



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

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April 25, 2014

Dr. Deborah S. Delisle  
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of Secondary and Elementary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

**RE: *Michigan Department of Education Request to Waive the Period of Availability of FY 2011 School Improvement Grant Funds***

Dear Dr. Delisle,

I am writing with regard to Michigan's Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 funds under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program under section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Under Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (the "Tydings Amendment"), FY 2011 SIG funds must be obligated by September 30, 2014. Michigan is requesting to extend \$19,711,550.00 in FY 2011 SIG funds.

Therefore, I am requesting, on behalf of Michigan, a waiver of Section 421(b) of GEPA for Michigan's FY 2011 SIG funds. Specifically, I am seeking this waiver to extend the period of availability for the FY 2011 SIG funds for an additional 12 months until September 30, 2015. This request is necessary due to Cohort II SIG schools closing, merging, or changing governance.

Michigan will combine the remaining FY 2011 SIG funds with its 2013 SIG funds and use the combined funds to make FY 2013 SIG awards consistent with the SIG final requirements. Michigan believes that receiving this waiver will enable it to expand the number of schools that can be funded in SIG Cohort III. These funds will help increase the quality of instruction and improve the academic achievement of students in these schools by supporting rigorous reforms. Michigan will hold each Local Education Agency (LEA) that receives FY 2011 SIG funds accountable in accordance with the annual goals that the LEA included in its FY 2013 SIG application.

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It is likely the actual amount of FY 2011 funds to be extended will be less than \$19,711,550.00, as the final expenditure reports will not be filed before Michigan awards the FY 2013 funds to Cohort III. Therefore it is necessary to request the entire FY 2011 in order to avoid a mid-year award well after the FY 2013 competition has occurred. Michigan intends to make a first round of grant awards to the highest scoring applicants based on the FY 2013 funding by mid-June of 2014. Michigan will then offer a second round of funding based on the next highest scoring applicants from that competition not later than October 1, 2014.

Michigan provided all LEAs in the State and the public with a notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on this request. Copies of those notices and the responses received are attached.

Michigan further assures that, if it receives the requested waiver, Michigan will meet the following conditions:

- Michigan assures that it will use its unobligated FY 2011 SIG funds in conjunction with its FY 2013 SIG funds to support its FY 2013 SIG competition and will require each LEA that receives those funds to expend them in accordance with the final requirements of the SIG program (75 Fed. Reg. 66363 (Oct. 28, 2010) and Title I, Part A, Section 1003(g)).

I understand how critical it is that Michigan and its LEAs have sufficient fund accounting procedures to ensure that Federal funds are obligated in a timely manner. To ensure that Michigan obligates future funds in a timely manner, Michigan will work closely with LEAs and entities that support LEAs in school improvement initiatives funded through the SIG. These funds will be expended prior to the end of the grant period in a deliberate manner designed to increase the quality of instruction and the academic performance of students.

Please feel free to contact Linda Forward by phone, 517-241-3137, or e-mail, [forwardl@michigan.gov](mailto:forwardl@michigan.gov), if you have any questions regarding this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D.  
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services

Attachment