



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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May 23, 2016

To: Exceptional Children Directors
Charter School Coordinators

From: William Hussey, Director
Exceptional Children Division

RE: APPLICATION AND GUIDELINES FOR NC SIP 2016-17 GRANT PARTICIPATION

The Exceptional Children Division announces the application process for participation in the NC State Improvement Project (NC SIP) grant. The new grant cycle will span 2016-2021. Beginning with this 2016-17 school year, continued participation of selected LEAs into the following year will be contingent upon completion of annual objectives established within the LEA's NC SIP plan. This State Personnel Development grant from the US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs will focus on accomplishing the following goals:

2016-2021 NC State Improvement Project Goals

Goal 1	NC SIP staff will increase their capacity to provide leadership, professional development, coaching, and supports to participating districts, teachers, and families on leadership and effective reading, math, and content literacy instruction.
Goal 2	District and building administrators will have the skills to develop, implement, and evaluate district plans that support the improvement of core content instruction and achievement of students with disabilities in their districts.
Goal 3	Teachers and administrators will have the skills to effectively implement research-based reading, math, adolescent literacy and co-teaching instructional practices for SWD in the K-12 classroom, which will lead to increased student engagement, student generalization of skills, academic achievement, and family engagement.
Goal 4	Pre-service teachers and in-service administrators enrolled in partnering IHEs, will have the capacity to effectively implement and support research-based reading, math, adolescent literacy, and co-teaching for students with disabilities.

The 2010-2015 NC SIP goals and no cost extension funds will sunset on September 30, 2016. **All LEAs** that have participated as partners in the past grant cycle will **need to reapply for selection to receive 2016-17 funds**. Applications will be accepted from both traditional and charter schools. We anticipate a healthy competition for these funds.

A more intentional, targeted approach is being taken in the structure of the NC SIP grant with the focus upon strengthening existing implementation and building capacity across the state. LEAs interested in applying for the NC SIP grant funding, which will begin October 1, 2016, should carefully review the accompanying information which includes a description the three (3) new **levels of engagement and corresponding funding structures**. In addition, the goals, expectations, and requirements alignment document included in this correspondence was created to be helpful. The requirements for each level of engagement will also be stated in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which will be signed by selected LEAs. To ensure the most competitive application opportunity for your LEA, determine which

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level of engagement is most suitable and which most closely aligns with the goals of each of the selected schools' improvement plans. We recognize that alignment to each of the schools' improvement plans is an important vehicle in accomplishing the goals, expectations, and requirements of the NC SIP grant.

Levels of Engagement Described:

- 1) **8 NC SIP Best Practice Centers** (\$40,000 per year funding provided with continuation of funding contingent upon evidence of reaching specific goals established in the NC SIP LEA plan as evaluated through the annual developmental review)

Goal: Establish one intensive best practice center in each of the eight regions across the state. Best practice centers model implementation frameworks and best practice of comprehensive professional development and provide regional accessibility to professional development and technical assistance.

Expectation: These sites will actively implement comprehensive professional development on evidence-based practices within a two-school (initially one elementary and one middle school) feeder pattern with a goal of expanding over time. These sites use efficient decision support data system to inform implementation cycles.

Requirements: Best Practice Centers demonstrate leadership, readiness, and staff buy-in through well established, highly functioning, committed, cross-curricular teaming structures in the LEA, schools, and with the NC SIP staff, and regional coaches.

- The team participants will include the following LEA leadership roles: Superintendent, Exceptional Children Director, Curriculum Director/s, identified Building Principal/s, NC SIP Coordinator/s, Instructional Coach/es, Reading or Math Foundations Instructor/s, Instructional Technology representative, Teacher/s, and Parent Advisor/s. Include the representative from a NC SIP Institution of Higher Education partnership. The LEA teams will work closely with the NC SIP literacy and math consultants, and the NC SIP LEA regional coaches to strengthen the support of evidence based best practices in reading and math instruction, administrators' understanding and support, co-teaching, adolescent literacy, and follow-up coaching.
- LEA staff will participate in following checklist of school-wide professional development content and welcome visitors to participate in these future professional development opportunities and observations of best practices:
 - ✓ All Leaders Understand, Support, and Collaborate to Provide Evidence Based Instruction (a newly developed one day course for administrators)
 - ✓ Reading and Math Foundations
 - ✓ Evidence Based Programs (identified based on student data and need)
 - ✓ Co-teaching for Administrators and Teachers
 - ✓ Adolescent Literacy
 - ✓ Coaching
- LEA staff will model implementation fidelity in each of these content areas (checked above) and regularly collect and submit data on the following: teacher fidelity observations; follow-up coaching; student pre and post assessments and regularly scheduled progress monitoring; parent satisfaction; district, school, and teacher collaboration; administrator and teacher professional development logs; visitation/observation log; scheduled formative and summative assessment involving the NC SIP grant evaluation team.

