. The three-year implementation plans will indicate modifications to strategies and budgets towards LEA sustainability as federal funding support is stepped-down in year five.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 135-136*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- The LEA has demonstrated how, to the extent practicable, in accordance with its selected SIG intervention model(s), it will implement one or more evidence-based strategies.
- The LEA will create an organizational structure designed to support all SIG schools. The LEA organizational structure must include the institution of an LEA Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST) that must meet a minimum of 3 times per year with MSDE's Title I Office and representation from Maryland's Breakthrough Center. The Turnaround Executive Support Team will oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority and SIG schools and will have decision-making authority to oversee budget, staffing, policy modifications, partnerships, and data that drive the full implementation of the reform models to ensure greater student achievement in each of its SIG Schools. The TEST will ensure schools are receiving differentiated technical assistance in the areas where the schools' performance results in the Core Value areas of achievement, growth, school and college and career readiness are deficient. The TEST will also be responsible for working with bargaining groups to ensure the agreements will not impact the LEA's ability fully and effectively implement the intervention model. Prospective contracts with outside providers will also be reviewed by this body to ensure terms or provisions in a contract enable the LEA to fully and effectively implementation of the model.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number in rubric: LEA application, page 136*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- 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, or each priority and focus school, as applicable, identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.

- The SEA will consider the following when evaluating the LEA’s commitment and capacity :
 - Actions that support the modification of policies or practices that will enable it to fully implement the intervention models effectively.
 - Alignment of the budgets toward efforts that are sustainable and the LEA’s willingness to re-evaluate budgets throughout the grant period.
 - Ongoing and job-embedded professional development that responds to identified needs in all of its schools.
 - Alignment of other resources, people, time and funding, to support the reform effort., including how the LEA will ensure that the most effective teachers and principals are recruited, hired and retained in SIG schools.
 - The membership of the Central Support Team and Turnaround Executive Support Team and their time commitment to support the ongoing implementation and sustainability of the reforms.
 - The LEA’s level of risk, based on the MSDE’s annual Risk Assessment.

X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, 134-135

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- For an LEA eligible for services under subpart 1 or 2 of part B of Title VI of the ESEA (Rural Education Assistance Program) that proposes to modify one element of the turnaround or transformation model, the LEA has described how it will meet the intent and purpose of that element.

N/A for Maryland

The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric. Provide page number(s) in rubric:

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- An LEA that proposes to use SIG funds to implement, in partnership with a whole school reform model developer, an evidence-based, whole-school reform

model in a school, must demonstrate that (a) the evidence supporting the model includes a sample population or setting similar to that of the school to be served; and (b) it has partnered with a whole school reform model developer that meets the definition of “whole school reform model developer” in the SIG requirements.

- The LEA may use SIG funds to implement an evidence-based, whole school reform model. Under the final requirements, an evidence-based, whole-school reform model:
 1. Is supported by evidence of effectiveness, which must include at least one study of the model that—
 - A. Meets What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards with or without reservations;
 - B. Found a statistically significant favorable impact on a student academic achievement or attainment outcome, with no statistically significant and overriding unfavorable impacts on that outcome for relevant populations in the study or in other studies of the intervention reviewed by and reported on by the What Works Clearinghouse; and
 - C. If meeting What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards with reservations, includes a large sample and a multi-site sample as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 (Note: multiple studies can cumulatively meet the large and multi-site sample requirements so long as each study meets the other requirements in this section);
 2. Is a whole-school reform model as defined in these requirements; and
 3. Is implemented by the LEA in partnership with a whole-school reform model developer as defined in these requirements.
- USED identified and posted on its website, models that were found to have met the requirements of the evidence-based, whole-school reform model. The websites will be provided to the LEAs via the LEA application.
- Information on the website includes a narrative description of each model, the narrative description and at least one study meeting What Works Clearinghouse standards that were submitted in response to the calls for evidence. An LEA that chooses to apply to its SEA for SIG funds to implement an evidence-based, whole-school reform model must select from among those models listed below.

