

MINERAL COUNTY SCHOOLS

ONE BAKER PLACE

KEYSER, WEST VIRGINIA 26726

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT

PHONE 304-788-4200
FAX 304-788-4204

April 9, 2010

Jan Stanley, Assistant Director
Office of Assessment, Accountability, and Research
West Virginia Department of Education
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia 25301

RE: Mineral County School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003 (g) Letter of Intent

Dear Ms. Stanley:

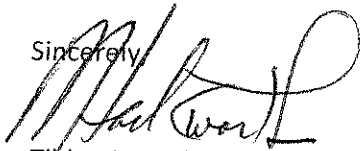
In the subsequent pages you will find the information/data detailing Mineral County's intent to pursue funding through the School Improvement Grant 1003 (g) funding to provide positive intervention and support to Keyser Primary-Middle School. The school failed to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) four of the past five years. The school has been identified as a Tier III school for the purposes of this funding process.

Our proposal is to implement facets of the "Turn-Around Model" in addressing instructional/student achievement needs at this school. Through this intervention implementation, we will provide the following to maximize individual student growth and achievement:

- Employment of a "Turn-Around" Specialist
- Targeted professional development and increased emphasis on the realization of professional learning communities being developed and functioning within the school
- Become an "Early Adopter" of the new professional evaluation system

Thank you in advance for your review and anticipated approval of our proposal to continue pursuing grant funds through the SIG 1003 (g) process.

Sincerely,



Tilden L. Hackworth
Superintendent

Needs Assessment and Root Causes

Needs Assessment:

- **Overview of school AYP data**

Keyser Primary-Middle School is identified for not making adequate progress in the areas of special education in reading and math and low SES in reading. The school is on corrective action.

The student participation rate for taking WESTEST II is 99.7 overall with 98.58 special education and 97.68 low SES.

The school has participated in all of the professional development offered by the state and is organized into professional learning communities.

At the school level, the staff is engaged in on-going, sustained professional development and is assisted by the state's school improvement specialists. Visits by these specialists have provided staff and administration with improvement suggestions as well as leading PD to the staff. The initial steps in developing professional learning communities have taken place, but the next steps in the progression have not occurred.

The instructional minutes per day are adequate but the elementary day is just over the minimum standard. The middle school day exceeds the minimum by almost twenty minutes per day.

The school calendar is set by the county/state and is strictly adhered to by the school. Other than the days the county was closed for inclement weather the school was in session.

- **External trends and data**

The Keyser Primary Middle School has 59.01 percent of its population receiving free and reduced lunch. It is the third ranked school in the county in that category.

The population of the school is predominately white with approximately 95%; the second racial group is black with 2.9%. Over eighty percent of the Keyser community's residents have a high school diploma and twelve percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Less than 10% of the mothers of the students that attend KPMS do not have a high school diploma.

The school community's population is 23% under the age of eighteen with an almost equal distribution of males to females. Public and HUD assisted housing is available in Keyser. There are 354 Federal Project Housing units in the school's attendance area. The unemployment rate is at or near the state level.

Approximately fourteen percent of the community lives below the poverty level.

The school does have a high rate of student mobility. It averages about 15% of its students leaving or entering in any given year.

Several years ago, Mineral County Schools reached universality in Pre/K. The program is recognized in the state for its commitment to excellence. Therefore, KPMS enjoys the fact that its entering kindergarten

students are ready for school. The county does use the state's readiness indicators as a guide. Over 90% of students entering kindergarten had a Pre/K experience.

- **Student Achievement data**

The Keyser Primary-Middle School failed to achieve AYP in four of the past five years. AYP was obtained in 2007 through "Safe Harbors" application.

Due to comparability problems between WESTEST and WESTEST-2, WESTEST-2 data will be the focus for grant consideration purposes.

The total student population at the Keyser Primary/Middle School in 2009 obtained a 55.26% proficiency rating in math which corresponds to a ranking of 90/155 middle schools in the state (42 percentile). For comparable data in R/LA for total students, 56.60% proficiency was obtained, ranking the school 111/155 in the state (29 percentile).

Specific grade level subgroup proficiency ratings and scaled score averages are included in Tables 1 - 3. These scores take on enhanced significance as cohort groups are compared for future student achievement IMPROVEMENT/GROWTH purposes.

