

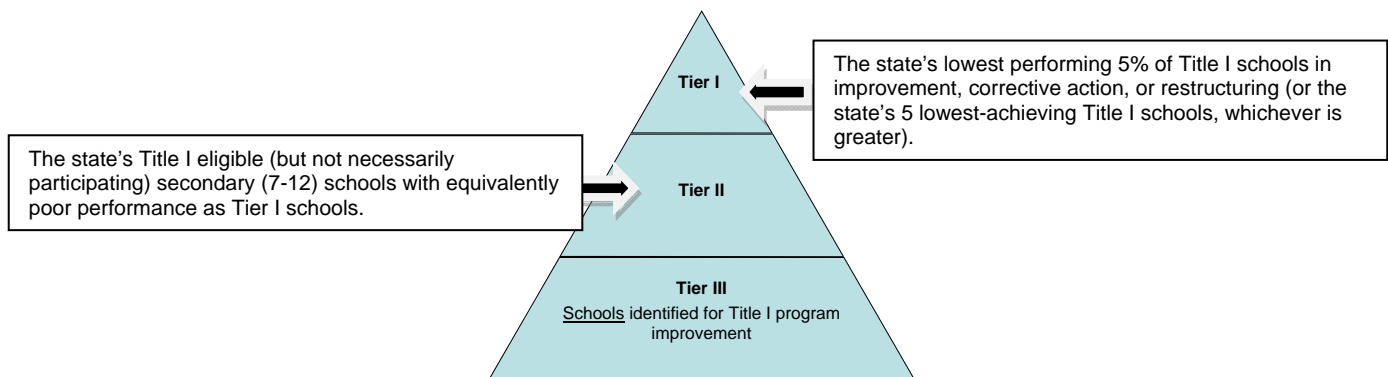
Using ARRA Funds for Low Performing Schools

On February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama. This legislation created an unprecedented opportunity to improve teaching and learning for at-risk students. Record setting funding was appropriated for schools to implement innovative practices through various grant opportunities some of which include:

- State Fiscal Stabilization
- Race to the Top
- School Improvement Grants (SIG)

Within each of these grants, the US Department of Education (USDE) aligned a requirement for states to identify low performing schools. These schools are then categorized in Tiers I, II, and III. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction must include the schools identified in these three tiers in their grant applications for these funds.

- State Fiscal Stabilization Application – In order for states to get their phase two funding under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, they had to submit an application. In the phase two application, states provided information in four key areas of education reform: (a) achieving equity in teacher distribution, (b) improving collection and use of data, (c) standards and assessments, and (d) supporting struggling schools. This application was submitted to the USDE on January 11, 2010.
- Race to the Top State Application – The federal Race to the Top grant is a competitive, \$4.35 billion education reform program enacted as part of the ARRA. The USDE released the Race to the Top application on November 12, 2009. To qualify, states must have no legal barriers to linking student growth and achievement data to teachers and principals for the purposes of evaluation. They also must have approval from the USDE for their plans for both phases of the Recovery Act's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund prior to being awarded a Race to the Top grant. The USDE will hold two rounds of competition for this grant. For the first round, it will accept states' applications until the middle of January, 2010. Applications for the second round will be due June 1, 2010, with the announcement of all the recipients by September 30, 2010.
- School Improvement Grant (SIG) – States are required to identify schools in categories of Tiers I, II, and III that would be eligible for the SIG funds. Schools in Tiers I and II who apply for these school improvement funds are required to implement one of the four models (outlined below) in their school. Schools in Tier III who apply for these school improvement funds do not have to implement one of the four models.



Turnaround Model

Replace principal and at least 50% of the staff, adopt new governance, and implement a new or revised instructional program.

Restart Model

Close the school and restart it under the management of a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an educational management organization (EMO). A restart school must admit, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend.

Close/Consolidate Model

Closing the school and enrolling the students who attended the school in other, higher-performing schools in the LEA.

Transformation Model

1. Develop teacher and leader effectiveness
2. Comprehensive instructional programs using student achievement data
3. Extend learning time and create community-oriented schools
4. Provide operating flexibility and intensive support