



# RACE TO THE TOP



## Information for Finalists (*Addendum to Information for Finalists, March 4, 2010*) March 10, 2010

### Physical arrangements of the room in which you will be presenting:

- You will be seated at a table large enough for your five-person State team to sit facing the peer reviewers who will be seated at a table facing your team. You may present at your seat or you may stand, but there will not be a podium.
- Each member of your presentation team will have a table-top microphone that can be removed from its stand, if desired.
- A Windows compatible laptop will be available for your use during your presentation. If you choose to use a Power Point presentation, your team may view the presentation on the laptop, as well as on an 18" confidence monitor (i.e., a monitor that can be seen by the presenters but not the audience). A handheld remote-controlled slide advancer will be available for the presenter or a member of your five-person team to use to advance the slides.
- The peer reviewers will view any slides you present on a 40 inch LCD monitor.
- There will be a countdown timer on the presenters' table that will allow your team members to keep track of the time. The timer will be set to 30 minutes for your presentation, and you must stop when time runs out.

### Your presentation:

- Please remember that your presentation may not include any information beyond what is contained in your application narrative or appendices.
- It is permissible to use poster boards in your presentation. If you choose to use poster boards, you must bring 7 paper copies of the information on the poster boards (on letter-sized paper). These copies will become part of the application record and will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's (Department's) Web site after Phase 1 awards are announced.

### Presenters:

- All presenters must have ongoing roles in and responsibilities for executing your State's Race to the Top reform plan. The Department is aware that in some cases, consultants or other outside experts (e.g., from law firms or foundations) assisted in the development of States' Race to the Top applications. In order to allow reviewers to validate and clarify their evaluations of your applications and ensure that you have the understanding, knowledge, and capacity to implement your plans, these consultants and experts may not be members of your five-person State teams.
- Please email your list of presenters to [racetothetop@ed.gov](mailto:racetothetop@ed.gov) as soon as possible, but no later than noon EST on Friday, March 12. (This is a corrected date.) Please include in your list each person's name, title, and role in executing your State's Race to the Top plan. We will provide this information to the peer reviewers and include the list on the Department's Web site when the videotaped presentations are posted after the Phase 1 awards are announced. If reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please include those requests with your list.

Peer reviewer identities:

- To ensure a level playing field for all applicants and maintain the integrity of the competition, we have informed our peer reviewers that we will not release their names to the public until the grant awards are announced in early April. In addition, when we post peer reviewers' comments on all of the Phase 1 State applications, the peer reviewers' personal identities will not be associated with specific State applications.
- However, due to the nature of the Tier 2 presentations, your five State participants will be aware of the identities of your State's panel. We expect all State presenters to assist us in maintaining the integrity of the competition and allowing the reviewers to complete their work without being subject to outside influences. As a result, we remind you that, at a minimum, you should not talk to others, including presenters from other finalist States, about the identities of your panel reviewers.

Budget conversations:

- As we discussed on the call with you on March 5<sup>th</sup>, Department officials will meet with you shortly after your presentation to discuss general budget issues and principles. The purpose is to outline Departmental standard operating procedures to finalize budgets for applicants that receive a discretionary grant award.
- We want to clarify that these will not be individual meetings about your State's specific budget request. Rather, we will meet with several States at a time for a more general discussion.
- These meetings will be with Department staff, not with peer reviewers; as such, the meetings will not affect the peer reviewers' evaluation or scoring of your State application.
- Others from your State besides your five-person presentation team may participate in these meetings, and they may choose to participate by phone. We will provide the conference call logistics to you shortly after you submit your list of presenters to the [racetothetop@ed.gov](mailto:racetothetop@ed.gov) mailbox.