

Preliminary Summary on Race to the Top for AFT Leaders

Key logistical details

- \$4 billion competitive grants. States are the applicants.
- Application available November 12, 2009.
- Phase 1 applications due mid January 2010; phase 1 awards announced April 2010.
- Phase 2 applications due June 1, 2010; Phase 2 awards announced September 2010.
- States can apply in either phase 1 or 2. Those that apply in phase 1 but not awarded grants may reapply in phase 2. States that receive phase 1 grants may not reapply in phase 2.
- States will be judged on a 500-point system. Points are allocated among 19 selection criteria within five main areas. (See attached “Race to the Top Point System”)
- ED released guidance as to how much each state should apply for based on student population. This chart is their recommendation:

Category 1 – \$350-700 million	CA, TX, NY, FL
Category 2 – \$200-400 million	IL, PA, OH, GA, MI, NC, NJ
Category 3 – \$150-250 million	VA, AZ, IN, WA, TN, MA, MO, MD, WI
Category 4 – \$60-175 million	MN, CO, AL, LA, SC, PR, KY, OK, OR, CT, UT, MS, IA, AR, KS, NV
Category 5 – \$20-75 million	NM, NE, ID, WV, NH, ME, HI, RI, MT, DE, SD, AK, ND, VT, WY, DC

Highlights of Selection Criteria (underlines here correspond to attached “Point System”)

- Collaboration with local and state teacher unions
 - Within A1 Articulating State’s education reform agenda and LEA’s participation in it: States receive points for demonstrating that participating districts are committed to state’s plan as evidenced by “Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the **local teachers’ union leader** (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs”
 - Within A2 Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale-up, and sustain proposed plans: States receive points for “support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of statements or actions of support from the State’s teachers and principals, which include the **State’s teachers’ unions** or statewide teacher associations...”
- Standards and Assessments: States receive points for participating in voluntary common state standards and assessments initiative.
- Data Systems: States receive points for implementing a statewide longitudinal data system and using data to improve instruction (including using professional development to do so).

- Effective Teachers: D2 Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. States receive points if they have a plan for districts to:
 - Measure student growth* for every student;
 - Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) **are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement**;
 - Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback and data on student growth; and
 - Use these evaluations to inform decisions regarding professional development; compensation, promotion, and retention of teachers and principals; whether to grant tenure and/or full certification; and removal of ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve.

- D3 Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals: States receive points for plans to “ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students”; and increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education, and to English language learners. Plans may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.

- Struggling Schools: E2 Turning around the lowest achieving schools. States receive points if they have a plan to support their persistently low performing schools by implementing one of four intervention models as outlined in the school improvement grants initiative. The four models and briefest explanation are:
 - Turnaround: among other things, would have to replace 50 percent of staff,
 - Closure: close school,
 - Restart: convert to charter or private management,
 - Transformation: among other things like supporting schools and communities, would have to identify and remove teachers who do not improve student achievement outcomes. (If the district has more than nine persistently low-performing schools, the district cannot use the transformation model for more than 50% of schools).

* Student growth is defined as change in student achievement between two or more points in time. Student achievement is defined as test scores or “other measures of student learning provided that they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.”