

School Improvement Grant 1003(g) Funds

TRANSFORMATION MODEL

The strategies that are used to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of students in a turnaround model may be the same strategies that are used to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of students in a transformation model. For questions about any terms or strategies that appear in both the transformation model and the turnaround model, refer to the turnaround model section of this guidance.

An LEA implementing a transformation model must:

- (1) Replace the principal who led the school prior to commencement of the transformation model;
- (2) Use rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals that –
 - (a) Take into account data on student growth as a significant growth as a significant factor as well as other factors, such as multiple observation-based assessments of performance and ongoing collections of professional practice reflective of student achievement and increased high school graduation rates; and
 - (b) Are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement;
- (3) Identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing this model, have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates and identify and remove those who, after ample opportunities have been provided for them to improve their professional practice, have not done so;
- (4) Provide staff ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development that is aligned with the school’s comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff to ensure they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies; and
- (5) Implement such strategies as financial incentives, increased opportunities for promotion and career growth, and more flexible work conditions that are designed to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in a transformation model.

The requirement for teacher and principal evaluation systems that “are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement” refers more generally to involvement by teachers and principals withing the LEA using such systems, and may or may not include teachers and principals in a school implementing the transformation model.

In general, LEAs have flexibility to determine both the type and number of opportunities for staff to improve their professional practice before they are removed from a school implementing the transformation model. Examples of such opportunities include professional development in such areas as differentiated instruction and using data to improve instruction, mentoring or partnering with a master teacher, or increased time for collaboration designed to improve instruction.

In addition to the required activities for a transformation model, an LEA may also implement other strategies to develop teachers’ and school leaders’ effectiveness such as:

- (1) Provide additional compensation to attract and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of students in a transformation school;

- (2) Instituting a system for measuring changes in instructional practices resulting from professional development; or
- (3) Ensuring that the school is not required to accept a teacher without the mutual consent of the teacher and principal, regardless of the teacher's seniority.

LEAs also have the flexibility to develop and implement their own strategies, as part of their efforts to successfully implement the transformation model, to increase the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. Any such strategies must be in addition to those that are required as part of this model.

There are a wide range of compensation-based incentives that an LEA might use as part of a transformation model. Such incentives are just one example of strategies that might be adopted to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills needed to implement the transformation model. The more specific emphasis on additional compensation in the permissible strategies was intended to encourage LEAs to think more broadly about how additional compensation can contribute to teacher effectiveness.

An LEA implementing a transformation model must:

- (1) Use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based and vertically aligned from one grade to the next as well as aligned with State academic standards; and
- (2) Promote the continuous use of student data (such as formative, interim, and summative assessments) in order to inform and differentiate instruction to meet the academic needs of individual students.

In addition to the required activities for a transformation model, an LEA may also implement other comprehensive instructional reform strategies, such as:

- (1) Conducting periodic reviews to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity, is having the intended impact on student achievement, and is modified if ineffective;
- (2) Implementing a schoolwide "response-to-intervention" model;
- (3) Providing additional supports and professional development to teachers and principals in order to implement effective strategies to support students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and to ensure that limited English proficient students acquire language skills to master academic content;
- (4) Using and integrating technology-based supports and interventions as part of the instructional program; and
- (5) In secondary schools –
 - (a) Increasing rigor by offering opportunities for students to enroll in advanced coursework, early-college high schools, dual-enrollment programs, or thematic learning academies that prepare students for college and careers, including by providing appropriate supports designed to ensure that low-achieving students can take advantage of these programs and coursework;
 - (b) Improving student transition from middle to high school through summer transition programs or freshman academies;

- (c) Increasing graduation rates through, for example, credit recovery programs, re-engagement strategies, smaller learning communities, competency-based instruction and performance-based assessments, and acceleration of basic reading and mathematics skills; or
- (d) Establishing early-warning systems to identify students who may be at risk of failing to achieve to high standards or to graduate.

An LEA implementing a transformation model must:

- (1) Establish schedules and strategies that provide increased learning time; and
- (2) Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

In general, family and community engagement means strategies to increase the involvement and contributions, in both school-based and home-based settings, of parents and community partners that are designed to support classroom instruction and increase student achievement. Examples of mechanisms that can encourage family and community engagement include the establishment of organized parent groups, holding public meetings involving parents and community members to review school performance and help develop school improvement plans, using surveys to gauge parent and community satisfaction and support for local public schools, implementing complaint procedures for families, coordinating with local social and health service providers to help meet family needs, and parent education classes (including GED, adult literacy, and ESL programs).

In addition to the required activities for a transformation model, an LEA may also implement other strategies to extend learning time and create community-oriented schools, such as:

- (1) Partnering with parents and parent organizations, faith – and community – based organizations, health clinics, other State and local agencies, and others to create safe school environments that meet students’ social, emotional, and health needs;
- (2) Extending or restructuring the school day so as to add time for such strategies as advisory periods that build relationships between students, faculty, and other school staff;
- (3) Implementing approaches to improve school climate and discipline, such as implementing a system of positive behavioral supports or taking steps to eliminate bullying and student harassment; or
- (4) Expanding the school program to offer full-day kindergarten or pre-kindergarten.

Extra time or opportunities for teachers and other school staff to create and build relationships with students can provide the encouragement and incentive that many students need to work hard and stay in school. Such opportunities may be created through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities as well as structural changes, such as dividing large incoming classes into smaller theme-based teams with individual advisers. However, such activities do not directly lead to increased learning time, which is more closely focused on increasing the number of instructional minutes in the school day or days in the school year.

An LEA implementing a transformation model must:

- (1) Give the school sufficient operational flexibility (such as staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates; and

- (2) Ensure that the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support from the LEA, the SEA, or a designated external lead partner organization (such as a school turnaround organization or an EMO).

The areas of operational flexibility mentioned in this requirement are merely examples of the types of operational flexibility an LEA might give to a school implementing the transformation model. An LEA is not obligated to give a school implementing the transformation model operational flexibility in these particular areas, so long as it provides the school sufficient operational flexibility to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates.

In addition to the required activities for transformation model, an LEA may also implement other strategies to provide operational flexibility and sustained support such as:

- (1) Allowing the school to be run under a new governance arrangement, such as a turnaround division within the LEA or SEA; or
- (2) Implementing a per-pupil school-based budget formula that is weighted based on student needs.