ACT Explore scores from October 2009 reflect an improving trend of productivity at the Keyser Primary/Middle. Keyser Primary-Middle 8th graders out-performed the national average in Math, Reading, Science, and Composite areas with Keyser Primary-Middle 8th graders falling below the national average only in English. Even more impressively, Keyser Primary-Middle's standard deviation was smaller than the nation's across all categories (less variance), and 71% of Keyser's 8th graders were in the top two quartiles of the ACT national distribution.

TABLE 1
WESTEST-2 2009
MATH AND READING/LA TOTAL STUDENTS
KEYSER PRIMARY/MIDDLE

SCHOOL	(n)	GRADE	MATH		READING/LA	
			% PROF	MEAN SS	%PROF	MEAN SS
KEYSER P/M	(114)	3	55	555	65	415
KEYSER P/M	(113)	4	59	568	48	424
KEYSER P/M	(110)	5	52	589	58	437
KEYSER P/M	(175)	6	63	617	60	447
KEYSER P/M	(157)	7	52	626	48	448
KEYSER P/M	(167)	8	47	619	56	460

TABLE 2
WESTEST-2 2009
READING/LA and MATH – LOW SES
KEYSER PRIMARY/MIDDLE

SCHOOL	(n)	GRADE	MATH		READING/LA	
			% PROF	MEAN SS	% PROF	MEAN SS
KEYSER P/M	(80)	3	45	549	55	404
KEYSER P/M	(69)	4	48	557	36	414
KEYSER P/M	(70)	5	36	576	50	427
KEYSER P/M	(86)	6	52	606	50	435
KEYSER P/M	(83)	7	43	610	34	434
KEYSER P/M	(84)	8	39	605	49	446

TABLE 3
WESTEST-2 2009
MATH AND READING/LA-- SPECIAL ED.
KEYSER PRIMARY/MIDDLE

SCHOOL	(n)	GRADE	MATH		READING/LA	
			% PROF	MEAN SS	% PROF	MEAN SS
KEYSER P/M	(32)	3	31	539	28	378
KEYSER P/M	(20)	4	35	555	10	385
KEYSER P/M	(19)	5	11	562	20	401
KEYSER P/M	(31)	6	23	580	26	407
KEYSER P/M	(31)	7	16	577	10	394
KEYSER P/M	(16)	8	6	558	13	379

- **Other student outcome data**

Keyser Primary Middle School does not have a problem with student attendance. The county daily attendance rate is 93.7% but the school has 94.3%. The county goal is 95% which could be attained by the school in the near future. Less than 2.9% of the school population attends less than 80% of the time. An incentive program is in place and attendance is closely monitored on a daily basis.

The retention rate for the last two years has been less than 2%. Most of these occur in the lower elementary grades.

Thus far this school year, 1066 discipline referrals have been made to the office with 129 resulting in at least one day of suspension. The most frequent referrals were disruptive classroom behavior (369 incidents) and repetitive classroom disruption (125 incidents). Seventy percent of all the discipline comes from the classroom teachers; of those, thirteen teachers account for 26% of all referrals.

The school enrollment is 1155 with a professional staff of 96. The teacher to student ratio is 12.03. No student has been retained more than once in the years they attend the school.

The drop-out rate at the school is less than one percent and is not a major problem. However, there appears to a correlation between the drop-out rate at Keyser High School and the conditions at Keyser Primary-Middle School.

- **Analysis of culture, conditions and practices**

- ***School culture and governance***

No culture topology or cultural survey has ever been conducted at the school.

The current governance structure reveals that the principals are engaged and the staff is divided into professional learning communities. Teachers do provide input to the administrators during Faculty Senate and at other appropriate times.

All professional staff have two daily planning periods. Teachers in graded K-5 have daily grade team planning periods. Teachers in grades six to eight have daily subject planning periods.

The administration consists of a principal and two vice principals. The assistant principal's duties are divided with one working primarily with grades K-5 and the other with grades 6 to 8.

A parent coordinator, funded by Title I, is at the school on a regular basis. Although parent involvement is in place, it has room to improve.

- ***Instructional practices***

The use of standards-based instruction practices and formative assessments is in the developmental stages.

A technology integration specialist, paid by Title I funds, is employed at the school.

The school has conducted 165 walk-throughs this school year. Some good indicators are evident, but one negative is that 49% of the middle school walk-throughs show lecture to be the main style of instruction.

