

Minnesota to receive \$5.5 million to continue efforts to turn around lowest-performing schools

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U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that Minnesota will receive \$5.5 million to continue efforts to turn around its persistently lowest achieving schools through the Education Department's School Improvement Grants (SIG) program. Ten additional states also will receive this continuation funding: Connecticut—\$3.6 million; Kentucky—\$7.7 million; Maryland—\$6.8 million; Mississippi—\$6.1 million; New Mexico—\$4.1 million; Ohio—\$20.2 million; South Carolina—\$7.4 million; South Dakota—\$1.5 million; Utah—\$3.4 million; and West Virginia—\$3.3 million.

"When schools fail, our children and our neighborhoods suffer," Duncan said. "Turning around our lowest-performing schools is hard work but it's our responsibility. We owe it to our children, their families and the broader community. These School Improvement Grants are helping some of the lowest-achieving schools provide a better education for students who need it the most."

School Improvement Grants are awarded to State Educational Agencies (SEAs) that then make competitive subgrants to those local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use them to provide the resources required to substantially raise student achievement in their lowest-performing schools.

Under the Obama administration, the SIG program has invested up to \$6 million per school over three years at more than 1,300 of the country's lowest-performing schools. Early findings show positive momentum and progress in many SIG schools, and some of the greatest gains have been in small towns and rural communities.