

**LEA SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 1003(g)
APPLICATION COVER SHEET
for 2011-2012 School Year Implementation**

District Name: Yukon Koyukuk School District

Address: 4762 Old Airport Way

City: Fairbanks **State:** AK **Zip:** 99709

District Contact data for the School Improvement 1003(g) Grant

Contact Name: Gina Hrinko

Position Director of State and Federal Programs

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District Signature

Kerry Boyd
District Superintendent (Printed Name):

(907) 374-9400 x 116
Telephone:

X
Signature of the Superintendent:

Date:

The district, through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement 1003(g) Grants program, including the assurances contained herein and the conditions that apply to any waivers that the district receives through this application.

LEA SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 1003(g) APPLICATION ELEMENTS

Section numbers may be referenced to the required element in the final requirements and USED SIG application document.

A. SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED: An LEA must include the following information with respect to the schools it will serve with a School Improvement Grant.

List each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school the district commits to serve and identify the school intervention model that the district will use in each Tier I and Tier II school. Use the chart below or attach a separate chart.

NOTE: An LEA that has nine or more Tier I and Tier II schools may not implement the transformation model in more than 50 percent of those schools.

SCHOOL NAME	AK School ID Number (#####)	Tier (I, II, or III)	INTERVENTION MODEL (TIER I AND II ONLY)			
			Trans- formation	Turn- around	Restart	Closure
Raven Correspondence School	528010	II	X			

B.1. LEA CAPACITY: LEA capacity to provide adequate resources and support to all Tier I and Tier II schools that the LEA is planning to serve.

Please address the capacity of the LEA to provide adequate resources and support to all Tier I and Tier II schools listed above. Address each area:

- a. **Human Capacity: Describe the qualifications and staff availability at the district office to provide support to the schools and the district’s ability to recruit and retain qualified teachers and principals with the skills needed to implement the applicable model.**

The YKSD understands that implementation of high-quality, effective instructional programs require a substantial commitment on their part to facilitate and support staff in their efforts to implement key project strategies that will lead to improved student achievement. The district is committed to providing the necessary resources, through implementation of the Transformation Model that will lead to improved teacher practice and increased student learning.

The district will provide adequate facilities for implementation of project activities. This includes district office use and space for professional development workshops, access to technology such as audio and/or video conferencing systems, and access to books and other materials necessary to ensure the overall success of the project. These leveraged resources, which are distinct and separate from Federal and non-Federal share, will assist Raven School in achieving its objectives.

Qualifications and Staff Availability: District Office staff is highly qualified and available to support Raven School in the implementation of the Transformation Model. District restructuring efforts will be coordinated with Transformation Model efforts to leverage the availability and qualifications of key staff. The qualifications of district staff who will participate in the transformation of Raven School are detailed below:

Kerry Boyd, Superintendent: Ms. Boyd has extensive experience in school leadership and administration. She has successfully implemented restructuring at the district level and will oversee

district support for this project. Ms. Boyd has ten years of teaching experience and eight years of formal administrative experience. She holds a Masters of Education in Educational Leadership and a State of Alaska Type B Administrator's Certification.

Andrea Berg, Director of Distance Education and Assessments: Ms. Berg has extensive experience teaching rural students and working in distance education. She has State of Alaska Type A Certification in Secondary English and has a Bachelors of Arts in English Education and a Bachelors of Science in Psychology. She has over fifteen years of teaching experience and five years of school administrative experience.

Gina Hrinko, Director of State and Federal Programs: Ms. Hrinko has a Masters of Education in Educational Leadership with a State of Alaska Type B Administrator's Certificate. She has five years of teaching experience and twelve years of school administration experience. Ms. Hrinko also has extensive experience in school leadership, curriculum development, professional development and assessment and evaluation.

Shawn Coyle, Director of Technology: Mr. Coyle has extensive experience in multiple areas of Information Technology and Information Systems management and has proven skills in departmental supervision and administration of resources/employees and budgetary management. He holds three masters degrees in Teaching Post Secondary, Management Information Systems and Molecular Genetics.

Cristina Poage, Director of Special Education, Counseling & Student Support Services: Ms. Poage has a Masters degree in Educational Leadership. She has State of Alaska Type B certification in Educational Leadership and a State of Alaska Type A certification in Elementary and Special Education. Ms. Poage has thirteen years of experience in special education teaching and has been coordinating YKSD's Special Education program since 2001.

Harry White, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & School Improvement: Mr. White has eight years of teaching experience and fourteen years of school administration experience. He has a Masters degree in Administration and Curriculum with a State of Alaska Type B Superintendent Endorsement. He was twice recognized as Principal of the Year in Alaska for Region II.