Proprietary Strategies

Success for All

- [Success for All Narrative Description \[PDF \(246 KB\)\]](#)
- [Success for All Evidence \[PDF \(2 MB\)\]](#)

Institute for Student Achievement (ISA)

- [ISA Whole School Reform Narrative](#) [PDF (132 KB)]
- [ISA Evidence](#) [PDF (957 KB)]

Positive Action

- [Positive Action Strategy Narrative](#) [PDF (147 KB)]
- [Positive Action's Response to Questions from the Department](#) [WORD (40 KB)]
- [Positive Action Evidence](#) [PDF (1 MB)]

Non-Proprietary Strategies

Small Schools of Choice

- [Small Schools of Choice Narrative](#) [PDF (219 KB)]
- [Small Schools of Choice Evidence](#) [PDF (2 MB)]

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 140*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

- For an LEA that proposes to use SIG funds to implement the restart model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA has demonstrated that it will conduct a rigorous review process, as described in the final requirements, of the charter school operator, charter management organization (CMO), or education management organization (EMO) that it has selected to operate or manage the school or schools.
- The LEA will demonstrate that it has developed procedures and a timeline to recruit, screen and select external providers. The process must include a variety of stakeholders. LEAs must select providers that can address specific priority needs that the LEA identified via the SIG application. These procedures will be articulated in the planning tool located in the LEA application. Note: Maryland does not evaluate providers or provide LEAs with a list of approved providers. Maryland's procedure for reviewing the LEA's process for selecting and evaluating the quality of providers is located in the LEA application. SEA's evaluation criteria for quality external providers includes reviewing the MOU between the external provider, the LEA, and the school for:
 - Alignment to the school's needs assessment;
 - Identification of goals and achievement indicators;
 - Alignment of the MOU deliverables;
 - LEA's monitoring procedures for MOU deliverables;

- Specific plan with a timeline of activities the LEA will use to hold the external provider; accountable for non-performance, including its process for non-renewal and early termination of the contract.

*X The evaluation criteria for this action are included in the LEA application rubric.
Provide page number(s) in rubric: LEA application, page 141*

The evaluation criteria for this action are not included in the LEA application rubric.

Provide description of evaluation criteria:

D. LEA BUDGETS: In addition to the evaluation criteria listed in Section C, the SEA must describe how it will evaluate an LEA’s budget and application.

The SEA must describe how it will review each LEA’s budget, including a description of the processes the SEA will use to determine if it is appropriate to award an amount different than that requested in the LEA’s budget request.

- A budget template is provided for the LEA in the LEA Application packet. This template is the standard template used by all LEAs when submitting a budget narrative to the Maryland State Department of Education. The LEA must develop budgets that directly align to the activities and the strategies stated in the plan of operation for each year or model the LEA chooses to implement. School budgets will be reviewed annually and adjusted by the LEA to reflect adjustments in activities or strategies over the five year period. The school or LEA may not change the model.
- Budgets will be reviewed and approved annually to ensure alignment to the priority needs, as identified in the updated comprehensive needs assessment and the strategies identified in the plan prior to issuing sub-awards or continuation funding each year.

*Please note that an SEA may make a SIG award to an LEA for up to five years for a particular school, of which the LEA may use one school year for planning and other pre-implementation activities and up to two school years for activities related to sustaining reforms following at least three years of full intervention implementation. The LEA budget should address the entire grant period. An LEA may not receive more than five years of SIG funding for a particular school.

E. TIMELINE: An SEA must describe its process and timeline for approving LEA applications.

Maryland received a Waiver from the US Department of Education on August 4, 2015 to carryover FY 2014 SIG funds in the amount of \$6,632,348 to enable the State to award

those funds to LEAs through a competition to be conducted during the 2015-2016 school year. Based on the amount of the Federal award, Maryland anticipates awarding sub-grants to no more than five (5) eligible schools whose LEA have demonstrated the strongest need and have the capacity to provide support to the identified schools. Maryland will use FY 2015-2016 grant funds as a multi-year award to the schools that received sub-grant awards from FY 2014 funds.

LEAs will submit a pre-implementation plan for up to one year by August 12, 2016 for SY 2016-2017.

LEAs that complete pre-implementation activities before the start of the 2017-2018 school year, may submit for approval, their three-year implementation plan after January 1, 2017. Funds will be issued for Year 1 implementation upon approval of the three-year plan. Funds for the remaining two years of the plan will be issued annually and subject to meeting the renewal criteria. LEAs will submit their sustainability plan on or before May 30, 2019. Funding for the sustainability plan will be based on approval and meeting the renewal criteria.

