

Title I School Improvement Grants [1003(a)] Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How are the Title I School Improvement Grants funded?

A1. The state of Florida has the authority to set-aside a percentage of its Title I allocation to distribute to local educational agencies (LEAs) for school improvement activities. This is the School Improvement Initiative [1003(a)]. For the 2010-11 school year, the state of Florida exercises that authority and has set-aside 4% of its Title I allocation for this purpose. The state of Florida applied for the 2010-2011 School Improvement Fund [1003(g)] from the United States Education Department.

Q2. How was LEA eligibility determined for each of the Title I School Improvement Grants?

A2. The Florida Department of Education determined an LEA eligible for 1003(a) if it had a Title I school in need of improvement (SINI 1-2), corrective action (SINI 3), planning for restructuring (SINI 4), and/or implementing restructuring (SINI 5+).

Q3. How were the LEAs' allocation determined for Title I School Improvement Grants [1003(a)]?

A3. Title I School Improvement Initiative [1003(a)]:

1. Methodology to Determine Eligible Schools and Districts:

- a. From Public School Eligibility Survey (PSES), remove schools without TA (Targeted Assistance) and SW (Schoolwide programs) code.
- b. Match Public School Eligibility Survey (PSES) to Master School ID file (MSID).
- c. Create 2009-2010 Proposed Preliminary Title I list to be used **only** for purposes of School Improvement allocations.
- d. Proposed Preliminary Title I list of schools is not approved for distribution until Preliminary Title I schools list is created and approved.
- e. Match 2009-2010 Proposed Preliminary Title I list to 2009 SINI data, 2009 DINI data and 2008-2009 AYP file
- f. Delete schools with SINI status = 0 or null

2. Methodology to Calculate Allocation:

- a. Divide allocation amount into 2 categories:
- b. 50% of allocation amount to LEAs based tier/range of district criteria met
 1. Range 90-100 = Tier 1
 2. Range 80-89 = Tier 2
 3. Range 70-79 = Tier 3
 4. Range 60-69 = Tier 4
- c. 50% of allocation amount to schools based on total number of SINI 1-6 schools
- d. Total district allocation = allocation amount to each district based on their range of criteria met PLUS allocation amount based on the total number of SINI 1-6 schools in the district.

Q4. What are the restrictions on the use of funds for Title I School Improvement Grants, [1003(a)]?

A4. These funds are restricted to the following:

- To implement programs which lead to an increase in the achievement of students scoring below proficiency in reading, mathematics, and/or writing on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) in Title I Schools identified in need of improvement, corrective

action, or restructuring. These funds will be allocated to LEAs to enable the lowest-achieving Title I schools to meet the progress goals in school improvement plans under Section 1116(b)(3)(A)(v).

- Funds must be used to implement activities at Title I schools to meet the progress goals in school improvement plans under section 1116(b)(3)(A)(v).
- Not less than 95% of the funds shall be expended for carrying out project activities. The remaining amount, not to exceed 5%, may be used for planning, interagency coordination, administration, and/or indirect costs. Positions such as project coordinator, accountant, clerical staff, and/or other positions not directly serving students or the direct project goals are considered administrative.
- Funds made available for this project shall supplement and not supplant other state and local public funds expended for educational programs.

Q5. When the School Improvement application is released, will there be a checklist?

A5. Yes. The LEA will be able to access the checklist by clicking the technical assistance link in the online application.

Q6. Can Title I School Improvement funds be used to provide transportation from after school tutoring activities provided through Title I, Part A Basic, Title I, 20% SES set-aside, and/or through School Improvement Grants [1003(a)]?

A6. Each case will need to be considered based on how the LEA has previously provided transportation for these activities. LEAs need to be cautious when using funds for transportation. There will be a presumption of supplanting, with the LEA having to prove that it is supplemental.

Q7. Will communication of these grants be coming from the Bureau of School Improvement or the Bureau of Federal Educational Programs?

A7. All correspondence concerning Title I School Improvement Grants [1003(a)] will originate from the Bureau of Federal Educational Programs.

Q8. Will these funds have a 'conditional approval' to allow expenditures for activities that occur in September or October?

A8. Yes, each LEA will submit a signed original DOE 100A or 100B, the checked off Assurances, and a completed DOE 101 for each program the LEA is eligible for. The LEA will receive 25% of their allocation upon receipt of these completed documents into Grants Management until October 31, 2010. After this date no additional funds will be available until the application has been approved.

Q9. Can an LEA use these funds to implement a strategy that requires a multi-year contract causing a recurring cost?

A9. A strategy that requires a recurring cost to the LEA is allowable. The following needs to be taken into consideration:

- Eligible Title I schools that implement this strategy using Title I School Improvement Funds in 2009-10 will not be eligible to use Title I School Improvement Funds in the following years if they become a SINI 0 school or become a non-Title I.
- Current eligible Title I schools for the 2009-10 that become a SINI-0 school for the 2010-11

school year will not be able to use Title I school improvement funds in 2010-11 to continue implementation of a strategy in the 2009-10 school year. The use of Title I, Part A Basic funds could provide for the continuation of the strategy.

- Current eligible Title I schools that implement this strategy using Title I School Improvement Funds in 2009-10 will not be eligible to use Title I School Improvement Funds or Title I, Part A Basic funds in 2010-11 if any of the schools becomes a non-Title I school. The LEA would have to use state or local funds to continue implementation of the strategy.

Q10. Does each school that is identified as a school in need of improvement, corrective action, and/or restructuring have to be served by these funds?

A10. No. The LEA may focus these funds on a selected number of identified SINI 1-6 for the 2009-2010 school year.