

**Persistently Low Achieving Schools
Conference Call Transcript
March 4, 2010**

In Attendance

USDE, Carlos McAuley; Deb Sigman, Rachel Perry, Fred Balcolm of CDE, Theresa Garcia, executive secretary to the SBE and SBE staff.

Sigman: We understand there are implications for your students, staff and community. We expect this as the first in a series of calls.

History

Were charged with making this list as per RttT, ARRA, and SIG. Each state was directed to identify its persistently lowest achieving schools. ARRA and RTTT and SIG are available for a _____. This list is required for each of these grants.

State law SBX5 1 also requires doing this. Deb gave the criteria for how they identified. Each school must implement one of the following intervention models:

1. Turnaround
2. Closure
3. Restart
4. Transformational

The intervention model is to be started in the 2010 – 11 school year and throughout the grant period. They encouraged districts to apply for the funding. The LEA is to start to identify the model. The SIG is intended to be the primary resource for doing this work and everyone is encouraged to apply for these funds.

Rachel Perry: Methodology

1. Tier 1 ES, MS, HS
2. Tier 2 eligible secondary schools that don't receive Title I schools. HS and MS group.
3. Identified the numbers of schools that they would need to identify.
4. Used percent proficient values from 07 – 09 and came up with an average for ELA and math
5. Take out schools that got 50 point gain or were 800. Take the most recent growth year and subtract the growth API from each year.
6. Minimum N was 100.
7. Used NCES requirement to identify high schools that had a grad rate of less than 60%.

Deb said that the SIG will be taken up by the SBE on March 10, 11 meeting.

Q&A

1. If the principal has already been changed this year must they change them next year? If you replaced the principal in the last two years, then you do not have to do it again? **No. They have to be replaced within the last two years.**
2. What if we don't want to do any of these models? **If you do SIG you must do implement a model. The legislation requires it. If you want to pursue another model then get a waiver from the SBE.**
3. What does the legislation say what happens if we don't do any of these? We have to negotiate many of these. Is the legislation silent on this? **Yes.**
4. If we replace the principal with the expectation of turning the school around, but not the staff, would that be a requirement? **It depends on the model you select. The Transformation model does not require replacement of the staff.**
5. Reporting requirements of the application. How is it designed and what does it look like? **The reporting requirements in the application that is on the website.**
6. If I don't apply for a school improvement grant what does the legislation require for reporting? **The legislation is silent.**
7. If we've done part of the transformation model, then what is the timeline for making this assertion? **Accurately describe what you've done and say what else you will do to complete it and submit to the SBE.**
8. What is the timeline -- if SBE rejects it, then what? What is the timeline if it's rejected and the start of school is six weeks away? **Theresa: The department will help districts apply and make sure that they are acceptable.**
9. When would we know if we had approval on the assertion that we've implemented the components of the transformation model? The July board meeting is approval. If not approved we have less than a month to get ready for the start of school. If we have to wait until July to get the confirmation then we are stuck with doing something else without any funding. **I did not record an answer here. I believe there was no answer.**
10. On the charter school option. Can it be a district conversion? **Yes it can.**
11. Transformation model: We've done many of the elements, replaced the principal. We're focusing on academic outcomes. We won't get our second academic reading until August. For the first the school didn't improve, in fact we've lost some points. The principal is now in the second year. In order for the staff to make an educated decision it puts us in a precarious situation. We won't know our results. It makes doing this very difficult. And most of these things need to be negotiated. If half the staff has to be

