

School Improvement Grants 1003(g)

SIG Grants – Restart & Closure Models

Presentation for Alaska Districts

March 10, 2010

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Use of SIG Funds

- Tier I and Tier II schools must choose one of four school intervention models
 - Transformation
 - Turnaround
 - Restart
 - Closure

Restart Model Overview

- Restart model is one in which an LEA converts a school or closes and reopens a school 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.**
 - A restart model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.
 - A rigorous review process could take such things into consideration as an applicant's team, track record, instructional program, model's theory of action, sustainability.
 - As part of this model, a State must review the process the LEA will use/has used to select the partner.

Closure Model Overview

- School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are **higher achieving**.
 - These other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.
 - Office for Civil Rights Technical Assistance Module--Struggling Schools and School Closure Issues: *An Overview of Civil Rights Considerations*

Restart & Closure Application Supplements

Includes all required elements for the Restart or Closure Intervention Model

- B.1 Analysis of school's needs (data and other information used, needs determined, explanation of why this model was chosen)
- B.2 Annual goals for student achievement and graduation (must be set in each area; will be used to evaluate progress in implementation of model for continued funding)
- B.3 & 4 Required & optional actions and timeline for each element of model (all required elements *must* be addressed to be considered for funding)
 - Address overall implementation requirement and timeline
 - Answer specific questions about implementation of element
 - Answer questions about what capacity district has to implement and any barriers that need to be overcome
- C. Budget & Resources (indicate all sources of funding for school to be served with SIG funds; describe specific alignment of SIG funds with other funds; describe plan for sustainability; submit actual budgets and narratives (expected in the range of \$250,00 to \$500,000 per year for school of 100 student enrollment for restart, \$50,000 for one year to close a school))

Analysis of School's Needs

B.1 Analysis of School's Needs

- Required Data – copies must be submitted with application
 - SBA data from 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009. Use the Report Card Reports from DIASA on the EED website at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/diasa.html>.
 - Attendance and graduation rates from the 2008-2009 School Report Card.
 - ELP assessment results, if applicable
- Additional areas of consideration
 - Demographic data & other data that may be available
 - Information in the six domains from the Alaska Self-Study Tool (Note – it is not anticipated that districts will have the time or resources to complete the whole self-study in all six areas, but if information is already available that addresses areas in these six domains, it will be useful in determining the focus for priority activities in the school.)
- Brief observations in each area of need based on data and information analysis
- Describe why this model has been chosen for this school

Restart Model Required Activities

LEA converts a school or closes and reopens a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an education management organization (EMO)

- Must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.
- Must be selected through a **rigorous review process**.
- Based upon a relationship outlined in a performance contract
- May require changes in policy or negotiated agreements
- In a Title I targeted assistance school, may require switching to a schoolwide model (can use a waiver if less than 40% poverty)

Restart Model Required Activities

LEA must consider in the review process how the CMO or EMO will demonstrate its potential for effectively turning around the school

- How demonstrate instructional strategies are research-based?
- How demonstrate alignment of instruction, curriculum, and assessment with Alaska GLEs?
- How demonstrate healthy fiscal history?
- How demonstrate realistic detailed budget?
- How demonstrate that instructional programs are secular, neutral, and non-ideological?
- What performance-based benchmarks will be used to hold CMO or EMO accountable
- May require changes in policy or negotiated agreements
- In a Title I targeted assistance school, may require switching to a schoolwide model (can use a waiver if less than 40% poverty)

Closure Model Required Activities

LEA closes a school and enrolls the students in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving

- Other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available
- What costs may be covered through a SIG grant to close a school? Costs related to parent and community outreach may be covered, but other costs are regular responsibilities that LEA covers for all students. See question D-2 on page 21 of the USED Guidance.
- How will parents and community members be notified and involved in the decision to close the school and notified of the school closure and new school destination?
- How will LEA decide which schools are “nearby” and which are higher achieving?
- How will the LEA provide continuing support to parents and students throughout the process?
- How will new school prepare to receive new students?
- Resource on EED website: “Does Closing Schools Cause Educational Harm?” identifies areas a district should consider in closing a school.

