



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Arkansas will receive nearly \$6 million to turn around its persistently lowest achieving schools through the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program at the U. S. Department of Education. The funds are part of \$546 million available to states for the School Improvement Grant program in fiscal year 2010. The funding announcement was made Friday by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

"We are strongly committed to improving education for all students. When a school continuously performs in the bottom five percent and shows no sign of progress, we know that clear, effective and focused intervention is needed," said Dr. Tom Kimbrell, commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). "Turning around our lowest performing schools is not an easy task. However, these funds will help Arkansas to improve schools for our most underserved students."

The \$5.89 million made available to Arkansas is being distributed by formula to the state and will then be sent out by the state to school districts. Arkansas's application, which includes its list of persistently lowest-achieving schools, as defined by the state, can be found here: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/summary2010/index.html>.

School districts will apply to the state for the funds this spring. When a school district applies, it must indicate that it will implement one of four school intervention models in each of its persistently lowest-achieving schools for which it receives SIG funds, based on school needs:

- **Turnaround Model:** Replace the principal, screen existing school staff, and rehire no more than half the teachers; adopt a new governance structure; and improve the school through curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.
- **Restart Model:** Convert a school or close it and re-open it as a charter school or under an education management organization.
- **School Closure:** Close the school and send the students to higher-achieving schools in the district.

- Transformation Model: Replace the principal and improve the school through comprehensive curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.

The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators leadership, resources and training.

