

**Illinois State Board of Education
Grants and Programs**

FY 2010 School Improvement Grant – Section 1003(g)

Audio Teleconference Questions and Answers

Monday, April 27, 2009

- 1. Does the grant allow for the purchase of technology to use with teachers and students (i.e., smartboards)?**

Answer: Consider how the school is looking at data and how teachers are being trained. This grant is to fund research-based strategies and practices, and the use of smartboards is not supported by research. However, there are a number of technology items that may be used.

- 2. What types of strategies are considered appropriate under the USDE Strategy?**

Answer: The strategies would be to address needs that have been identified by the district and for which data support the identified need in order to improve teaching and learning in the school. For example: the school may be near a military base and student mobility and attendance are a factor. Discipline may be another issue that is causing the school to not make AYP.

- 3. Can a behavior intervention specialist be hired to address the needs of the school?**

Answer: The data must support the need for behavior interventions and the needed personnel to support the school's efforts?

- 4. Is there a "cap" on the number of schools that can apply for the FY 2010 SIP 1003(g) grant within a district?**

Answer: There is no cap on the number of schools that can apply for the grant within a district. The school must be in federal academic status based on the 2008 Report Card data. Any district receiving a total of over \$1 million must be approved by the State Board of Education.

- 5. What is the website for the Parental Involvement Information on ISBE?**

Answer: The Grants and Programs website at <http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/parent.htm> provides a wide range of resources including the Parent Involvement Analysis tool, parent involvement policy information, and other resources.

- 6. Does ISBE provide a list of approved providers for implementing these strategies?**

Answer: No. This would be inappropriate. Please refer to your RESPRO for assistance.

- 7. Can we expand current school improvement efforts?**

Answer: Yes, if the current school improvement plan and improvement efforts support the need to expand the program(s) in order to improve student achievement and move the school out of improvement status. The funds can be used to **expand** the efforts but not supplant the current local, state, or federal funds.

8. If we plan to work with the school's feeder districts, how would we provide payment to the cooperating districts for the time their teachers engage in these improvement efforts?

Answer: The district would pay the cost of these expenses under *Function Code: 4000 – Payment to Other Districts and Governmental Units* on the Budget Summary and Budget Summary Breakdown. The payment(s) would be for those teachers who work beyond their contractual time. The efforts may be related to aligning the curriculum and programs between and among schools, as well as other activities designed to improve the funded school's student achievement. The payments would be listed as a *purchased service* because the district would be paying the other district's teachers, and if applicable, substitute teachers, for their service.

9. What areas should be the focus of the proposal if the first year the school did not make AYP was in the area of reading and the second year was in the area of mathematics?

Answer: The school improvement plan and the proposal should be addressing both content areas.

10. What is the cost of federal TRS for FY 2010?

Answer: For 2010, the PRELIMINARY federal TRS rate is 23.38% (see the TRS link www.trs.illinois.gov -employer services link (left side of screen)

<http://trs.illinois.gov/subsections/employers/employerservices.htm>

The benefits requested on a grant depend on the package approved at the district level. Whatever is an approvable package for all other salaries (subs, teachers, aides, etc.) would be acceptable in this grant.

11. What points would a school receive if the school's federal academic status is "Choice?"

Answer: The points on the proposal would not receive points for Section I: Need – 2007-2008 Federal Improvement Status. However, the school may be eligible for other points based on the 2008 Report Card data and there are up to 13 points possible for the narrative section.