Additional Resources & Timeline

- SIG Webinars from Center on Innovation and Improvement at <http://www.centerii.org/webinars/> - links to 5 webinar/audio presentations and Power Points produced by the National Network of State School Improvement Leaders (NNSIL) – one on “Selecting the Intervention Model” and one on each of the 4 intervention models. They may be accessed at any time. **Slides 11-38 of this Power Point is the presentation on the Restart Model from NNSIL and slides 39-53 is the presentation on the Closure Model from NNSIL.**
- Resources on the EED website at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stim/home.html> under the “ARRA Title I School Improvement Grants 1003(g)” heading include:
 - “Handbook on Effective Implementation of School Improvement Grants” from Center on Innovation and Improvement.
 - Selecting the Intervention Model – A Decision-Making and Planning Tool for LEAs
- Timeline for applications
 - **Notice of Intent to Apply - April 1, 2010**
 - **LEA SIG RFA and Transformation Supplement - May 3, 2010**



national network of state school improvement leaders

School Improvement Grant (SIG) Intervention Models

A webinar series prepared by the **Center on Innovation & Improvement** for use by the regional comprehensive centers and state education agencies to inform local education agencies.

National Network of State School Improvement Leaders (NNSSIL)

Mission

To provide collegial support among state leaders of school improvement to build, utilize and disseminate a robust body of knowledge of professional practices leading to systemic educational change.

Membership

- 50+ SEAs and territories**
- 16 Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs)**
- CII & CCSSO as administrative partners**



For more information: <http://www.centerii.org/leaders>

COMPREHENSIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS

The U.S. Department of education supports a system of “comprehensive technical assistance centers” consisting of 16 regional centers and five national content centers. These centers provide technical assistance primarily to state education agencies, with the regional centers directly serving the states in their regions and the content centers providing expertise, materials, and tools to aid the regional centers in their work.

NATIONAL CONTENT CENTERS

Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center

Center on Innovation & Improvement

Center on Instruction

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

National High School Center

For directory of the centers

see: www.centerii.org

REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS

- Alaska Comprehensive Center
- Appalachia Region Comprehensive Center
- California Comprehensive Center
- Florida & Islands Comprehensive Center
- Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center
- Great Lakes West Region Comprehensive Center
- The Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center
- Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center
- New England Comprehensive
- New York Comprehensive
- North Central Comprehensive Center
- Northwest Regional Comprehensive
- Pacific Comprehensive Center
- Southeast Comprehensive
- Southwest Comprehensive Center
- Texas Comprehensive Center

Featured Presenter



Lauren Morando Rhim

**Member, Scientific Council, Center on Innovation & Improvement
and Education Consultant**

THE RESTART MODEL

March 2010

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

Definition/scope of the school restart model

Theory of action underlying the restart model

Strategies to maximize impact of school restart

Timelines

Pitfalls to avoid

Guiding questions

Key resources

DEFINITION: RESTART MODEL

LEA converts a school or closes and reopens a school 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.**

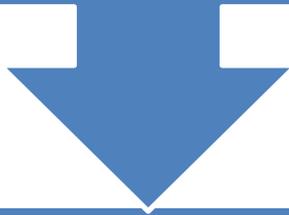
A restart model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.

A rigorous review process could take such things into consideration as an applicant's team, track record, instructional program, model's theory of action, sustainability.

As part of this model, a State must review the process the LEA will use/has used to select the partner.

DEFINITION: CHARACTERISTICS OF RESTART

Across-the-board change



Authority to do things differently

Based upon a relationship outlined in a performance contract

DEFINITION: RESTART MODEL OPTIONS

Restart School

Converts to charter

Performance contract

Charter School Board

Education
Management
Organization

Charter
Management
Organization

Independent
Operator

Education
Management
Organization

Charter
Management
Organization

THEORY OF ACTION

Starting fresh allows a state, district, or other authorizing entity to *break the cycle of low achievement* by making *deep* and *fundamental* changes to the way the school operates

Source: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (2005). Starting Fresh Series

STRATEGIES: CREATE NEW SCHOOL CULTURE SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

To realize the full potential of restarting low-achieving schools, states/districts must:

- define explicit expectations for performance;
- empower high capacity school leaders to make dramatic changes absent avoidable intrusion from external governing bodies (e.g., state, school district, or authorizer);
- create a positive new school culture that will catalyze success;
- recruit and retain skilled and committed educators to the schools and classrooms with the greatest need; and
- satisfy and engage parents in order to keep them in public schools.

