

## 2011-12 TITLE I REGIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### **What is the Grant Award Period?**

The grant award period is October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

Annual grants are awarded as close as possible to October 1<sup>st</sup>, however delays can and do happen.

As a result, the October 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup> period is an overlap from the prior year grant. It exists to ensure services are not interrupted as the new grant year starts and new funds are awarded.

### **Who is eligible?**

Any ISD/RESA/RESA that serves school districts with Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring due to not meeting academic proficiency goals in math and/or reading in the current or previous academic year is eligible for this grant.

### **How is the allocation determined?**

The annual ISD/RESA/RESA allocation is determined based on two pieces of data:

1. the number of Title I schools under their jurisdiction that are identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring due to not meeting academic proficiency goals in math and/or reading in the current or previous academic year.
2. The enrollment of each of the buildings described in #1 above.

### **What types of activities are supported by the RAG?**

ISDs use their RAG funds to build staff capacity in the identified school by supporting continuous improvement that focuses on the reason(s) why the Title I school was identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Activities may include the following supports and services that are based on demonstrated needs:

- School Support Teams (SST) - **REQUIRED**
- Leadership coaches
- Participation in the Michigan Fellowship of Instructional Leaders
- Content area coaches
- Professional development
- Data workshops/understanding and using data
- Support for Title I PLA schools in implementing their selected intervention model (typically the transformation or turnaround models)
- Materials/supplies to support the above named activities
- Travel costs associated with the above named activities

**Can the ISD use RAG funds for classroom or student materials/supplies?**

No. RAG funds may not be used to purchase classroom and/or student materials and supplies. Please refer to the previous question on the allowable uses of grant funds.

**How long should a school receive services under the current year award?**

As long as the Title I school is identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring due to not meeting academic proficiency goals in math and/or reading during the grant period, they may continue to receive services.

**What happens if a school the ISD/RESA/RESA receives funding for makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) when the list is released in August?**

In this scenario, services should only continue until the first day of the new school year. Any funding remaining that was earmarked for that school may be transferred to any other MI Excel school the ISD/RESA/RESA currently serves. The ISD/RESA/RESA determines the priority and need for transferring funds in this scenario.

If existing contracts or obligations prevent the cessation of services, the ISD/RESA/RESA may continue services until such time those obligations or contracts expire, not to exceed the end of the grant period (12/31).

**My ISD receives \$60,000 for one school, \$125,000 for another, and \$75,000 for a third, for a total allocation of \$260,000. Do I have to budget those exact amounts for each building or do I have some leeway in expenditures?**

Actual needs will vary according to individual circumstances. MDE recommends that ISDs/RESAs/RESAs build budgets based on those needs. This seldom results in exactly \$60,000, \$75,000, or \$125,000 worth of services going to each eligible school.

**What if a school is no longer Title I and the ISD had scheduled programming for it in September? Can the ISD continue to serve them since the grant period ends 12/31?**

No. Services must stop by the first day of school. Federal statute is clear that these funds are for identified Title I schools only. These funds may not be used for non-Title I schools.

**Can we use these funds for Title I schools that are not identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring?**

No. Federal statute clearly requires these funds to be used for Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

**Can we use these funds to support a Title I building that is identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring for reasons other than not meeting academic proficiency goals – such as those identified for graduation rates or not meeting student test participation requirements?**

Yes, the law allows you to do so. However, you must bear in mind that the allocation formula does not include these schools. Any support provided to these schools may mean less support to other schools you receive funding for.

**Could we fund professional development with this grant and allow participants from other non-identified Title I schools or non-Title I schools to attend?**

Yes, so long as these participants are charged a fee to attend or you find another funding source that allows you to cover their costs. Make sure to document how you funded the session(s) and detail the measures taken to ensure that Regional Assistance Grant funds were not spent outside of the statutory requirements and guidelines.

**What if a MI-Excel School receives a Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG)?**

SIG receiving schools are no longer eligible for MI-Excel services. To that end, RAG funded services should cease no later than **August 30** of the year in which the school receives the SIG, unless existing contracts or obligations exist that must be honored.

Any remaining RAG funds that were allocated for the SIG school may be transferred to any other MI Excel school the ISD/RESA/RESA currently serves. The ISD/RESA/RESA determines the priority and need for transferring funds in this scenario.

SIG schools may purchase SSoS services with their SIG funds. No RAG funding may be used to so support a former MI-Excel school for as long as it receives SIG funding.

**What if a MI-Excel School is also a Persistently Low-Achieving (PLA) school on the “5 percent list,” but does not receive a SIG?**

In terms of funding and support, a MI-Excel school that is also a PLA, but did not receive a SIG, is not considered any differently than any other MI-Excel school.

Inclusion on the PLA list (and **NOT** receiving a SIG) does not prohibit the school from receiving support through the SSoS and RAG. The only notable difference is Michigan statute that requires the PLA school to implement one of four intervention models (closure, restart, transformation, and turnaround). SSoS and RAG services will be used to support the school's selected intervention model as appropriate.

**I recently heard that SIG schools are required to have a school support team (SST). How does that work?**

SIG schools must have a SST as a condition of receiving their grant award. This applies to both SIG I and SIG II schools. This applies regardless of whether or not the school is Title I.

SIG schools must use their SIG dollars to fund the SST. The ISD/RESA **does not** use RAG funds for this purpose.

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***New FAQs will be developed for the 2012-13 school year.***