

# Title I School Improvement Grant

*A Simple Explanation and How-To*



**cde**

Colorado Department of Education  
Office of Special Services



*The following document has been developed to describe the School Improvement Grant process. The Colorado Department of Education encourages schools identified for NCLB School Improvement to apply for this grant.*

## WHAT IS NCLB SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT?

Schools are identified for NCLB School Improvement when they are supported with Title I funds and do not make their reading or math Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets for two consecutive years in the same content area. Schools remain on School Improvement until they have made the targets in that content area for two consecutive years. Only schools identified for Title I School Improvement are eligible for the grant.

## WHAT IS THE TITLE I SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT?

The Title I School Improvement Grant is an opportunity for any Title I school on NCLB School Improvement to receive the following:

1. A School Support Team (SST) review of the school
2. A first-year grant to help with the analysis of the SST report and planning for school improvement.
3. A second year grant for implementation of the recommendations in the SST Report.

Each school is eligible to receive up to \$150,000 over a two-year period. This is not a competitive grant. However, funds are limited, and CDE will prioritize schools furthest along in the Improvement process, if necessary. On the next page, you will find a general timeline for the School Improvement Grant process which begins with completing a simple Intent Form.



1	School Notified of Improvement Status and Eligibility for School Improvement Grant	August
2	District and schools complete Intent Form to participate in School Support Team review	August–December (first come, first served)
3	CDE confirms dates with school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Improvement Grant Orientation</li> <li>• School Support Team review</li> <li>• Formal exit with leadership</li> <li>• Sharing of report with school staff</li> </ul>	Within two weeks of receiving intent form
4	School Improvement Grant Orientation— Title I Liaison and SST Lead with entire school staff.	4–6 weeks before SST Review (determined in Step 3)
5	School develops portfolio for review team	Completed during the 4 weeks before the SST Review
6	School Support Team review	1 week, (determined in Step 3)
7	School Support Team report finalized	During the 4 weeks after the review
8	School Support Team report debriefed with school/district leadership (SST Lead and Title I Liaison)	4 weeks after the review (determined in Step 3)
9	School Support Team report shared with all school staff	4–8 weeks after the SST review (determined in Step 3)
10	School Improvement Grant—Year 1 Plan due to CDE	45 days after exit
11	School Improvement Grant—Year 2 Plan due to CDE	August 1 (or earlier)
12	School Improvement Grant—Interim Progress report	Following March
13	School Improvement Grant—Outcome Evaluation	Following September

## WHAT IS THE SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM REVIEW?

Colorado has created a School Support Team review process that provides a comprehensive, external review of schools. During the review, School Support Teams use document analysis, observations, and interviews to collect data around the following nine standards that research has shown to be most crucial in becoming a high-performing school.



### **Standard 1: Curriculum**

The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.

### **Standard 2: Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

The school uses multiple evaluation and longitudinal assessment strategies to continuously inform and modify instruction to meet student needs and support academic proficiency.

### **Standard 3: Instruction**

The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance and close achievement gaps.

### **Standard 4: School Culture**

The school/district functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

### **Standard 5: Student, Family and Community Support**

The school/district engages families and the community in order to support and enhance the academic, social, career, and developmental needs of students and remove barriers to learning.

### **Standard 6: Professional Growth Development & Evaluation**

The school/district provides research-based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

## Standard 7: Leadership

School/district instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, developing leadership capacity.

## Standard 8: Organization Structure & Resources

There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

## Standard 9: Comprehensive & Effective Planning

The school/district develops, implements, and evaluates a School Improvement Plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction, and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

<i>An SST Review is</i>	<i>An SST Review is not</i>
An examination of how a school is functioning with respect to nine standards;	A critique of the effectiveness of particular programs;
A voluntary process that results in a comprehensive report of the school;	A mandatory process that the State requires of schools identified for Improvement;
A process that goes beyond just the examination of Adequate Yearly Progress targets to help assist schools with adjusting their work to better meet the needs of all students;	A quick-fix way to make AYP targets;
A review conducted by educators who have many years of experience as teachers, principals, district administrators, and support staff;	A monitoring of a school's compliance with state and federal law;
A well-coordinated process that provides several opportunities before a review for staff to understand the process and prepare for the visit. While anxiety may exist for some during the review, the SST members do everything in their power to remain unobtrusive, flexible, and objective.	A haphazard or intrusive process that causes upheaval and turmoil in the school.