Recruitment/Retention of Teachers: The district makes a concerted effort to hire teachers who are highly qualified for the positions in which they are being interviewed and considered for. This is somewhat challenging because all of our hired teachers teach multiple grades and subjects. All teachers must be highly qualified in all of the core content areas they teach. The district provides support for all teachers working toward becoming highly qualified in an area they are not. Support provided includes providing study guides and materials to prepare for a Praxis II exam, exam fees, and travel expenses associated with taking the exam. Professional development opportunities are offered as part of our teacher/principal retention efforts and to increase leadership development and capacity.

- b. **Capacity to provide support: Describe the ability of the district to provide support to the schools in implementing instructional changes, providing professional development, and any other areas of assistance needed by the schools, including the ability to contract with external providers for services (as applicable).**

RCS' transformation model builds specifically on three of the district's established priorities: 1) use of research-based strategies to meet the individual needs of all students, and to increase the number of students testing at proficient levels in reading, writing, and mathematics; 2) ongoing support, through professional development, for teachers to improve their practice of teaching and assessing student

learning; and, 3)

YKSD has the following ability to provide support for implementing instructional changes: One of the district's priorities is to continue supporting a balanced instructional program that includes differentiation and promotes collaboration between home and school. High-quality instruction responds to the individual differences in a learning community and is essential in providing additional support, enrichment, and/or intervention. Inherent to high-quality instruction is rigorous content that is delivered through differentiated instruction. We follow state standards for curriculum development and ensure that our curricula are aligned and respond to Alaska Grade Level Expectations. This priority aligns with the implementation of the transformation model at Raven School and will facilitate effective support and assistance as the school progresses.

YKSD has the following ability to provide professional development: Being a district in corrective action, has required the district to adjust and change its attitude (about schooling, instruction, collaborating with community, etc.) in order to increase overall effectiveness with students, and as teachers or administrators. Through the 'Performance Excellence for All Kids (PEAK)' professional development that is provided annually to all staff, district teachers and staff have been proactive by implementing new strategies and looking for additional opportunities to improve the culture of the school and/or district. Instruction is designed so that students are actively engaged in and interacting with the content continually. The PEAK framework is implemented as a way to better prepare and guide our teachers on how to use and implement effective teaching strategies proven to significantly increase student performance in all academic areas. Many different PEAK trainings have been provided so that all school staff are better equipped with the essential tools (concepts, methods, approaches, strategies, and techniques) they need to ensure success for all students. PEAK resources draw upon the best research-supported practices; and are proven to be highly successful.

YKSD has the following ability to provide direction and foster a culture of collaboration and engagement: We have restructured our district office to provide more support to teachers and schools. A culture has been established that reflects shared ideas that give the district its identity and standards for expected behaviors. In managing our educational organization, the district has clearly defined a vision that assists school staff, parents and students in knowing where they fit in, and how they can work collaboratively to support teaching and learning. Establishing and clearly articulating our vision has allowed our school communities to see things they way they can be, not just the way they are. A clear example of a vision being set in motion was when John F. Kennedy commented, "By the end of the decade, we will put a man on the moon." Although he did not live to witness the attainment of his vision, he generated the idea in the minds of Americans that this dream was indeed attainable. As Americans gazed out at the moon, they began to imagine what it would be like to actually see this happen. This is an example of how powerful a vision can be when communicated with excitement and enthusiasm. Unlike being shown a strategy and simply following it, to *see* the vision and *pursue* it calls for us to be fully engaged.

Through the restructuring process, the district realized that if real change to the overall school climate was to occur, the district had to be willing to take risks (i.e., opportunities to move closer to our potential). At times that has meant selecting the right person for a task and giving them the freedom to do what we ourselves are unable to do. Risks for the right reasons, has increase the willingness of our staff to risk more. Of course, the amount of school change is dependent upon the degree of risk a school is willing to engage in. Most schools are able to produce compliance, while great schools nurture engagement. Our restructure process has helped us to more fully understand that if people are engaged and/or invested, they have a sense of ownership. The YKSD fosters an environment that encourages and guides staff toward their strengths (i.e. realizing their potential) so that they continue to have optimal opportunities to learn and grow.

