

## School Improvement Grant – 1003(g)



### June 24, 2008, Teleconference Questions and Answers

**1. Does the grant allow for the hiring of coaches?**

Yes, if the coach is to be assigned to the school receiving the SIP 1003(g) funds.  
See Uses of Funds: page 6 and 7.

**2. Can you include the membership fee and services the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) in the budget?**

Yes. The professional development plan is to align with the NSDC Standards for Staff Development that focuses on context, process, and content standards. See page 3 – USDE Required Strategies, #1, and page 9, Section III, Proposed Activities.

**3. Is it beneficial to choose one or more of the USDE Strategies?**

Yes. The proposal must clearly describe how each of the strategies is addressed.

**4. Is it acceptable to budget for an internal evaluator?**

Yes. This can be part of the assessment and monitoring of the school's project. The project cannot fund universal screening tools, but tier 2 and tier 3 of intervention can be used.

**5. Can funds be used to allow for release time to work with feeder schools? For example, the school would like to conduct a data retreat and invite representatives of the feeder schools to participate in the process.**

Yes. If the data retreat would support your efforts and this activity is included in your plan. The cost of stipends and/or substitute payments can be submitted.

**6. If the school wants to explore bringing in High Schools That Work, can the funds be used to pay for the HSTW survey?**

Yes, if this activity is clearly defined in the proposal and it is clear that the activity is time specific, research based and implemented. The school cannot be engaged in “planning” all year.

**7. If the school has been working with a consulting group, is it acceptable to add new deliverables to their work and include this in the proposal?**

Yes, if the proposal clearly describes the new services and their relationship to the plan. The contract should be amended to show that additional deliverables have been added to the original contract and that they are defined as services “in addition to” the work previously contracted.

**8. Can the proposal include specifics such as using the “Target Teach” curriculum and/or others, as well as the Hope Foundation?**

It is essential for the school to use instructional strategies that will help the school improve. The programs that are implemented must be research based and focus on reading and mathematics. The State will not endorse a specific product.

**9. Can the project fund the use of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) if it is currently using DIBELS?**

No. Funds cannot be used to pay for a screening tool that identifies students for intervention services and that was previously being used in the school. This is supplanting.

**10. How do we submit the Letter of Intent?**

The Letter of Intent can be mailed, faxed to 217-785-9031, or emailed to Cynthia Newman at [cnewman@isbe.net](mailto:cnewman@isbe.net). These must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 27. Proposals will only be accepted from those applicants that have submitted the Letter of Intent. The address is: Illinois State Board of Education, Grants and Programs, 100 N. First Street, Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

**11. What is needed to demonstrate staff support and commitment (see Section II: Commitment, page 8)?**

A letter from the principal confirming that staff commitment has been achieved may be included in the appendix.

**12. Can a part-time teacher be hired because this is a small school and only has one teacher to teach mathematics?**

No, this is not acceptable. However, a part time coach can be hired to help provide mentoring and instructional support to the teacher.

**13. Can a district apply if the district is in improvement status but there are no schools in the district that are in status?**

No. A district cannot apply for these funds. A school must be in federal status. The list of eligible schools is available at [http://www.isbe.net/sos/excel/school\\_status.xls](http://www.isbe.net/sos/excel/school_status.xls).

**14. Can a non-Title I school apply for this grant?**

No. The school must be a Title I school that is in federal improvement status. This is determined by the ISBE Data Division data analysis which includes AYP status and funding. The federal and state status of a school is listed on the AYP page of the school's Report Card (see <http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getSearchCriteria.aspx>) and the full list of schools in federal status is posted at [http://www.isbe.net/sos/excel/school\\_status.xls](http://www.isbe.net/sos/excel/school_status.xls).

**15. Can two schools be included in one proposal?**

No. There must be separate proposals for each school applying for these funds.

**16. Is this proposal to include a one year plan or should the proposal include a three year plan?**

ISBE intends to fund each school for the next three years based on the school's progress and appropriations from Congress. For many, the proposal may only be able to focus on one year and others may be able to include a three year plan. The second year application will relate to the progress made. Either way is correct.

**17. Is it necessary to use the SIP 1003(g) RFP Narrative Forms – 2 and 2A?**

Yes, please use the forms provided at [http://www.isbe.net/sos/pdf/43-45\\_school\\_improvement.pdf/](http://www.isbe.net/sos/pdf/43-45_school_improvement.pdf/).