LEAs that implement a full year pre-implementation plan will submit their three-year implementation plan on or before May 30, 2017. Funds will be issued for Year 1 implementation upon approval of the three-year plan. Funds for the remaining two years of the plan will be issued annually and subject to meeting the renewal criteria. LEAs will submit their sustainability plan on or before May 30, 2019. Funding for the sustainability plan will be based on approval and meeting the renewal criteria.

FY 2014 Funds – distributed over 2 years
Grant Award Period: July 1, 2014- September 30, 2020
 Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,632,348
 5% Administration: \$331,617
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$6,300,731
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

October 2016	Pre-Implementation	SY 2016-2017
Floating distribution between January 2017-October 15, 2017 (LEAs may apply for year 1 funds as they complete their pre-implementation activities)	Implementation- Year 1	SY 2017-2018

FY 2015 Funds-distributed over 1 year
Grant Award Period: July 1, 2015-September 30, 2021

Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,547,772
 5% Administration: \$327,388
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$6,220,384
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

July 1, 2018	Implementation-Year 2	SY 2018-2019
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FY 2016 Funds-distributed over 2 years

Grant Award Period: October 1, 2016-September 30, 2021

Estimated Amount of Grant Funds: \$6,316,518
 5% Administration: \$315,825
 Amount of funds for SIG Schools: \$5,999,693
 Number of Schools Identified: up to five schools

July 1, 2019	Implementation- Year 3	SY 2019-2020
July 1, 2020	Sustainability	SY 2020-2021

At a minimum, the timeline should include information regarding when the:

(1) SEA will notify LEAs about the SIG competition;

- Upon approval of the SEA 2015/16 Application by the U.S. Department of Education, the notification of this competition will be sent to all LEAs with schools identified on Maryland’s March 1, 2016 Priority or Focus Schools list.

(http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea_flex/docs/PriorityFocus20162017Schools.pdf) Maryland expects to make up to five awards using FY 2014 funds. Funds will be distributed to sub-awardees with approved applications according to the timeline above.

(2) LEA applications are due to the SEA;

August 12, 2016

(3) SEA will conduct its review of LEA applications;

August 15- August 31, 2016

(4) LEAs will be notified about their award status; and

- FY 2014 funds will be distributed on or before October 31, 2016; funds will be distributed in two increments for pre-implementation and Year 1 implementation. (LEAs may apply for year 1 funds as they complete their pre-implementation activities)
- FY 2015 funds- on or before July 1, 2018, Year 2 implementation in SY 2018-2019

- FY 2016 funds-on or before July 1, 2019, Year 3 implementation in SY 2019-2020
 - FY 2016 funds-on or before July 1, 2020, Sustainability Year SY 2020-2021
 - Discrepancies with renewal criteria will have to be resolved before the Notice of Grant Award will be issued.
- (5) SEA will award FY 2015/2016 SIG funds to LEAs.
- See item 4 above.
 - All approved grants will be posted on MSDE’s website within 30 days of the final approval of the grant application.

Additionally, the SEA should specify if it is using FY 2015/2016 funds to make two-year awards or multi-year awards, through a waiver of the period of availability of funds, to grantees.

The Maryland State Department of Education will be making multi-year awards through a waiver of the period of availability of funds to grantees.

F. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: An SEA must include the information below.

- (1) Describe the SEA’s process for reviewing an LEA’s annual goals for student achievement to ensure they are rigorous, relevant, and attainable for its Tier I and Tier II schools, or for its priority and focus schools, as applicable, and describe how the SEA will determine whether to renew an LEA’s School Improvement Grant with respect to one or more Tier I or Tier II schools, or one or more priority or focus schools, in an LEA that is not meeting those goals and making progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements.
- An LEA will submit a culminating matrix for each school receiving School Improvement Grant funds. This matrix will include each of the identified goals established for the schools. The LEA will describe the extent to which each goal was achieved along with the supporting data. If a goal was not met, the LEA will discuss modifications that will be established in order to achieve the goal. Future goals will be aligned with Maryland’s new accountability system under the *Every Student Succeeds Act*.