Source: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (2005). Starting Fresh Series

STRATEGIES: PLANNING CHECKLIST



Allocate time to plan / prepare



Establish rigorous selection process



Recruit and select highly skilled providers/leaders

- Board and/or EMO/CMO-level
- School level (principal / CEO)



Establish conditions to support restart

- Freedom to act
- Staff aligned with mission / approach



Engage parents and community



Implement effective instructional practices and rigorous performance accountability

STRATEGIES: ESTABLISH RIGOROUS SELECTION PROCESS

Rubric to assess CMO/EMO
quality*

Academic?

Fiscal and
operational?

Potential?

*Adapted from Rhim, L. M. (2009). *Charter School Replication: Growing a Quality Charter School Sector*.
National Association of Charter School Authorizers

STRATEGIES: RUBRIC TO ASSESS CMO/EMO *ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT*

What is the CMO/EMO's academic performance relative to local and state averages?

Has the CMO/EMO demonstrated student academic growth over time, particularly among student populations similar to the target population for the proposed replication?

Has the CMO/EMO demonstrated improved graduation rates and readiness for post-secondary education?

What is the post-secondary success rate of graduates of CMO/EMO schools?

Is there evidence of unmet demand for the school model (e.g., waitlists)?

STRATEGIES: RUBRIC TO ASSESS CMO/EMO *FISCAL AND OPERATIONAL RECORD*

Does the CMO/EMO have a track record of successfully recruiting high-quality school leadership and instructional personnel?

Has enrollment in schools operated by the CMO/EMO been stable or grown over time?

Does the application from the CMO/EMO include evidence of a well-functioning governance board or boards?

Has the CMO/EMO met state and federal financial reporting requirements in the states in which it operates?

Does the CMO/EMO's most recent fiscal audit indicate positive financial health?

STRATEGIES: RUBRIC TO ASSESS CMO/EMO POTENTIAL

Plan for sustainable growth?

- Specific projections regarding anticipated growth?
- Rational plan reflecting awareness of key policy issues and potential challenges?
- Appropriate performance expectations based on evidence?
- Skilled and stable management team charged with leading restart effort?
- Practical plan to create pipeline of teachers and leaders?

Evidence of Successful Transferability?

- Corporate mission and vision statement?
- Evidence based educational model reflecting best practice?
- Coherent corporate voice regarding school model reflecting clear company culture?
- Capacity to provide professional development to support school model?
- Plan to train all new school personnel on an ongoing basis?
- Means to track fidelity of implementation of school model?

STRATEGIES: DISTRICT ROLE

Cultivate supply of restart providers (e.g., non-profits, charter operators, IHE)

Extend freedom to act

Attract restart providers (e.g., EMO/CMO's with track record of success)

Develop rigorous selection criteria

Negotiate relationship terms

Hold providers accountable for outcomes

STRATEGIES: PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY CHECKLIST



Establish clear, measurable, and achievable student achievement and organizational performance goals;



Collect a tangible body of evidence;



Establish process for evaluation that includes examining academic, organizational, financial and compliance data;



Develop data gathering and reporting cycle;