➤ **Highly Qualified teacher data**

The professional and paraprofessional staffs are all highly-qualified. Two full-time and part-time professionals are employed as counselors. A full-time nurse is on staff.

The staff attendance rate is commensurate with the county rate.

The school does provide for after school book studies and has professional development on days that are provided by the county calendar.

Root Causes:

Administrators and teachers

- Teacher turnover has been increasing over the past several years.
- About 1/3 of the staff has 5 years or less experience.
- Teacher moral is waning.
- More professional development for new staff is needed.

Curriculum and Resources

- Few teachers are using a standards based instructional approach.
- CSOs have not been deconstructed and learning targets identified.
- No common grade level assessments have been developed for the identified learning targets.

Master Schedule, classroom schedules and classroom management/ discipline

- Master scheduling is not conducive to remediation.
- Classroom management is not consistent.
- An excessive number of discipline referrals are present.
- Positive rewards are in place but could be more productive.

Student and Parental involvement

- The *Edvantia Title I Pilot Project Instructional and Learning Appraisal*, which focused on parent and community involvement was completed.
- Of the four areas at the Welcoming Environment Levels of Implementation, three were emerging and one was partial.
- Of the three areas in Linking to Learning Levels of Implementation, all three were emerging.

District Capacity Index

Each LEA must complete a self-analysis of the capacity it has to assist the low performing schools in the implementation of the selected intervention. This will be determined utilizing a scale of 1-3 ranking from poor (1), satisfactory (2) and commendable (3) for the following criteria:

Criteria	Poor 1 point	Satisfactory 2 points	Commendable 3 points	Points Earned
LEA governance	State takeover district	Limited SEA intervention	No SEA intervention	3
Title I audit reports	Findings in areas requiring a repayment of funds	Findings in areas noted-repayment of funds not required	No findings in the fiscal area	3
LEA overall achievement ranking	Bottom (5% = 3 districts)	Middle (70% = 38 districts)	Top (25% = 14 districts)	2
Approval of the district strategic plan by the SEA (entire plan, not just the Title I section)	Not approved by the SEA	Approved by the SEA with revisions	Approved by the SEA without revisions	3
Percentage of Title I schools that met AYP in the last testing cycle	0-50% of the Title I schools met AYP.	51-75% of the Title I schools met AYP.	76-100% of the Title I schools met AYP.	3
Development of schools as professional learning communities	The school has not yet begun to address the practice of a PLC or an effort has been made to address the practice of PLCs, but has not yet begun to impact a critical mass of staff members.	A critical mass of staff has begun to engage in PLC practice. Members are being asked to modify their thinking as well as their traditional practice. Structural changes are being met to support the transition.	The practice of PLCs is deeply embedded in the culture of the school. It is a driving force in the daily work of the staff. It is deeply internalized and staff would resist attempts to abandon the practice.	2

Identification of district leadership team and assignment of responsibilities	No district leadership team nor identified person assigned for monitoring implementation	Lacks specific identification of personnel for the district leadership team and for monitoring implementation.	A specific district leadership team is identified and one or more persons are assigned for monitoring implementation.	3
Criteria	Poor 1 point	Satisfactory 2 points	Commendable 3 points	Points Earned
School Leadership Team	School leadership team members are identified on the district and school level, but little evidence is produced to document whether the requirements of NCLB Sections 1116 and 1117 have been met.	School leadership team members are identified on the district and school level and evidence is produced to document whether the requirements of NCLB Sections 1116 and 1117 have been met.	School leadership team members are identified on the district and school level and include a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., parents; representatives of institutions of higher education; representatives of RESA or representatives of outside consultant groups) Evidence is produced to document whether the requirements of NCLB Sections 1116 and 1117 have been exceeded.	2
			Total Points	21

Districts must obtain a score of 20 out of 24 possible points to demonstrate capacity to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I, Tier II or Tier III school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention/activities in each identified school.

Mineral County Schools has a composite score of 21 points which is in the acceptable range to demonstrate adequate resources to support a Tier III identified school.

The county does not have any countywide sanctions with respect to AYP.

The last Title I monitoring in September of 2008 showed that the county was in compliance with all fiscal areas. In the subsequent years the State auditors had no findings in Title I.

The Tier III school and the county have approved strategic plans.