School Support Teams consist of six individuals, each of whom has an extensive educational background. CDE requires that School Support Team members are trained in the SST Process and have background knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- ▶ Knowledge of and/or experience in the K–12 system;
- ▶ Knowledge of the Colorado Model Content Standards;
- ▶ Knowledge of the Colorado Student Assessment Program; and
- ▶ Ability to work effectively as a part of a team.

## WHAT IS THE RESULT OF A SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM REVIEW?

As a result of the School Support Team review process, schools receive a comprehensive report that cites commendations in areas where the school is doing well and findings related to the nine standards. This report also provides the school with a set of recommendations that are tied to themes; these themes are, in turn, tied to strategic actions. Every effort is made to communicate to the school what the possible next steps could be for improvement.

## FUNDING FOR THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT

The funding for the School Improvement Grant comes in two parts: Year One (Initial Grant) and Year Two (Implementation Grant). The Year One grant of \$50,000 provides funds for a School Support Team (SST) review of the school program and additional activities. Each SST review is estimated to cost no more than \$25,000. The remaining funds are awarded to the school at the completion of the review after a detailed budget has been submitted and approved. The funds are to be used for examining the report, planning, and initial implementation of short-term recommendations.

A School Improvement Implementation Grant (Year 2) ranges from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Prior to the release of these funds, schools must submit a school improvement plan that incorporates research-based strategies based on the needs identified by the SST review. CDE reviews each plan and provides feedback to schools when revisions are needed. The approval of the plan results in a release of funds to the school.

## ***School Liaison***

Each school that receives a School Support Team review is assigned a Title I Liaison. The role of the Title I Liaison is to assist the school in developing a detailed budget for the remainder of the \$50,000 and the development of a school improvement plan. The Title I Liaison may also assist in identifying resources and with the implementation of the improvement plan.

## **YEAR ONE**

### ***Use of Funds***

Each school will have approximately \$25,000 beyond the cost of the SST review. These funds are to be used to support the following kinds of activities:

1. Hiring a facilitator to assist with the debriefing of the School Support Team report with school staff and community.
2. Planning and developing next steps for the school based directly on the findings of the School Support Team.
3. Building Leadership Team release time for the development of the School Improvement Implementation Grant.
4. Developing the Year Two Grant plan.
5. Implementation of short term goals as identified by the School Support Team review (may include the cost of a consultant).

## **YEAR TWO**

### ***Use of Funds***

In Year Two, each school will receive up to \$100,000. Funds must be spent according to the following criteria:

1. Expenditures build the school's capacity for improvement
2. Expenditures are tied to the findings in the SST report
3. Expenditures to supplement school funding, without supplanting
4. Year 2 plan has full buy-in from school staff and community

All schools are provided with a template for submitting their school improvement proposal.



## CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

Schools that elect to participate in the School Improvement Grant process, beginning with a School Support Team review, should consider the following questions. If the school can answer “Yes” to the majority of these, there is a greater likelihood of success in the implementation of the school improvement process.

- ▶ Are the school leadership and staff willing to work collaboratively?
- ▶ Is the school willing to work towards ensuring that all staff and community have the opportunity to contribute their ideas about improvement?
- ▶ Is the school willing to establish the structures to support collaboration (i.e. specific times for teams to meet, timely communication, etc.)?
- ▶ Is the school willing to develop a process for group decision-making?
- ▶ Is the school willing to use data as the primary source for decision making?
- ▶ Is the school willing to sustain a commitment to the implementation of a continuous improvement plan?
- ▶ Is the district willing to provide the resources (time, research, personnel, etc.) to the school for its improvement initiatives?
- ▶ Is the school willing to make a commitment to change those structures, practices, etc. that contribute to lack of progress?