Articulate consequences for failure to meeting performance targets

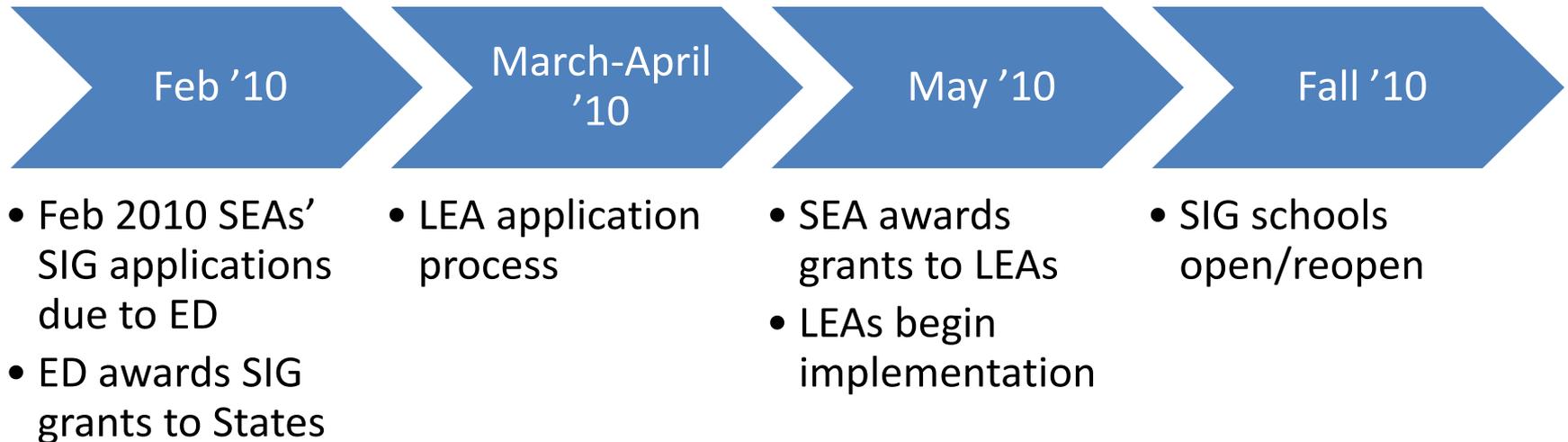


Prepare to retry if restart falters, and



Develop criteria for renewal or revocation of the contract.

SIG GRANT TIMELINE



FAST TRACK- AND EXTENDED- PLANNING RESTART

Fast - Track
Planning Restart

March –
September

Extended Planning
Restart

September
-
September

FAST-TRACK RESTART TIMELINE

MARCH

- Develop selection criteria
- Release call for proposals
- Establish selection process

APRIL

- Review proposals
- Conduct due diligence
- Negotiate relationship terms
- Hire skilled restart leader
- Recruit skilled teachers
- State to review the process the LEA will use/has used to select the partner

MAY

- Complete hiring all school personnel
- Develop plan to manage assets (e.g., curriculum materials, furniture, and technology) that "belong" to the school

JUNE - AUGUST

- Analyze data and problem solve
- Develop plan based on detailed data analysis of school culture and capacity
- Professional development
- Establish action plan with high priority goals and benchmarks

