**Fulcrum of Change: Leveraging 50 States to Turn Around 5,000 Schools**

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* School Year 2010-2011
* First Cohort of Revamped SIG Schools
* Nine States (SEAs)
* Alaska
* Arkansas
* Idaho
* Illinois
* Louisiana
* Michigan
* Montana
* Oklahoma
* Virginia

**Questions**

1) How are states integrating the expanded SIG program into existing school improvement efforts?

2) What lessons are emerging for states interested in fully leveraging their roles to drive turnaround efforts?

***Integrating the Expanded SIG Program Into Existing School Improvement Efforts***

* Evolving state systems of support are, to varying degrees, providing a coherent structure to distribute technical assistance and support implementation of the SIG program.
* State education agencies (SEA) are working to leverage SIG regulations and dollars to drive district- and school-level dramatic change efforts.
* The rushed nature of the first round of SIGs hindered initial implementation efforts, but SEAs are applying emerging lessons to subsequent rounds of SIGs.

***Emerging Lessons for States***

* Not all of the prescriptive reform models (e.g., turnaround, transformation, restart, and closure) are feasible in all states and often lack the nuance that defines successful SEA approaches to developing systems of support based on individual district and school context and need.
* Building district capacity is central to building and supporting dramatic, transformational school change efforts with the ultimate goal of improved instruction and outcomes for students.
* Improving a school board’s capacity may be a key leverage point, especially for small and rural school districts where district capacity is low.

***Early Indicators of Positive Change***

* All nine SEAs have, to some degree, attempted to leverage their roles in distributing SIG dollars to extend the impact of the dollars. The roles they are taking are distinct to each state policy context and existing capacity, but there was clear recognition of the *opportunity* embedded in the SIG process for the SEA to influence district and school behavior as opposed to just being a conduit to disseminate grant dollars.
* The SIG program is perceived to have introduced a sense of urgency that was not present under previous reform paradigms.
* Initially educating districts and schools about the revised and expanded SIG program, and subsequently supporting their applications and intervention implementation, has required an increased level of communication—communication about procedures as well as more substantive issues—to cultivate buy-in of the SIG reforms.
* Grant dollars are driving increased and intentional use of data to inform practice.
* The expectations for dramatic change and quantity of dollars have driven SEAs and districts to engage new partners to access needed expertise.
* Emerging strategies for rural districts (e.g., extensive use of technology to deliver technical assistance and school board coaches) have promise to accelerate change in spite of unique challenges.