Sample Culminating Matrix:

LEA:
Name of School:
Intervention Model:
Goal #1:
Indicate Met/Partially Met/Not Met:
Supporting Data:

Modifications (if needed):

Goal #2:

Indicate Met/Partially Met/Not Met:

Supporting Data:

Modifications (if needed):

- Each LEA will be required to submit monthly spend-down reports to the MSDE Priority/SIG team.
 - The SEA will perform site visits at each school. The primary function of these site visits is to review and analyze all facets of a school’s implementation of the identified intervention model and collaborate with leadership, staff, and other stakeholders pertinent to goal attainment. Each school site monitoring visit will be summarized in a written report.
- (2) Describe the SEA’s process for renewing the SIG award of an LEA that received SIG funds for a school year of planning and other pre-implementation activities for a school, including the SEA’s process for reviewing the performance of the school against the LEA’s approved application to determine whether the LEA will be able to fully implement its chosen intervention for the school beginning the first day of the following school year.
- Based upon evidence reviewed documenting LEA and school implementation, each school’s site visit monitoring reports, monthly meetings with LEA leadership, the SEA will determine the LEA’s capacity to ensure goal attainment, and subsequent renewal of the School Improvement Grant funds. The SEA will make a decision if a LEA’s Title I SIG, section 1003 (g), is renewed for the next school year. In order to make that determination, the SEA will review the following criteria:
 - Level of Implementation Ratings for each Model;
 - Fiscal Monitoring Spend Downs;
 - LEAs Commitment and Capacity; and
 - Quarterly Reports
 - All grants are subject to annual risk assessment as described in the Uniform Grants Guidance.
 - Based on a point value for each criterion the SEA will make a determination on grant renewal using a renewal scoring key. A corrective action plan may be required as a condition of renewal.

(3) Describe how the SEA will monitor, including the frequency and type of

monitoring (*e.g.*, on-site, desk, self-reported) 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, or priority and focus schools, as applicable, the LEA is approved to serve.

- An LEA will ensure full and effective implementation of the selected school intervention model for schools they are approved to serve. LEAs will submit to the SEA a quarterly summary report of the monitoring/oversight that has been completed and the progress the school has made towards achieving their goals. The SEA will perform site visits at schools. The primary function of the site visits is to review and analyze all facets of a school's implementation of the identified intervention model and collaborate with leadership, staff, and other stakeholders pertinent to goal attainment.
- SEA School Improvement Grant Teams (SIG Teams) will conduct monitoring visits annually at each of the schools and programmatic and fiscal monitoring visits with district level team (staff responsible for the technical assistance and administrative support). In addition, an initial school walkthrough visit will be conducted at each of the schools at the beginning of each school year for each year of the grant.
- The SEA will conduct programmatic monitoring visits with the LEA Central Support Team and the Turnaround Executive Support Team annually to monitor their leadership and support to the identified schools. School principals will be included in the first LEA monitoring visit only. The SEA will discuss the approved SIG intervention plan with the school leadership and district staff to ensure that all parties are familiar and understand the approved goals and the consequences for not making progress toward meeting the goals.
- The SEA will conduct fiscal monitoring visits with the LEA fiscal/grant office representatives to monitor district and school funding. In addition and as a best practice, the LEA is required to submit electronic fiscal reports monthly to the SEA for each school and the LEA.

Annual Visit Timeline

- ☑ September - October: SEA will meet with the school principal and conduct an initial school walk-through.
- ☑ January – February- Program monitoring will be desk monitoring or onsite monitoring as determined by the SEA. The SEA will take into consideration monthly school updates, quarterly reports, CST and TEST participation, fiscal reports, and draw-downs to determine the method of monitoring.
- ☑ April – May: SEA will conduct an onsite visit at each identified school to monitor

the impact of SIG on teaching and learning in the instructional classrooms based on four domains: instructional planning; instructional delivery; teacher-student engagement; and classroom management.

(4) 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.

- LEAs will be granted school improvement funds if the LEA submits a grant application that adequately addresses the needs of the schools(s) and demonstrates the capacity to implement the model it selected for each school. Should the SEA not have sufficient funds to support all LEAs with identified schools, the SEA will fund LEAs with schools that have the highest academic need on the list of eligible schools. Maryland will serve up to five schools.