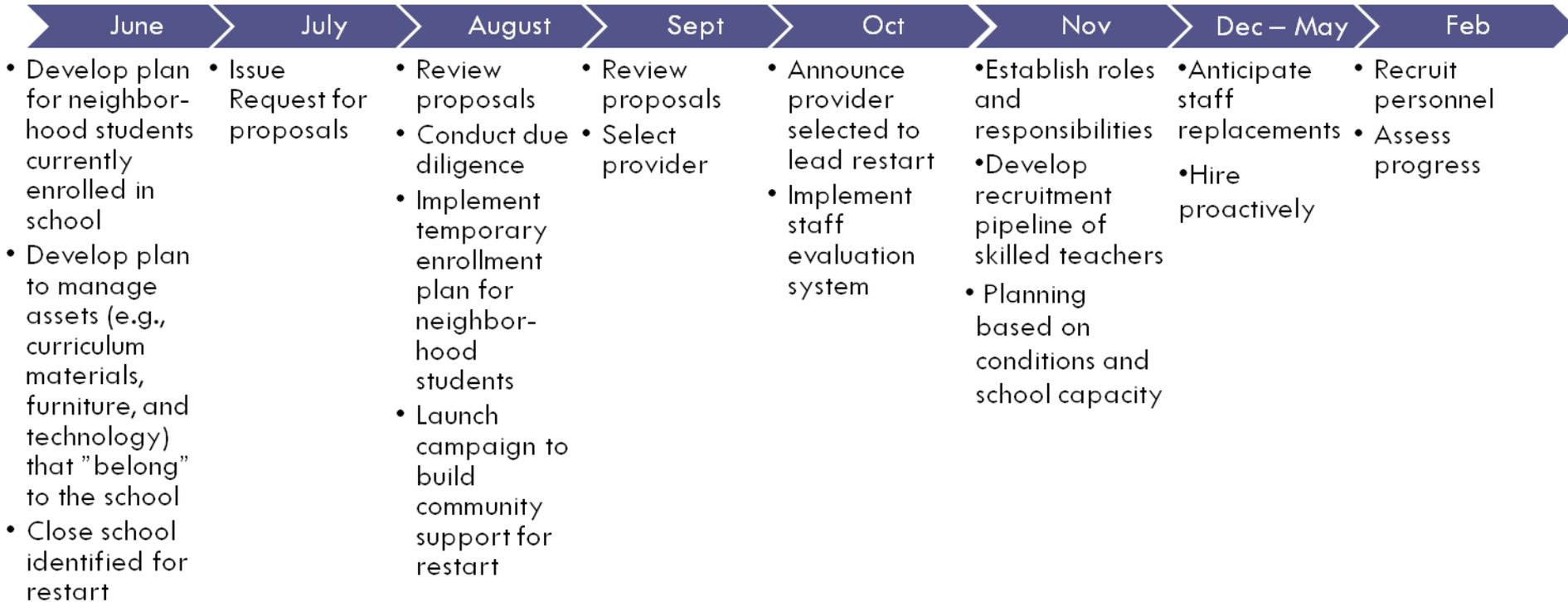
SEPTEMBER

- Implement plan based on detailed data analysis of school culture and capacity
- Track adoption of model and establishment of positive school culture
 - Monitor instructional practices
 - Assess benchmark student assessment data

OCTOBER

- Initiate ongoing cycle of continuous progress monitoring and adjustment

EXTENDED PLANNING RESTART TIMELINE



POLICY PITFALLS TO AVOID



Weak charter statute that limits charter schools' operational autonomy



Language requiring majority of teachers to approve conversion to charter status



Inequitable charter school funding statutes



Prescriptive district procurement procedures that preclude merit-based selection of restart providers



Inhibiting autonomy that leads to inhibiting implementation of CMO/EMO or charter school model

PRACTICAL PITFALLS TO AVOID



“Conventional wisdom” about degree of prescription outlined in collective bargaining agreements



Weak/bureaucratic—as opposed to performance based—provider selection procedures



Ambiguous relationship terms



Failure to consistently implement effective instructional practices



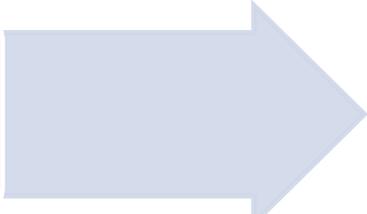
Undefined accountability metric



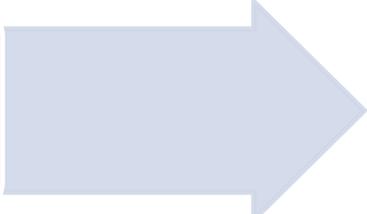
Absence of consequences for failure to meet performance goals

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What policy barriers may impede efforts to leverage the restart approach?



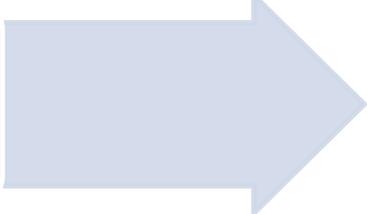
What steps are required to cultivate a pipeline of restart providers?



How can I leverage federal funding to stimulate a supply of restart providers?



Is the statewide system of support aligned to scaffold restart efforts?



RESOURCES

- The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2009). *School restructuring, What works when? A guide for education leaders*. Washington, DC: Learning Points Associates. Retrieved from http://www.centerforsri.org/files/School_Restructuring_Guide.pdf
- Hassel, B. C., & Hassel, E. A. (2005). *Starting fresh in low-performing schools: A new option for school district leaders under NCLB*. Chicago, IL: National Association of Charter School Authorizers. Retrieved from <http://www.qualitycharters.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=338>
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RESOURCES

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THE CLOSURE MODEL

March 2010

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

Definition of the school closure model

Theory of action underlying the school closure model

Strategies to maximize positive impact of school closure

Timelines

Pitfalls to avoid

Guiding questions

Key resources

DEFINITION: SCHOOL CLOSURE

School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are **higher achieving**.

Other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.

THEORY OF ACTION

School capacity according to multiple measures (e.g., academic performance, school culture/expectations, teacher performance, or facilities) *is so low* as to preclude a reasonable expectation of dramatic improvement for students currently enrolled. Therefore, closing the school and transitioning students to a higher performing school is the best strategy to dramatically improve their academic outcomes

STRATEGY: ESTABLISH POLICY CONTEXT

Strategically decide if closing schools is a feasible and necessary option, by considering:

- How will closing low-achieving schools contribute to the larger district reform effort?
- To what extent have current (or past) school interventions led to improved school performance in persistently low-achieving schools, and which schools have not improved despite repeated interventions and increased resources?
- Which schools, if any, are having a negative impact on students' academic achievement?

STRATEGY: ESTABLISH CLEAR PROCEDURES AND DECISION CRITERIA

Include key stakeholders, including business and community leaders, in developing criteria for closing schools.