Being in corrective action has helped our district embrace an approach to teaching that is more apparent in settings outside of school – parents teaching children, or friends teaching each other. Teachers are developing and using instructional methods that are similar to how we would teach our own children our content at home. For example, we would ask the learner to do whatever it will take for us to see how well the learning is happening so that we can determine what further instruction is needed. This is how we would teach anything for which it is important that the learning actually transpire. This is how parents teach their own children how to ride a bike or swim; this is how an employer trains a new employee; and, it is what friends do when they are teaching anything they want learned well. The only place where a different approach is usually used is in schools. This has changed in our district. Research indicates that creating an environment in which people are passionate about and take pride in what they are doing will always have an end result of effective performance (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Our district vision is based on the idea that YKSD is a great place to learn, contribute and grow. This, in turn, has caused our teachers to become more committed because they see the value in what we are doing.

c. Policies or procedures: Describe the need and the LEA’s ability to change any policies or procedures that may create barriers to implementation. Include evidence or a statement of support for such changes, as applicable, from the teachers’ union, school board, staff, and parents.

The School Board recognizes that its most important function is to establish policies which communicate its direction for the management and control of the schools. Policies are written statements adopted by the Board which communicate the guidelines and limits within which the Superintendent or designee and staff may take discretionary action. Attached is a copy of BB 9311 which outlines the steps that must be taken in order for developed policies to be approved.

Initial changes will be made with the implementation of the grant to ensure policy and practices are aligned to program needs. Each year the program will continue to review policy and practices to ensure they are within regulations and continue to provide the best opportunity and support for our students. RCS will continue to gather input from all stakeholders as changes to policy and practice are considered and will adhere to board policy and regulation as appropriate.

To overcome the identified barriers in implementation, RCS will have to restructure planning and meeting time to ensure areas are addressed. Timelines and training for both students and teachers will need to be included within the 2011-2012 calendar. RCS is just now starting the enrollment process for 2011-2012, which will allow for these changes to be included with minimal efforts. Teachers will have opportunities to discuss the changes and the needs for additional assessment at the initial enrollment/ILP meetings. Allowing parents the opportunity to discuss and clarify the requirements and how this will have a positive impact on their students learning. The role of the teacher will not so much change as it will be clarified and structures put into place to ensure expectations and responsibilities of all stakeholders. These additional guidelines will become part of the teacher-parent-teacher contacts and the intervention plans as appropriate. Raven already has a process to include all stakeholders in decision making for the program. With the implementation of the transformation model, this input will be more detailed and collected on a more frequent basis. Input collected during the initial planning of the inclusion of a transformational model within the school was supportive. The online survey and meetings indicated the need to focus on our at risk students.

d. LEA needs: Describe any LEA needs for additional assistance from the state.

Our district would benefit from technical assistance specific to school transformation within correspondence schools. Very little direct assistance has been provided in this area.

e. Previous efforts: Describe the LEA's previous efforts and results in implementing strategies to improve student achievement and the LEA's application for and use of other federal funds during the prior two school years.

As part of our district improvement process, a plan has been developed that addresses student achievement needs, and outlines key steps for improvement. In order to improve student proficiency levels in reading, writing and mathematics, teachers assess formatively for learning and monitor for student progress using AIMSweb, RTI, and teacher developed assessments. The collected data is used to adjust and refine instruction to better meet student needs.

Other LEA Efforts Include:

Alaska Native Education Grant: YKSD secured federal funds to implement a 5-year project specifically designed to improve the low academic achievement and English language development of YKSD students by building upon the successes of prior programs, and expanding the district's capacity to provide the following services to each school site:

- Strengthen and expand English language development, district-wide, by providing high-quality English language instruction educational programs and professional development/support for school staff;
- Strengthen and expand Native language program by providing additional instruction and follow up support, on-site, from the Native language instructor and Native language specialists; and,
- Professional development for parents/families; opportunities for culturally relevant activities, and to develop a high school Athabaskan conversation and grammar course.

The *Expanding our Horizons* builds capacity and yields results that will extend beyond the project period in three ways: 1) provide a more balanced approach for teaching English language development content and skills; 2) build the capacity of the district's teaching staff to address the needs of students who are not proficient in English; and, 3) build the capacity of district staff to integrate school content, with the cultural context of the indigenous communities, in which they teach.

Preparing, Training and Recruiting High-Quality Teacher and Principals Sub-Grant: The 'High Performing Teachers by Design' (HPTD) one year initiative pulls together the tools and resources teachers need to improve their overall content knowledge and pedagogical skills, which will significantly increase the capacity of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District (YKSD) and Yukon Flats School District (YFSD) for ensuring teachers meet NCLB requirements for being Highly Qualified. Through the use of videoconferencing, participating teachers will be able to partake in ongoing professional development, coaching and support as they design their instruction from their remote locations.

Improving Literacy Through School Libraries Grant: YKSD's project has five objectives: To increase 1) student literacy, and in particularly K-3 students; 2) student interest and motivation in recreational reading; 3) students' access to print and media resources that meet their recreational and informational reading needs; 4) library hours after school; and 5) the skills of YKSD's Certified Librarian and Library Aides to improve the literacy of K-3 students.