The eight best practice center LEAs' participation as sponsored host sites will allow for more accessible, regionally provided professional development and technical assistance. Each LEA's data will be used to develop the NC SIP grant participation plan which will be evaluated for evidence of completion through the annual developmental review. The requirements for each level of engagement will also be stated in the signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for selected LEAs.

- 2) **Approximately 15 NC SIP Demonstration Sites** (\$20,000 per year funding provided with continuation of funding contingent upon evidence of reaching specific goals established in the NC SIP LEA plan as evaluated through the annual developmental review)

Goal: Demonstration sites develop implementation frameworks and best practices of comprehensive professional development and aim to become best practice centers.

Expectation: LEA and school staff (one elementary and one middle school in a feeder pattern) will work to strengthen teaming structures and school-wide implementation of evidence-based practices for students with disabilities. These sites will use efficient decision support data system to inform implementation cycles. LEA data sources will be used to develop a customized NC SIP participation plan.

Requirements include that selected demonstration sites develop leadership, readiness, and staff buy-in for the following:

- The demonstration sites will develop well established, highly functioning, committed, cross-curricular team teaming structures in the LEA and schools that will work closely with the NC SIP regional team. Participants will include the following LEA leadership roles: Superintendent, Exceptional Children Director, Curriculum Director/s, identified Building Principal/s, NC SIP Coordinator/s, Instructional Coach/es, Reading or Math Foundations Instructor/s, Instructional Technology representative, Teacher/s, and Parent Advisor/s. LEA teams will have the opportunity to work with a NC SIP Institution of Higher Education partner.
 - All the demonstration sites will increase school-wide capacity through analysis of data to select the professional development the schools' staff will participation the first year. All demonstration sites will conduct Leaders Understand, Support, and Collaborate to Provide Evidence Based Instruction (a newly developed one day course for administrators), as well as Reading and Math Foundations courses. In addition, two content areas must be selected from the checklist below:
 - ✓ Scientifically Research Based Programs (identified based on student data and need)
 - ✓ Coaching
 - ✓ Co-teaching for Administrators and Co-teaching Teachers
 - ✓ Adolescent Literacy
 - The demonstration sites will regularly collect and submit data on the following: leader and teacher fidelity observations; follow-up coaching; student pre and post assessments and regularly scheduled progress monitoring; parent satisfaction; district, school, and teacher collaboration; administrator and teacher professional development logs; scheduled formative and summative assessment involving the NC SIP grant evaluation team.
- 3) **NC SIP Network Sites** – the number of these sites will be determined as funding allows (up to \$10,000 per year funding provided with annual continuation of funding contingent upon evidence of reaching specific goals established in the NC SIP LEA plan as evaluated through the annual developmental review)

Goal: To engage in exploration activities in order to develop implementation frameworks and aim to become a demonstration site.

Expectation: The staff at these network LEA sites will work to demonstrate the strengthening of their internal LEA and school teams; develop certified Reading and or Math Foundations, adolescent literacy, and co-teaching instructors; increase the number of administrators and teachers who receive the identified professional development content. LEA data will be used to develop the NC SIP participation plan.

Requirements include that selected network sites develop leadership, readiness, and staff buy-in for the following:

- Network sites will develop and support certified instructors to provide the Leaders Understand, Support, and Collaborate to Provide Evidence Based Instruction (a newly developed one day course for administrators), and Reading and or Math Foundations course/s with fidelity. The site will develop certified instructors to provide adolescent literacy OR co-teaching courses (select one) with fidelity (observations will be conducted).
- The network site will collect and submit data on: instructor fidelity on course provision; follow-up coaching; parent satisfaction; district, school, and teacher collaboration; administrator and teacher professional development logs; scheduled formative and summative assessment involving the NC SIP grant evaluation team.

In order to minimize the application process for the LEA, the following artifacts will be pulled from records at DPI to be considered as supplemental information in addition to the application for those LEA partners who have participated with the NC SIP grant:

- NC SIP Developmental Reviews
- PRC 082 expenditure report for 2014-15 and 2015-16
- BAAS budget submissions, approvals, and compliance with spending approved
- Professional development needs identified in the LEA Self-Assessment (LEA/SA)
- Professional development instructors and capacity (Reading, Math Foundations, Adolescent Literacy, Co-teaching, Coaches) developed in LEA
- Data submission on professional development, student progress, Scientifically Based Reading Research lessons taught

Consideration will be given in the weighted scoring of the site applications with no historical NC SIP data. A lack of previous data will not hinder an LEA's application potential for selection.

If you have questions, you may contact Dr. Paula Crawford via email at paula.crawford@dpi.nc.gov .

Late applications will not be reviewed nor considered. All completed applications must be submitted and **postmarked no later than June 24** to include the wet signatures of all the individuals listed on the District Level Team Composition table. The documents (which are attached in this correspondence) may be found on this page <http://ncsip.org/about/index.php> Emailed applications may be sent to Deanna.Steed@dpi.nc.gov and **must be followed by a hard copy of the application** mailed to:

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Enclosures