Develop a consistent and data-based method of assessing school performance, such as a performance index, that supplements state-level academic achievement data and that is uniformly applied to schools across the district.

STRATEGY: OPERATE TRANSPARENTLY

Communicate
the decision
to close
schools,
through:

- Ongoing and upfront communication with the school board or school committee members.
- Keeping the district leadership and school board unified (example: asking school board members to vote on a slate of closures, rather than individual school closures).
- Developing and articulating a clear rationale for the school closures, including the immediate benefit that students will receive as a result of the school closure.

STRATEGY: PLAN FOR TRANSITION

Plan for orderly transition of students AND staff in both closing school and receiving schools.

- Develop and implement a transition plan for students and staff.
- Create options and ensure immediate placement of displaced students.
- Communicate directly (e.g., face-to-face) with the families of all displaced students.
- Take proactive measures to communicate with staff and plan for transitioning displaced staff.

STRATEGIES: METHODOICAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

There are steps that districts can take to diminish the extent of the challenges and obstacles that will surface when using the closing schools strategy

Embed school closure decisions in broader district reform strategy

Develop a supply of higher-performing school option

Make certain data guides decision-making at all stages of the process

Clearly explain benefits of closure to students currently enrolled in the low-achieving schools

Anticipate and avoid battles with school board members

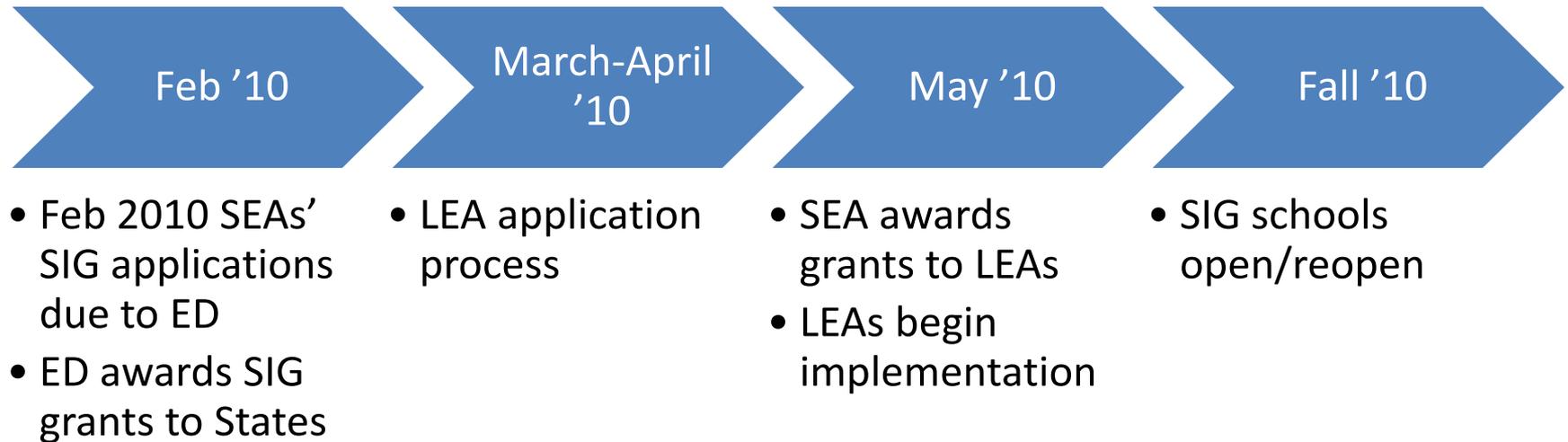
Provide support to students and family during transition to new, higher performing schools