Voluntary School Choice Grant: The YKSD grant applies the VPSC choice program to children located in isolated geographic areas (unable to take a bus to the next school district). The project provides an unparalleled pilot program for other rural, isolated areas where choice is not available any other way. The goals of this 7-year project are 1) increase the number of high-achieving YKSD schools by innovating and improving them; 2) provide in-district transportation support to encourage student choice; 3) raise student achievement scores district-wide; 4) meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in all of our schools; 5) build and sustain student resiliency and skills to promote life-long learning and success; and 6) provide an innovative credit recovery program to students who have dropped out of school for another opportunity to graduate.

B.2. LEA CAPACITY: Tier I School(s) that the LEA is not planning to serve.

If the LEA is not applying to serve each Tier I school, please explain why. Be specific and address each of the areas human capacity, capacity to provide support, policies or procedures, and LEA needs that are applicable to the district's lack of capacity to serve all Tier I schools.

Not applicable

B.3. EXTERNAL PROVIDERS: LEA process to recruit, screen and select external providers.

Describe the district's rigorous process for recruiting, screening, and selecting any external providers that will be used to provide support to the schools. The screening process must verify that a provider has a meaningful plan for contributing to the reform efforts in the school, will implement strategies that are research-based, has a record of success in similar schools, has a healthy fiscal history, and has the capacity to implement the strategies it is proposing. (External providers may be used to provide technical expertise in implementing various components of the intervention model such as helping a school evaluate its data and determine changes that are needed, providing job-embedded professional development, assisting in curriculum alignment, designing teacher and principal evaluation systems that rely on student data, etc.)

Any external provider support to Raven Correspondence School for implementation of the Transformation Model will be in the form of professional development to teachers and staff. Before external providers are hired, we will ensure that any professional development they offer meets the following criteria:

1. It provides research-based strategies that are culturally relevant to our population;
2. Strategies have been tested successfully in correspondence schools.

Due to the unique structure of Raven Correspondence, external providers will not be working directly with students but with the teachers and staff of Raven School. The process of recruiting, screening, selecting and monitoring external providers are critical to ensure the provider's services align with the school's identified needs and that the services are consistently high-quality and meet targeted goals. Raven School has already assessed its own needs and has developed its strategies for implementing the Transformation Model based on those needs. Our screening process will determine whether a provider's model/strategies fit within the goals of our program, and assess the quality of services that the external provider offers, to ensure providers have direct experience with correspondence instruction that meets the unique challenges to student success. Raven School will require that external providers demonstrate that their strategies are research-based, and that they have the capacity to implement the strategies they propose.

Finally, in the provision of professional development, we will continue to collaborate with the Alaska Staff

Development Network (ASDN), whose mission is to improve student achievement by providing research-based distance learning and face-to-face professional development programs for Alaska’s teachers and school administrators. We are interested in our continued partnership with ASDN because they have the capacity to deliver high-quality professional development that is targeted to meet specific needs. The current partnership that YKSD has with ASDN has been successful for several reasons: 1) ASDN works in close collaboration with district administration to tailor their professional development to meet our specific identified needs; 2) Through the RAPPS program, four district administrators have earned their Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership, and now hold a Type B Administrator’s certification, while 6 teachers are currently enrolled in the program; and 3) ASDN has helped our district receive some much needed professional development on use of data to improve teaching and learning. In response to Alaska district’s that are in corrective action, ASDN provides free professional development through distance delivery, webinars, and face-to-face classes that other district’s around the state must pay for if they want to participate. The YKSD is currently part of ASDNs consortium for district’s who are in corrective action. This collaboration provides numerous professional development opportunities for all of our district’s teachers. One example of such opportunities is the Rural Alaska Principal Preparation Service (RAPPS) program. This program offers teachers who are working in low-performing districts, the opportunity to work toward earning their Type B certification by enrolling in UAA’s Educational Leadership program. Through this established partnership, ASDN pays for ½ of the tuition costs for enrolled participants.

B. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: An LEA must include the following information in its application for a School Improvement Grant.

For each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must complete the LEA Application Supplement related to the specific school improvement model to be implemented in the school (Turnaround, Transformation, Restart, or Closure). The application supplement must describe:

- (1) For each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that—
 - The LEA has analyzed the needs of each school and selected an intervention for each school; and
 - The LEA has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA’s application in order to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model it has selected.
- (2) If the LEA is not applying to serve each Tier I school, the LEA must explain why it lacks capacity to serve each Tier I school (described above in B.2).
- (3) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to—
 - Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements;
 - Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality;
 - Align other resources with the interventions;
 - Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively; and
 - Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
- (4) The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA’s application.
- (5) The LEA must describe the annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that it has established in order to monitor its Tier I and Tier II schools that receive school improvement funds.