12. How much money are we talking about? We replaced the principal so what are talking about? **\$50,000 – \$2 million. It depends on the scope of the change to be made depending on the model. A closure would be only one year. The amount could be different each year.**
13. Most of us are aware that we don't have the capacity to do the writing of the application? What sources are out there that can help us get this done? **County offices. There will be more calls.**
14. The school that is identified as a 7 – 12 school with an API of 727. API growth of 67 points. Is this a mistake? **Muroc school district. Rachel will contact district to clarify.**
15. The title I schools and non Title I schools methodology is weak.
16. What are the exit criteria? Moving out of the bottom five percent? Is it growth model, proficiency levels? It does not talk about getting out. **No response.**
17. What is a reasonable timeline for a charter? **I did not record the answer.**
18. Will there be a bidders conference to understand the details of the SIG application? **We will keep you posted on trainings we have planned, if SBE approves.**
19. Where do we get the verification of the list of schools? **We will make the list public at the state board meeting. We wanted to do it tomorrow, but we may delay it due to the failure of the state to get RttT grant today. No later than March 9.**
20. Right now most districts are laying off staff and better staff and administrators. You are asking this in the face of this crisis. We need the money to keep my teachers funded.
21. The school identified is an independently funded charter school. It seems like the district relationship here is very different. The obligation is to the charter itself.
22. Is this process going to be repeated each year? **Yes.** Does the SIG continue? **We don't know.**
23. Some higher performing API schools can't make 50 points. You didn't consider the initial API scores. State law does not differentiate this. The lower performing schools are being exempted and higher performing schools are being penalized.

24. If you are a PI district can you still oversee a charter school? **Yes as long as the district is authorized.**
25. In order to choose from one of these four options it would be good to identify the research base on this. Do you have it? **Center for Innovation and Improvement. A needs assessment is going to be important for each school.**
26. Tony Flint, Oakland: We have five schools identified. One will be closed. Three were opened three years ago. Do we have to replace the principals? **The way the SIG is structured, not if its been done in the last two years. Renewable for up to three years. The LEA can keep the principal for three years even if they're not making progress. That could be a decision that the LEA could make.**
27. Replacement of staff – if you want to get SIG funds in the fall then all local contracts would have to be met by then. Is that right? **Yes.** Two separate things – SIG has implementation requirements.
28. Can an alternative county office school have 14 different sites? Can it do 14 different versions of the models? **We don't know.**
29. If a district chooses a restart it appears as if replacing the principal is not required. **That model is silent about replacing the principal.**
30. Please confirm that a district chooses not to take the SIG funds and takes a year to plan they could reapply for SIG the following year. **Only if the schools is still in the eligible for persistently underperforming school status. Also State legislation is silent about when you must implement the model if you take a year to plan.**
31. Desiree Von Flute from Fairfax: API data for five years. It considered only four years if four years were considered. What can you do to explain to community and staff who made safe harbor but now find themselves on this list? Would there be exceptions made for schools that are being acknowledged for their success? **No exceptions.**
32. CDE media conference: Would CDE consider not announcing this until after the testing window? **No.**
33. Can districts see the list first before it goes public? **Yes.** We want to be sure our numbers match. We are a DAIT district working with our union and with great principals. New adoptions. Many pieces in place that represent transformation. We don't want to add any more things because we are ready to roll.
34. Patrick Lohoy, Oakland. We don't have the money up front. When will the money flow? We have a 10 day review process. **The timelines are built into the SIG application. We project that Oct. 1 that the cash is available.**

35. Is there an appeals process in place to appeal our status? **The only chance to be removed is if there is an error or an SBE waiver.**

36. For school closures we have to move the students to schools with lower APIs. **Yes.**

CDE: **You are required to implement.**

District: We decide not to implement.

CDE: **You are not under any obligation to going for SIG.**

37. District: What is fall back? What if you don't apply? CDE: **It is not clear.**

38. District: Grants 50,000 to 2,000,000. What is the per student? **It is not based on the student. It is based on the model.**

39. District: What has arrangement with the two unions? **We have not been working with the unions. It is a local bargaining issue.**

40. District: What happens if the union doesn't want to do the model? **You are obligated to do your model.**

Missed the rest of the conversation.

41. Sharon McGehe, Desert Sands: If a non PI school took a year to plan for a model and then was funded as a Title I school they would have funding to pay for the intervention? **Yes.**

Send questions to:
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