Clarify receiving principals role in transition

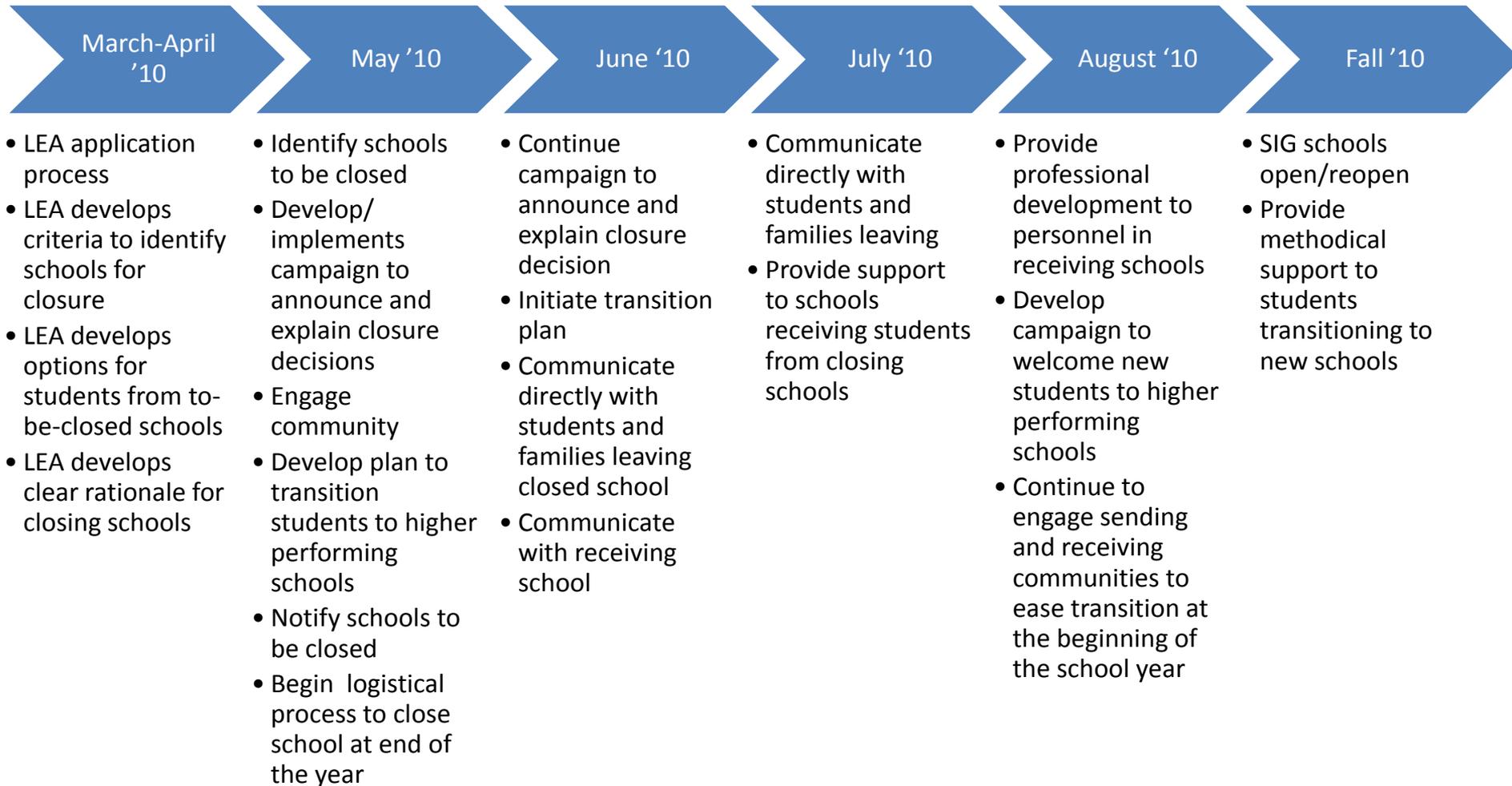
Provide staff members with clear information about closure process

Source: Steiner, L. (2009). *Tough Decisions*. Center on Innovation & Improvement.

SIG TIMELINE



SCHOOL CLOSURE TIMELINE



PITFALLS TO AVOID



Failing to communicate urgency due to persistent low-achievement



Perception that criteria are subjective or driven by an alternative agenda



Public disagreement between school board members about closure



Belief that students are better served in persistently low-achieving school than higher performing alternative



Reversing course in the face of opposition



Permitting opposition to “control the story”



Failing to prepare for and support transition for key stakeholders (i.e., students, families, principals, and teachers)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Does the district have higher performing options readily available to students enrolled in the persistently low-achieving school identified for intervention?
- Does the school board and district leadership have the steely will required to follow-through on the difficult decisions involved with school closure?
- For high schools, how will you plan for potential tensions between students from different neighborhoods?

RESOURCES

- Brinson, D., & Rhim, L. (2009). *Breaking the habit of low performance*. Lincoln, IL: Center on Innovation & Improvement. Retrieved from <http://www.centerii.org/survey>
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FURTHER QUESTIONS....

www.centerii.org

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