For each Tier III school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must submit a Tier III Supplement along with a School Improvement Plan for 2011-2012 that highlights the services to be received with these

funds. Include budget information for each Tier III school in the LEA budget for these funds. The plan must describe:

- (6) For each Tier III school the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must identify the services the school will receive or the activities the school will implement, and which of the six domains for instructional effectiveness will be addressed by the services or activities.
- (7) The LEA must describe the goals it has established (subject to approval by the SEA) in order to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.

B.8. CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS: The LEA must consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA’s application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools.

List each meeting or other activity held to consult with stakeholders regarding the LEA’s application and the implementation of the models in the Tier I and Tier II schools. Indicate the number of members present from each stakeholder group that had members present, and the general discussion or feedback received at the meeting.

Meeting Topic	Date & Time	Parents & Community	Teachers & Staff	School Administrators	School Board	District Staff	Other	General discussion or feedback received
General staff meeting	03/01/11 1pm					X		Discussed grant overview and options.
SIG grant discussion	03/08/11 1pm					X		Discussed grant overview and assigned committee.
SIG grant discussion	03/09/11 3pm					X		District committee meeting; discussed grant overview, needs from administration, ability to support.
General staff meeting	03/15/11 11am		X					Discussed grant overview and options.
SIG grant follow-up	03/21/11 2pm		X					Discussed SIG grant and followed-up from previous meeting.
Parent SIG survey	Online survey open 03/14/11 to present	X						Parent feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89.2% support staffing solutions in YKSD SIG proposal; • 43.9% feel that tutoring/study halls are priority; • 31% support individualized academic counseling

C. BUDGET: An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school it commits to serve.

The LEA must provide a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year to—

- Implement the selected model in each Tier I and Tier II school it commits to serve;
- Conduct LEA-level activities designed to support implementation of the selected school intervention models in the LEA’s Tier I and Tier II schools; and

- Support school improvement activities, at the school or LEA level, for each Tier III school identified in the LEA’s application.

NOTE: An LEA’s budget must cover all three years of the grant, and be of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected school intervention model in each Tier I and Tier II school the LEA commits to serve.

An LEA’s budget for each year may not exceed the number of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools it commits to serve multiplied by \$2,000,000. The minimum LEA budget is \$50,000 per year multiplied by the number of schools served

1. Complete the following budget overview chart

District SIG Budget Overview	Year 1 Budget		Year 2 Budget	Year 3 Budget	Three-Year Total
	Pre-Implementation	Full Implementation School Year			
School Name					
Raven Correspondence School		\$499,754	\$499,930	\$499,620	\$1,499,304
Total Budget		\$499,754	\$499,930	\$499,620	\$1,499,304

- 2. Attach a complete budget and narrative for each school for the any pre-implementation activities planned through June 30, 2011, plus all three years, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 for which SIG funding is requested. Please note that pre-implementation activities may continue after June 30, 2011, but those activities would be funded during the 2011-2012 fiscal year budget. The budget for each school served may include district level expenses that are used to support or provide services to the school. Use the Budget and Narrative Form #05-07-071 found on the department website under Forms & Grants:**

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/forms/home.cfm>

LEA SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 1003(g)
Assurances and Waivers Signature Page

D. ASSURANCES: An LEA must include the following assurances in its application for a School Improvement Grant and must indicate which of those waivers it intends to implement.

The LEA assures that it will—

- (1) Use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve consistent with the final requirements;
- (2) Establish annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics and measure progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements in order to monitor each Tier I and Tier II school that it serves with school improvement funds, and establish goals (approved by the SEA) to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds;
- (3) If it implements a restart model in a Tier I or Tier II school, include in its contract or agreement terms and provisions to hold the charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization accountable for complying with the final requirements; and
- (4) Report to the SEA the school-level data required under section III of the final requirements.

E. WAIVERS: If the SEA has requested any waivers of requirements applicable to the LEA’s School Improvement Grant:

The LEA must check each waiver that the LEA will implement. If the LEA does not intend to implement the waiver with respect to each applicable school, the LEA must indicate for which schools it will implement the waiver.

- “Starting over” in the school improvement timeline for Tier I and Tier II Title I participating schools implementing a turnaround or restart model.
- Implementing a schoolwide program in a Tier I or Tier II Title I participating school that does not meet the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold.

Name & Title of Authorized Representative

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date