## CONTACT INFORMATION

The following is the contact information for the schools that participated in the School Improvement Grant process during the 2004–2005 school year. Feel free to contact the schools to learn about their experience.

Manauagh Elementary, Montezuma–Cortez SD

Contact: Rob Lee

300 E. 4th Street, Cortez, 81321

(970) 565-7691, E-mail: rlee@cortez.k12.co.us

Miami–Yoder Elem., Miami Yoder SD

Contact: Paul Dellacroce

420 S. Rush Rd., Rush, 80833

(719) 478-2186, E-mail: pdellacroce@miamiyoder.org

Highland Middle, Ault–Highland SD

Contact: Todd Bissell

P.O. Box 68, Ault, 80610

(970) 352-7404, E-mail: tbissell@weldre9.k12.co.us

Federal Heights Elem., Adams 12 Five Star SD

Contact: Linda Gordon

2500 W. 96th Ave., Thornton, 80260

(720) 972-5360, E-mail: Linda.l.gordon@admas12.org

Ignacio Intermediate, Ignacio SD

Contact: Kathy Pokorney

P.O. Box 460, Ignacio, 81137

(970) 563-0650, E-mail: kapokorney@ignacio.k12.co.us

Thornton Elementary, Adams 12 Five Star SD

Contact: Carol Sorvig

991 Eppinger Blvd., Thornton, 80229

(720) 972-5660, E-mail: carol.sorvig@adams12.org

Gunnison Elementary, Gunnison SD

Contact: Jim Perkins

1099 N. 11th St., Gunnison, 81230

(970) 641-7710, E-mail: jperkins@gunnisonschools.net

Centennial Jr./Sr. High, Centennial SD

Contact: Diana Cortez

P.O. Box 350, San Luis, 81152

(719) 672-3287

Coronado Elementary, Adams 12 Five Star SD

Contact: Julie Brigham

8300 Downing Dr., Denver, 80229

(720) 972-5320, E-mail: Julie.brigham@adams12.org

Risley Middle, Pueblo 60 SD

Contact: Rena Jimenez

625 Monument Ave., Pueblo, 81001

(719) 549-7440, E-mail: rjimenez@pueblo60.k12.co.us

Molholm Elementary, Jefferson County SD  
Contact: Joan Chavez  
6000 W. 9th Ave., Lakewood  
(303) 982-6240, E-mail: [jchavez@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jchavez@jeffco.k12.co.us)

Adams City Middle, Adams 14 SD  
Contact: Phil Sorensen  
4451 E. 72nd Ave., Commerce City 80022  
(303) 853-5404, E-mail: [psorensen@acsd14.k12.co.us](mailto:psorensen@acsd14.k12.co.us)

McElwain Elem., Adams 12 Five Star SD  
Contact: Gardner DesRobert  
1020 Dawson Dr., Denver, 80229  
(720) 972-5500, E-mail: [Gardner.desrobert@adams12.org](mailto:Gardner.desrobert@adams12.org)

Monaco Elementary, Adams 14 SD  
Contact: Brett Drobney  
7631 Monaco Blvd., Commerce City, 80022  
(303) 853-1255

O'Connell Middle, Jefferson County SD  
Contact: Pati Montgomery  
1275 S. Teller Pl., Lakewood, 80232  
(303)982-8370, E-mail: [pmontgom@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:pmontgom@jeffco.k12.co.us)

Haskin Elementary, Center SD  
Contact: Joel Hovland  
500 S. Broadway, Center, 81125  
(719) 754-3442

Kearney Middle, Adams 14 SD  
Contact: Sophia Masewicz  
6160 Kearney, Commerce City, 80022  
(303) 853-5504, E-mail: [smmasewi@acsd14.k12.co.us](mailto:smmasewi@acsd14.k12.co.us)

Craig Intermediate, Moffat SD  
Contact: Don Davidson  
201 E. 9th St., Craig, 81625  
(970) 824-3287, E-mail: [don.davidson@moffatsd.org](mailto:don.davidson@moffatsd.org)

