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**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education

**FROM:** Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. *KBS/CN*

**DATE:** July 26, 2016

**SUBJECT:** U.S. Department of Education School Improvement Grant

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**PURPOSE:**

To provide an overview of the School Improvement Grant recently awarded to the Maryland State Department of Education by the U. S. Department of Education.

**BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW:**

On June 23, 2016, the U. S. Department of Education (USED) announced that 16 states would receive more than \$113 million in School Improvement Grants (SIG) to continue efforts to turn around the nation's persistently lowest-achieving schools. Maryland received one of these SIG grants in the amount of \$6,588,011. This amount coupled with SIG carryover funds from Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 and FY 2015 will allow Maryland to annually award SIG funds to the selected schools through September 30, 2021.

In Maryland's approved application to USED for the SIG grant, Maryland stated that we will award up to five subgrants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) which have Priority Schools in the 2016-2017 school year. These Priority Schools for 2016-2017 were newly identified in March 2016. Priority Schools are the lowest performing five percent of Title I schools and Title I high schools with a graduation rate below 67 percent. The LEAs will participate in a competitive application process to receive this SIG funding (LEAs apply on behalf of specific Priority Schools). The grants will range in amount from \$50,000 to \$2,000,000 per school, per year.

The LEAs must indicate that the schools will implement the Maryland Turnaround Principle Model (Maryland State Approved Model) or one of seven other school intervention models.

Strategies that are part of Maryland's Turnaround Principle Model, a whole school reform model, are designed to improve student academic achievement, be implemented for all students in the school, and must address school leadership, teaching and learning, student non-academic

support, and family and community engagement. As part of the application, the LEA has to also describe its commitment and capacity to support these schools.

LEAs will need to submit a letter of intent to apply for these funds and submit their LEA application and budget. MSDE has scheduled a webinar to provide LEAs with technical assistance in this process for later this month. The grants are scheduled to be awarded by the end of the year.

Maryland has two continuing SIG schools (Gilmor Elementary in Baltimore City and William Wirt Middle in Prince George's County). Gilmor Elementary and William Wirt Middle will complete their last year of implementation of their SIG grant in the 2016-2017 school year.

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), USED has explained that the June 2016 SIG Grant will be the last of the Title I 1003g (SIG) awards. Through ESSA, funds for school improvement will become part of the State's regular Title I allocation.

**ACTION:**

This item is for information purposes only.