(5) For SEAs not approved for ESEA flexibility, describe the criteria, if any, which the SEA intends to use to prioritize among Tier III schools.

- Maryland does not anticipate there will be any focus schools served due to the limited amount of funding available. Maryland anticipates awarding sub-grants to approximately five (5) eligible schools whose LEA's have demonstrated the strongest need and have the capacity to provide support to the identified schools. Maryland will use FY 2015-2016 grant funds as a multi-year award to the schools that received sub-grant awards from FY 2014 funds.

(6) For SEAs not approved for ESEA flexibility, describe the SEA's process for reviewing the goals an LEA establishes for its Tier III schools (subject to approval by the SEA) to ensure they are rigorous, relevant, and attainable and how the SEA will determine whether to renew an LEA's School Improvement Grant with respect to one or more Tier III schools in the LEA that are not meeting those goals.

N/A

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

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

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

Consult with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in this

application.

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, or each priority or focus school, as applicable, that the SEA approves the LEA to serve.

Award each School Improvement Grant to an LEA based on an individual review of each application and a case-by-case determination of the amount needed to plan for implementation, as applicable, to fully implement a model for three years, and sustain the model, as applicable, rather than make grant awards based on a formula.

Monitor and evaluate the actions an LEA has taken, as outlined in its approved SIG application, to recruit, select and provide oversight to external providers, including charter school operators and CMOs, to ensure their quality and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.

Monitor and evaluate the actions the LEA has taken, as outlined in its approved SIG application, to sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

If a school implementing the restart model becomes a charter school LEA, hold the charter school operator or CMO 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 each LEA's 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 or priority and focus school, as applicable. An SEA must post all LEA applications, including those of applicants that did not receive awards, as well as applications to serve Tier III schools. Additionally, if an LEA amends an application, the SEA will post the amended application.

Report the specific school-level data required in section III of the final SIG requirements, including baseline data for the year prior to SIG implementation.

If the SEA intends to provide services directly to any schools in the absence of a takeover, seek and obtain approval from the LEA to have the SEA provide the services directly prior to providing services.

Prior to submitting its School Improvement Grant application, provide all LEAs in the State that are eligible to receive School Improvement Grants with notice and a reasonable

opportunity to comment on its waiver request(s) and attach a copy of that notice as well as copies of any comments received from LEAs to this application. The SEA also assures that it has provided notice and information regarding the waiver request(s) described below, if applicable, to the public in the manner in which the SEA 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.

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

The SEA must briefly describe the activities related to administration, evaluation, and technical assistance (e.g. funding staff positions, supporting statewide support, etc.) that the SEA plans to conduct with any State-level funds it chooses to reserve from its School Improvement Grants allocation.

- a. The SEA will reserve funds that will be used to convene school improvement grant teams who will be led by specialists from the Program Improvement and Family Support Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education. The SEA will assemble cross-divisional support team members with expertise and success in all or some of the following areas:
 - School improvement;
 - LEA administrative leadership;
 - School Principal Leadership;
 - Reading, Mathematics, Special Education, or ELL instruction depending upon the needs identified by the LEA;
 - School Culture and Climate; and/or
 - Family and Community Engagement.

- b. The SEA will reserve funds to support the salaries of Title I school support specialists who are also part of the School Support Team and will provide direct assistance and oversight to the identified schools. The specialists will be assigned as teams to LEAs with schools served by the school improvement grant. They are charged with working directly with the Central Support Teams and the Turnaround Executive Support Team in each LEA as models and strategies are being developed, implemented and monitored. They will oversee the spend-down of funds, budgets, and program implementation. The school improvement specialists will become the first line between the SEA and the LEA during the five-year grant process.

- c. Maryland will use administrative funds from the school improvement grant to support LEAs through the Title I Office. The SEA will participate in an ongoing

consultation process (with identified LEA staff) to determine the alignment of resources in the impacted schools in order to make decisions which will improve teaching and learning for all children as they achieve proficient and advanced levels of student achievement on state assessments.

Based on the final decisions by the LEA, the SEA will offer to broker and/or provide services at the school level to meet the specific needs of the school community in the following areas:

- Curriculum;
- Instruction;
- Assessment;
- School Culture and Climate;
- Students, Family, and Community Support;
- Professional Development with Accountability;
- Effective Leadership;
- Organizational Structure and Resources; and
- Comprehensive and Effective Planning.

