



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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GOVERNOR

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 28, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers

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

SUBJECT: Waivers of Title I School Improvement Grant Requirements

The United States Department of Education (USED) has released the application for School Improvement Grants under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The grants, through state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs), are for use in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. These schools must demonstrate the greatest need for, and the strongest commitment to, use of the funds in providing adequate resources that will substantially raise student achievement, enable the schools to make adequate yearly progress (AYP), and exit identification/improvement status.

The USED is allowing SEAs to apply for waivers of certain requirements in the School Improvement Grants. On or before February 8, 2010, MDE will submit to the USED an application for the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grants that includes a request to waive the following requirements for all LEAs in Michigan that are awarded these funds:

- a) Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)); a waiver of this requirement will result in the USED extending the period of availability of school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2013. Without this waiver, the period of availability for these funds would end September 30, 2011.
- b) Section 1116(b)(12) of the ESEA; a waiver of this requirement will allow Tier I schools that will implement a turnaround or restart model to “start over” in the school improvement timeline. This waiver would free a Tier I school from the requirement for an identified school to meet AYP for two consecutive years before being released from the ESEA requirements (i.e. Public School Choice, Supplemental Educational Services, 20 percent obligation for Choice and SES, 10 percent obligation for professional development, etc). Even though a school implementing this waiver would no longer be identified for

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improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, it is still eligible to receive Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant funds.

- c) The 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold in Section 1114(a)(1) of the ESEA; a waiver of this requirement would allow an LEA to implement a schoolwide Title I program in a Tier I school that does not meet the poverty threshold. Without this waiver, a Tier I school that does not have at least 40 percent of its student population at the federally determined poverty level may only offer a targeted assistance Title I program.

Please visit <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/090827.html> for more information on the School Improvement Grant and explanation of the "tier" system referenced above.

LEAs wishing to comment on the School Improvement Grant waiver request should submit comments to ARRAWaiverResponse@michigan.gov by February 1, 2010. Please include the phrase "SIG waiver comments" in the subject line. Comments should be specific to waiver requests a) through c) outlined above.

Questions may be directed to Bill Witt at 517-373-4140 or by email at ARRAWaiverResponse@michigan.gov.

cc: William Mayes, MASA
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