The school in Tier III with NCLB sanctions has participated in all the professional development offered by the state in recent years. The state school improvement specialists have visited and have provided on-site help and suggestions. Time is provided by the county for the school to work on PLCs on a regular basis. The staff is divided into PLCs and has a good idea of what is expected. The staff, for the most part, is cooperative and wants to work to improve the school. The administration is willing but has some challenges.

The district has a leadership team that has met with the Tier III school administrative staff on a regular and consistent basis. Individual members of the district team have worked with the school staff and provided information and expertise. The Title I Director and the Director of Testing and Student Services have been active with monitoring the implementation.

School leadership has identified a wide range of share holders and has met with them but little evidence that NCLB 1116 and 1117 has been met.

Preliminary Budget Form

District Name: Mineral County Schools

School Name by Tier	Intervention Models: Select the model that will be implemented in each Tier I and Tier II school.			
	Turnaround	Restart	Closure	Transformation
Tier I School:				
Tier II Schools:				
Tier III Schools:	Not applicable to Tier III schools.			

Complete a separate table for each Tier I or Tier II school. Estimate the amount of funds required to implement the intervention model selected for each school.

School Name:	Tier:			
Turnaround Model	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Replace the principal				
Use locally adopted competencies to measure the effectiveness of staff who can work within the turnaround environment				
Screen all existing staff and rehire no more than 50 percent of existing staff				
Select new staff				
Implement strategies to recruit, place and retrain staff				
Provide high quality, job-embedded professional development				

Adopt a new governance structure				
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				
Promote continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction.				
Establish schedules and implement strategies to increase learning time				
Provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented supports for students				
Additional options (specify activities) Any of the required and permissible activities under the transformation model or a new school model (e.g., themed, dual language academy)				
Total:				

Restart Model	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Convert or close school and reopen under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process.				
Enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.				
Total:				

School Closure Model	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Close the school		n/a	n/a	
Enroll the students in other higher-performing schools in LEA		n/a	n/a	
Total:		n/a	n/a	

Transformation Model	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total

A. Develop teacher and school leader effectiveness				
Replace the principal				
Use rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation systems that take into account data on student growth				
Identify and reward school leaders, teachers and other staff who have increased student achievement and the graduation rate				
Provide high quality, job-embedded professional development				
Implement strategies to recruit, place and retain staff				
Other permissible activities as defined in the regulations (specify activities)				
Section Subtotal:				
B. Comprehensive instructional reform programs				
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				
Promote the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction				
Other permissible activities as defined in the regulations (specify activities)				
Section Subtotal:				
C. Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools				
Establish schedules and strategies that provide increased learning time as defined by ED and create community-oriented schools				
Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement				
Other permissible activities as defined in the regulations (specify activities)				
Section Subtotal:				

D. Provide operating flexibility and sustained support				
Give schools operating flexibility to implement fully a comprehensive approach				
Ensure that the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support from the LEA and/or the SEA				
Provide intensive technical assistance and related support from a designated external lead partnership organization				
Other permissible activities as defined in the regulations (specify activities)				
Section Subtotal:				
Total for Transformation Model:				

Complete a separate table for each Tier III school. Estimate the amount of funds required to conduct school improvement activities.

School Name: Keyser Primary-Middle School				
List School Improvement Activities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Employ an external partner to assist and support	85,000	70,000	60,000	
Provide job embedded high quality professional development	30,000	20,000	10,000	
Use a rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation systems that take into account data on student growth	10,000	5,000	2,000	
Promote continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction	3,000	2,000	1,000	
Total:	128,000	97,000	73,000	298,000

The budget should take into account the following:

1. The number of Tier I and Tier II schools that the LEA commits to serve and the intervention model (turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation) selected for each school.
2. The budget request for each Tier I and Tier II school must be of sufficient size and scope to support full and effective implementation of the selected intervention over a period of three years.
3. The budget must be planned at a minimum of \$50,000 not to exceed 2 million dollars per year per school.
4. The SIG portion of school closure costs may be lower than the amount required for the other models and **will be granted for only one year.**
5. The LEA may request funding for LEA-level activities that will support the implementation of school intervention models in Tier I and Tier II schools and support school improvement activities, at the school or LEA level, for each Tier III school identified in the LEA's application.
6. The number of Tier III schools that the LEA commits to serve and the services or benefits the LEA plans to provide to these schools over the three-year grant period.