- d. Maryland will continue to develop monitoring tools that are school-specific, based on the model selected. Maryland will continue to modify these monitoring tools when amendments are granted to LEAs so they clearly match the activities and strategies for each individual school. School improvement funds will be used to support the cost of monitoring visits to LEAs and schools as they implement their models. Quarterly Summary Reports will be used as interim measures of success, based on the progress of the leading indicators. The SEA will analyze annual state assessment data and other indicators of success described in the LEA application to determine whether or not the model has been implemented successfully.

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

Maryland requests a waiver of the requirements it has indicated below. The SEA believes that the requested waiver(s) will increase its ability to implement the SIG program effectively in eligible schools in the State in order to improve the quality of instruction and raise the academic achievement of students in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools or in its priority and focus schools, as applicable, or will allow any 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.

Part 1: Waivers Available to All States

Waiver 1: Period of availability of FY 2015 funds waiver

Note: This waiver only applies to FY 2015 funds for the purpose of making three- to five-year awards to eligible LEAs.

X In order to extend the period of availability beyond September 30, 2017, waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2015 school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2021.

Waiver 2: Period of availability of FY 2016 funds waiver

Note: This waiver only applies to FY 2016 funds for the purpose of making three- to five-year awards to eligible LEAs.

X In order to extend the period of availability beyond September 30, 2018, waive section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2016 school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2021.

Part 2: Waivers Available Only to States Not Approved for ESEA Flexibility

Waiver 1: Tier II waiver

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2015/2016 competition, waive paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and incorporation of that definition in identifying Tier II schools under Section I.A.1(b) of those requirements to permit the State to include, in the pool of secondary schools from which it determines those that are the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the State, secondary schools participating under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for at least two consecutive years or are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined.

Assurance

The State assures that it will include in the pool of schools from which it identifies its Tier II schools all Title I secondary schools not identified in Tier I that either (1) have not made AYP for at least two consecutive years; or (2) are in the State’s lowest quintile of performance based on proficiency rates on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics combined. Within that pool, the State assures that it will identify as Tier II schools the persistently lowest-achieving schools in accordance with its approved

definition. The State is attaching the list of schools and their level of achievement (as determined under paragraph (b) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools”) that would be identified as Tier II schools without the waiver and those that would be identified with the waiver. The State assures that it will ensure that any LEA that chooses to use SIG funds in a Title I secondary school that becomes an eligible Tier II school based on this waiver will comply with the SIG final requirements for serving that school.

Waiver 2: n-size waiver

In order to enable the State to generate new lists of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools for its FY 2015/2016 competition, waive the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” in Section I.A.3 of the SIG final requirements and the use of that definition in Section I.A.1(a) and (b) of those requirements to permit the State to exclude, from the pool of schools from which it identifies the persistently lowest-achieving schools for Tier I and Tier II, any school in which the total number of students in the “all students” group in the grades assessed is less than [Please indicate number].

Assurance

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

Waiver 3: School improvement timeline waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the school improvement timeline waiver for the FY 2014 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2015/2016 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

Schools that started implementation of a SIG model in the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016 school years cannot request this waiver to “start over” their school improvement timeline again.

Waive section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA to permit LEAs to allow their Tier I or Tier II title I participating schools that will fully implement a SIG model beginning in the 2016–2017 school year to “start over” in the school improvement timeline.

Assurances

The State assures that it will permit an LEA to implement this waiver only if the LEA receives a School Improvement Grant and requests the waiver in its application as part of a plan to implement a SIG model beginning in the 2016–2017 school year in a school that the SEA has approved it to serve. As such, the LEA may only implement the waiver in Tier I and Tier II schools, as applicable, included in its application.

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

Waiver 4: Schoolwide program waiver

Note: An SEA that requested and received the schoolwide program waiver for the FY 2014 competition and wishes to also receive the waiver for the FY 2015/2016 competition must request the waiver again in this application.

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 and is fully implementing one of the seven school intervention models.

Assurances

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

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

PART II: LEA APPLICATION
SEE ATTACHED