



RACE TO THE TOP



Information for Finalists

March 4, 2010

The Presentation

1. The purpose of the Tier 2 review is to allow the reviewers to validate and clarify their evaluations of your application and ensure that you have the understanding, knowledge, and capacity to implement your plans.
 - a. It's up to you to determine what to emphasize and how to tell your story. Your presentation does not have to touch on each criterion or priority.
2. Your audience will be up to 5 independent, expert reviewers who reviewed your application in depth during the first stage (Tier 1) of the review. In addition, a small number of Department program staff will be present.
3. You will have a 90 minute block of time. You may use up to 30 minutes of that time for your presentation. The remainder will be for Q&A led by the reviewers. Time limits will be strictly enforced.
4. Following your State presentation, the assigned reviewers will meet to discuss your application and presentation, finalize their individual scores and comments, and submit them to the Department. Reviewers will be scoring against the criteria and priorities, just as they did in the first tier of the review.
5. In order to maintain a level playing field and ensure the continued integrity of the competition, the presentations may only be attended by your 5-person presentation team, the peer reviewers, and program staff from the Department.
6. Your presentation will be videotaped and posted on the Department's website after awards are announced. Each member of your presentation team will be required to sign and submit an appearance release prior to your presentation. Peer reviewers and Department staff are also required to sign this release prior to participating in the Tier 2 presentations. This release will be provided to finalists by the contractor.

The Presenters

7. Your State's presentation team may include up to five individuals. Presenters must have a deep knowledge of your application and have significant, ongoing roles in and responsibilities for executing your State's Race to the Top activities. In no case may presentation teams include consultants. State teams may include elected officials, State education executives, district superintendents, teacher leaders, and others with ongoing leadership roles and deep knowledge of the State's application.

- a. The only personnel from your State who may attend are the members of the presentation team.
8. Please email your list of presenters to racetothetop@ed.gov as soon as possible, but no later than noon EST on Friday, March 11. Please include in your list each person's name, title, and their role in executing your State's Race to the Top plan. If reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please include those requests with your list.

Other Rules

9. Your presentation may not include any information beyond what is contained in your application. Reviewers may not consider any new information, including new or changed plans, accomplishments, laws, policies, data, or performance measures.
10. You may use a projection system for your presentation; we will provide a laptop and projector. Note that you may not use Web-based information, video presentations, or embedded video resources, nor may you use any resources that provide information beyond what is contained in your original application.
11. You must bring paper copies of your presentations. These copies may include only the slides you are using in your presentation – not your notes and not any other supporting materials. Reviewers may only look at slides that you actually present during your 30 minute presentation. The slides presented to reviewers, the videotape of your presentation, and the list of presenters will become part of the application record and will be posted on the Department's Website after awards are announced. Please bring 7 paper copies of your presentation (one each for the reviewers and two for the application file).
12. No additional materials may be provided to reviewers.
13. The reviewers are responsible for ensuring that the Q&A time is well spent; as such, they may ask you to stop your response so that they may move onto the next question. Please cooperate with these requests.

Communications with the Department

14. We will work with you over the next week to make sure you have the information you need for Tier 2. Because this is a competitive process, there are a few ground rules:
 - a. We may not discuss pending applications. This means we are unable to respond to inquiries and questions pertaining to the substance of a finalist's application.
 - b. We will only respond to logistical questions pertaining to the Tier 2 review process. Please direct those questions to racetothetop@ed.gov. All Race to the Top questions that are sent to the Department will be directed to and processed through the Race to the Top email box.
 - c. We cannot provide additional guidance such as who should be on the presentation team, what information they should present, what questions reviewers are likely to ask, etc.
15. Please understand that these ground rules are in place to continue to maintain a level playing field for all finalists.

Again, congratulations on being selected as a finalist. We look forward to seeing you in Washington, D.C. the week of March 15.