**18. Is there an established daily rate that can be paid to an outside consultant?**

No. ISBE is not setting this fee, but the dollars paid to the consultant must be directly related to improving student achievement. The cost of hiring a consultant is determined through your negotiations, and this cost may include related expenses such as travel, lodging, and other needs. If costs are excessive, ISBE staff will negotiate your budget with you to make sure that funds are spent in the most effective manner.

**19. Will these grant funds have any impact on the RESPRO services and support that is provided?**

No. These funds will not conflict with the RESPRO services. Schools are required to work the RESPRO for School Improvement Plans and also the professional development plan required in the application.

**20. Can funds be used to support co-teaching training because the special education students' scores declined?**

Yes, these funds can be used to expand on these efforts.

**21. If the school wants to hire a turnaround coach specialist, how can we document their level of success?**

This is a local decision and you must have the evidence to support the hiring of the coach. Can this individual deliver the services your school needs based on his/her previous work experience?

**22. Is there a priority for grade span?**

Yes. A high school may be awarded 10 bonus points if its student achievement scores, as measured by the PSAE, are in the bottom 3 percent of all high schools statewide and the school is in improvement status.

**23. Will the ten bonus points for high schools impact the competition for these funds?**

This is a competitive grant. It is all about demonstrating the greatest need and strongest commitment.

**24. Will the spring 2009 SIP 1003(g) proposal include the same expectations?**

Yes, unless the federal government requests a change.

**25. The school has a high need and should the budget reflect this need?**

Write for what is needed and provide the funds to do what is needed. These grants will range from no less than \$50,000 to no more than \$500,000 for year one. Based on progress and appropriations, two additional one-year level funding awards will be provided.

**Final Notes and Reminders:**

Please review the School Improvement Grant – Section 1003(g) RFP and Attachments at [http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip\\_1003.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm) and work with your RESPRO (see <http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/respro.htm>) to develop your school improvement plan and proposal.

**Contact Person:**

For more information on this RFP, contact Martha A. (Marti) Woelfle, Grants and Programs, Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, IL 62777-0001, 217/524-4832, or by email at [mwoelfle@isbe.net](mailto:mwoelfle@isbe.net).

**REMINDER: Please budget for your school's National Association of Staff Development Council (NSDC) membership fee in your budget. Also, please budget funds for staff to take NSDC's Standards for Staff Development Assessment Inventory (SAI)**

Schools and districts can use the results of the NSDC Standards for Staff Development Assessment Inventory to learn whether their staff development programs are aligned with NSDC's Standards for Staff Development and the Council's definition of quality staff development. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory has established the validity and reliability of this instrument.

**The self-assessment is available in both a print and an online version.**

**PRINT VERSION**

The print version of the inventory may be purchased from the NSCD bookstore, and is being sold only in sets of 50. Buyers will receive 50 copies of the assessment inventory and 50 scoring sheets plus instructions for administering the inventory. Price: \$48, members; \$60, nonmembers. NSDC Item #B244.

**ONLINE VERSION**

Schools that buy the online survey will be able to have all staff members respond to a 60-question survey that takes only about 20 minutes to complete. Schools will be provided with an access code which will allow only their staff members to respond to the online survey. Their staff members will have access to a web site for a designated period of time. At the conclusion of that time period, a number of summary reports will be generated for the school. For an additional fee, districts can register for district reports as well.

Information from the assessment includes:

- **Report 1: Indicator Averages:** The chart shows the average indicator values calculated from the question responses. The five indicators needing the most improvement have been outlined. An additional chart accompanies this report that shows the numerical average response value for each question grouped by standards. There are five questions per standard.

- **Report 2: Frequency Counts by Indicator:** Bar graphs display the frequency of each response by count and percentage for each question. This report is organized by the three standards sections: Context, Process, and Content. The accompanying standards and five questions are listed by section.
- **Report 3: Basic Frequency Counts.** Bar graphs display the frequency of each response by count and percentage for each question. This report is organized by question in numerical order.

These reports will enable a faculty to draw conclusions and make recommendations to assist in planning quality professional learning. Additional guidance for planning quality professional development is provided.

### **Online version pricing available for individual schools or school systems**

If you are interested in beginning the process with your staff, contact Sue Francis, coordinator of custom-designed services, at 972-943-0381 or [Sue.Francis@nsdc.org](mailto:Sue.Francis@nsdc.org)