Skoglund Middle, Center SD  
Contact: Charleen Schaeffer  
500 S. Broadway, Center, 81125  
(719) 754-3442

Rocky Mountain Elem., St. Vrain SD  
Contact: Ray Sanchez  
800 E. 5th Ave., Longmont, 80501  
(303) 772-7388, E-mail: [Sanchez\\_Raymond@stvrain.k12.co.us](mailto:Sanchez_Raymond@stvrain.k12.co.us)

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

### **Professional Development and School Support Program (PDSSP) Website**

This website has been developed as a way to continually communicate information, activities, and events to teachers, principals, superintendents, administrative staffs, and parents involved in the continuous school improvement activities of their schools and districts.

[www.cde.state.co.us/pdssp/index.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/pdssp/index.htm)

### **School Improvement Website**

For more information about the School Improvement requirements go to:

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdeunified/schimp.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeunified/schimp.htm)

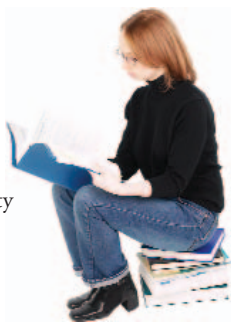
### **Adequate Yearly Progress Website**

This website provides everything one needs to know about Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as well as the status of Colorado schools and districts.

[www.cde.state.co.us/ayp/index.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ayp/index.asp)

## NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

- ▶ Discuss with school staff and community the interest in participating in School Improvement Grant
- ▶ Complete School Improvement Grant Intent Form
- ▶ Schedule dates with CDE for:
  - School Orientation
  - School Support Team review
  - Formal Exit
  - Debrief with school staff and community





## INTENT TO APPLY for the 2005–2006 Title I School Improvement Grant

Please complete this form for each school in your district (duplicate as necessary) that intends to apply for the Title I School Improvement Grant. Please return the intent form to Laura Hensinger by mail, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1450, Denver 80202 or fax (303) 866-6637.

### District Information (PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Title I Program Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Information (PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate at least two dates that your school is available for the School Support Team review. Please note we will do our best to honor your preference however it may not be feasible in all cases.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> September 19–23, 2005 | <input type="checkbox"/> January 9–13, 2006       | <input type="checkbox"/> April 3–7, 2006   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> September 26–30, 2005 | <input type="checkbox"/> January 16–20, 2006      | <input type="checkbox"/> April 10–14, 2006 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> October 3–7, 2005     | <input type="checkbox"/> January 23–27, 2006      | <input type="checkbox"/> April 17–21, 2006 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> October 10–14, 2005   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jan. 30–February 3, 2006 | <input type="checkbox"/> April 24–28, 2006 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> October 17–21, 2005   | <input type="checkbox"/> February 6–10, 2006      | <input type="checkbox"/> May 1–5, 2006     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> October 24–28, 2005   | <input type="checkbox"/> February 13–17, 2006     | <input type="checkbox"/> May 8–12, 2006    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 31–Nov. 4, 2005  | <input type="checkbox"/> February 20–24, 2006     | <input type="checkbox"/> March 6–10, 2006  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> November 14–18, 2005  | <input type="checkbox"/> Feb. 27–March 3, 2006    | <input type="checkbox"/> May 15–19, 2006   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> December 5–9, 2005    | <input type="checkbox"/> March 20–24, 2006        | <input type="checkbox"/> March 13–17, 2006 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> December 12–16, 2005  | <input type="checkbox"/> March 27–31, 2006        | <input type="checkbox"/> May 22–26, 2006   |

*We understand that the Colorado Department of Education will retain up to 50% of the initial \$50,000 grant award to provide for the costs associated with a School Support Team review.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of District Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of District Authorized Representative







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*For more information on the Title I School Improvement Grant  
contact Laura Hensinger by phone at (303) 866-6675  
or by email at [hensinger\\_1@cde.state.co.us](mailto:hensinger_1@cde.state.co.us)*