

September 29, 2009

Overview of Federal Race to the Top Grants

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:
Assembly Education Committee
Hon. Julia Brownley, Chair





Large Amount of One-Time Federal Stimulus Funding for K-12 Education

- ☑ The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes both formula-based and competitive grants for K-12 education.
- ☑ California is receiving \$6.1 billion in formula-based grants.
- ☑ In addition, California could apply to receive roughly \$800 million in competitive grants.

Federal Stimulus Grants for K-12 Education	
<i>(In Millions)</i>	
Formula-Based Grants	Amount
Fiscal Stabilization Fund	\$3,243
IDEA	1,268
Title I	1,080
School Improvement Grants	352
Education Technology	72
Title I, Program Improvement	45
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance	14
School Lunch Program	13
Total	\$6,086
Competitive Grants	Estimate^a
State Incentive Grant	\$750
State Standards and Assessments Grant	45
Institute of Education Sciences Grant	20
Total	\$815
^a Reflects estimated grant amount assuming California were to win an award.	



Race to the Top (RTTT) Grant Process Now Underway

- ☑ Nationwide, \$5 billion is available in competitive RTTT grants.
- ☑ The RTTT initiative contains three grant opportunities:
 - ***State Incentive Grants (\$4 Billion Nationwide)***. Information on federal priority areas and application criteria was recently released.
 - ***State Standards and Assessments Grants (\$350 Million Nationwide)***. These potential grants are still under development at the federal level.
 - ***District Innovation Grants (\$650 Million Nationwide)***. These grants to school districts are still under development at the federal level, but federal priority areas are expected to be released soon.



The Stakes Likely to Be High

- ☒ The RTTT funding is linked to federal school improvement funding.
- ☒ The RTTT funding could become linked to other annual ongoing federal funding. California receives about \$4 billion in annual ongoing federal funding for K-12 education.
- ☒ The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 is up for reauthorization—meaning RTTT priorities could become bedrock components of reauthorized legislation.



Narrow Window to Act

- ☒ If California wants to compete in phase 1 of RTTT funding, it would need to begin developing its plan now.
- ☒ Most of the California Department of Education's outreach to and collaboration with school districts is likely to occur in October and November.
- ☒ Plans likely will be due to the federal government in late December 2009 or January 2010.
- ☒ If California misses the phase 1 window, it can compete in phase 2. Under phase 2, California would have until spring 2010 to complete its plan.

Race to the Top (RTTT) Timeline	
Date	Process
Phase 1:	
July 29, 2009	Federal guidance on RTTT funding published.
August 28, 2009	End of 30-day public comment period on federal guidance.
Fall 2009	Notice inviting applications made available.
Winter 2009	States have 60 days to develop and submit applications.
First half 2010	Winners announced.
Phase 2:	
Spring 2010	Notice inviting applications available.
September 2010	Winners announced.



Overview of RTTT Application Criteria



The federal government has proposed various types of application criteria for RTTT grants.

■ Criteria That Must Be Met:

- ***Eligibility Requirements (2).***
- ***Absolute Priorities (1).***

■ If Criteria Met, Points Earned:

- ***Selection Criteria (19).***

■ Other Criteria Allow States to Stand Out:

- ***Competitive Criteria (1).***
- ***Invitational Criteria (3).***



Three Criteria Must Be Met



Two Eligibility Requirements:

- States must have received approval for second-round State Fiscal Stabilization Funding (SFSF).
 - To be eligible for second-round SFSF, states must have a plan for meeting 33 specific data and reporting requirements.
- States must not have any legal barriers to linking student achievement data to teachers/principals for the purposes of evaluation.



One Absolute Priority:

- States must have a coherent and comprehensive plan for addressing four reform areas:
 - High-quality standards and assessments.
 - Data systems that support instruction.
 - Effective teachers and principals.
 - Support for struggling schools.



Certain Selection Criteria Allow States to Earn Points

- ☑ States earn points based upon their ability to meet 19 selection criteria.
- ☑ Two types of selection criteria:
 - **Preconditions (9).** States earn points if they have met these criteria. Intended to reward states for past accomplishments in key reform areas.
 - **Plan (10).** States earn points based on the quality of their plans for meeting certain performance targets over the next few years. Intended to provide incentives for states to improve in key reform areas.

Race to the Top Selection Criteria by Reform Area	
Reform Area/Criterion	Type of Criteria
High-Quality Standards and Assessments	
Develop and adopt common standards	Precondition
Develop and implement common assessments	Precondition
Support transition to enhanced standards and assessments	Plan
Data Systems That Support Instruction	
Intend to implement a statewide longitudinal data system that includes elements of the America COMPETES Act	Precondition
Have a plan to ensure access to and use of state data	Plan
Have a plan to use data to improve instruction	Plan
Effective Teachers and Principals	
Provide alternative pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	Precondition
Differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	Plan
Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	Plan
Report the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	Plan
Provide effective support to teachers and principals	Plan
Support for Struggling Schools	
Intervene in lowest-performing schools and districts	Precondition
Increase supply of high-quality charter schools	Precondition
Turn around struggling schools	Plan
Other	
Demonstrate significant progress in each reform area	Precondition
Make education funding a priority	Precondition
Enlist statewide support and commitment	Precondition
Raise achievement and close gaps	Plan
Build strong statewide capacity to implement, scale, and sustain proposed plans	Plan



Major Issues for Consideration During RTTT Special Session

Making California as Competitive as Possible	
Criterion	Cost?^a
Legislation Likely to Be Needed (1):	
Have no firewall between student and teacher data	None
Legislation Could Make California More Competitive (16):	
Have coherent, comprehensive plan for addressing four reform areas	Minor
Develop and adopt common standards	Minor
Develop and implement common assessments	Minor
Support transition to enhanced standards and assessments	Minor
Intend to implement a statewide longitudinal data system that includes elements of America COMPETES Act	Minor
Have a plan to ensure access to and use of state data	Minor
Have a plan to use data to improve instruction	Minor
Provide alternative pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	Moderate
Differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	Minor
Report the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	Minor
Provide effective support to teachers and principals	Major
Intervene in lowest-performing schools and districts	Moderate
Increase supply of high-quality charter schools	None
Turn around struggling schools	Major
Place special emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and math	Moderate
Expand data systems	Minor
Enhance P-20 coordination	Minor
No Legislation Likely to Be Needed (9):	
Receive second-round State Fiscal Stabilization funding	None
Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	None
Demonstrate significant progress	None
Make education funding a priority	None
Raise achievement and close gaps	None
Enlist statewide support and commitment	None
Build strong statewide capacity to implement, scale, and sustain proposed plans	None
Facilitate school-level decision making	None
^a None = existing funding likely to cover cost. Minor = likely less than \$10 million annually. Moderate = between \$10 million and \$100 million annually. Major = more than \$100 million annually.	



State to Partner With School Districts

- ☒ School districts to partner with the state in developing RTTT proposal.
- ☒ State/districts to develop holistic plans that address each of the four reform areas.
- ☒ State/districts to think creatively and broadly—view RTTT funding as seed money to institute major program change.