

APPLYING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS

The School Improvement Fund (SIF) is distributed to School Advisory Councils (SAC) in Florida at the rate of \$10 per student per year. Any funds not spent during a school year are carried forward to the next year. These funds are the budget of the SAC and how they are used is entirely under the control of the SAC. The SAC may spend up all of the funds that it gets during the school year plus any funds carried forward from previous years; however, the SAC cannot make any commitment of funds to be received in future years.

When the SAC votes to spend funds written notice is sent to the district's Assistant Superintendent for Finances; if she rules that the expenditure is beyond the broad guidelines mentioned below, she may disallow the expenditure. In practice, this rarely happens, both because the SAC has very broad discretion and because it is unlikely that the SAC would choose to spend the money inappropriately.

The original guidelines provided by the legislature and the Florida School Improvement and Accountability Commission are that the funds are to be used to prepare and implement the School Improvement Plan (SIP), including needs assessment and evaluation of progress toward meeting the goals of the SIP. Constructing or maintaining buildings, purchasing ordinary office supplies, purchasing athletic equipment for school teams or instruments for the school band are examples of things that would not be funded.

Because the amount of money is relatively small (about 1/400th of the annual cost of educating a student in Gadsden County) it must be carefully targeted to be effectively spent; it can only supplement the school's budget. At James A. Shanks Middle School the practice has been to underwrite efforts to meet the school improvement goals. Some examples of such efforts have been the Parents' Night Out meetings, student agenda/planners, the school newspaper, help with student awards/incentives, the Accelerated Math Program, tuition for teachers to attend training programs and conferences, and Saturday tutorial sessions. Often, the money has been intended as "seed" money to help get an innovative program off the ground.

Teachers, students, administrators, parents, community members—either singly or in groups—are encouraged to present proposals to the SAC for using these funds. Any proposal must draw a clear link between the project and the goals and strategies of the School Improvement Plan. It must include a budget indicating how the money will be spent. It should indicate a time line for when the funds will be needed and when they will be spent. And, it must include an evaluation design.

SHANKS MIDDLE SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS

Title of proposed project:

Applicant(s):

Specific goals of the SMS SIP addressed by this project:

Objectives of the SMS SIP addressed by this project:

Strategies of SMS SIP addressed by this project:

Target audience (Who will be served? How many?):

Budget (attach itemized list with specific amounts for each category).

Materials, supplies, software _____

Transportation, travel _____

Tuition, registration admission fees, etc... _____

Other _____

If the project cannot be fully funded, but some of the objectives be reached for less money, please submit an alternative budget.

Total amount Requested _____

Evaluation Plan

How will you determine whether the project accomplishes its objectives? (Specify how outcomes will be measured and what criteria will demonstrate success.)

Timeline

Date funds will be needed ____/____/____ Date project will begin ____/____/____

Date activities will begin ____/____/____ Date activities will end ____/____/____

A narrative report of project outcomes will be presented to the SAC by _____,
on ____/____/____.

Date ___/___/___ Approved _____

Comments/Suggestions