



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

September 29, 2010

Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana
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 2008 School Improvement Grant Funds*

Dear Dr. Meléndez:

I am writing with regard to Michigan's Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 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 2008 SIG funds must be obligated by September 30, 2010. Currently, Michigan has \$4,808,209 in unobligated FY 2008 SIG funds. These funds remain unobligated because of the influx of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Title I funds in FY 2009. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) utilized these funds to support multiple school improvement initiatives, and as a result, the State Education Agency (SEA) is facing the possibility of lapsing FY 2008 School Improvement Grant Funds. Michigan does not anticipate being able to obligate these funds in a thoughtful manner that will increase the quality of instruction and academic performance for students prior to that deadline.

Therefore, I am requesting, on behalf of Michigan, a waiver of section 421(b) of GEPA for the unobligated portion of Michigan's FY 2008 SIG funds. Specifically, I am seeking this waiver to extend the period of availability for the FY 2008 SIG funds for an additional 24 months until September 30, 2012.

Michigan will combine the remaining FY 2008 SIG funds with its 2010 SIG funds (the FY 2009 SIG funds that carry over, if any funds remain unspent at the end of that grant period) and use the combined funds to make FY 2010 SIG awards consistent with the SIG final requirements. Michigan believes that receiving this waiver will enable it to use FY 2008 funds to make SIG awards that will allow its LEAs to support the implementation of required school intervention models in additional Tier I and Tier II schools. These funds will help increase the quality of instruction and improve the academic achievement of students in these schools by supporting rigorous reforms.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

KATHLEEN N. STRAUS – PRESIDENT • JOHN C. AUSTIN – VICE PRESIDENT
CAROLYN L. CURTIN – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
NANCY DANHOF – NASBE DELEGATE • ELIZABETH W. BAUER
REGINALD M. TURNER • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

Dr. Meléndez de Santa Ana
Page 2
September 29, 2010

Michigan will hold each LEA that receives FY 2008 SIG funds accountable in accordance with the annual goals that the LEA includes in its FY 2010 SIG application.

Michigan assures that it has provided all LEAs in the State with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on this request. Michigan will provide such notice by sending a letter to all LEAs on October 7, 2010 (see attached copy of notice). To expedite its waiver request, Michigan will submit copies of any comments it receives from LEAs after the comment period closes on October 14, 2010. Michigan has also provided notice and information regarding this waiver request to the public in the manner in which Michigan customarily provides such notice and information to the public by posting to the state website (see attached copy of that notice).

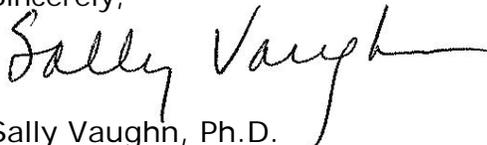
Michigan further assures that, if it receives the requested waiver, Michigan will meet the following conditions:

- Michigan assures that it will use its unobligated FY 2008 SIG funds in conjunction with its FY 2010 SIG funds (and its FY 2009 carryover SIG funds) to support its FY 2010 SIG competition and will require each LEA that receives those funds to expend them in accordance with the final requirements of the SIG program (74 Fed. Reg. 65618 [Dec. 10, 2009] and 75 Fed. Reg. 3375 [Jan. 21, 2010]).
- Michigan will submit any comments it receives to the U. S. Department of Education within 5 days of the closing of the comment period on this waiver.

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 the 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 me or Linda Forward by phone, 517-241-3147, or e-mail, forwardl@michigan.gov, if you have any questions regarding this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sally Vaughn, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer