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Race to the Top Phase III

Grant Management Manual for LEAs and BOCES

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Colorado's Race to the Top Grant

Colorado's $17.9 million Race to the Top grant, disbursed over four years, is focused on four major areas designed to advance the state's education reforms. The Race to the Top areas of focus are:

1. Leveraging and expanding the state's capacity to support district implementation of the state's reforms;
2. Implementing the Colorado Academic Standards through the work of Content Collaboratives (teams of educators with content and assessment expertise who will develop tools and assessments to assist educators in implementing the new standards and with accessing multiple measures of student learning for use in educator evaluations);
3. Supporting district implementation of the state's educator effectiveness law (S.B. 10-191); and
4. Increasing access to STEM education across the state

Fifty percent of the award is designated for local education agency (LEA) use based on Title I-A share distributions. Awards to the LEAs were non-competitive. However, any LEA agreeing to participate was required to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the state, submit a detailed scope of work and budget, and sign a terms and conditions letter indicating their responsibilities as a subgrantee.

For more information on the Race to the Top grant please see the below resources:

- Colorado's RTTT Website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/RTTT
- US Department of Education's RTTT Website: http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html

Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Role and Responsibilities

CDE acts as the programmatic and fiscal monitoring agent for the Race to the Top subgrantees on behalf of the US Department of Education. CDE views this responsibility as having a larger role in providing LEAs and BOCES with technical assistance and support in implementing the state's reform agenda and disseminating information and knowledge gained through participation in the grant program to other LEAs/BOCES.

CDE will be reporting to the US Department of Education on a monthly and annual basis.

Colorado's RTTT office will stay connected with LEAs/BOCES through e-mail, calls, and visits (as needed) throughout the four year grant cycle, and will use these moments of connection to learn about the challenges and successes each LEA/BOCES is having and share this knowledge with other LEA/BOCES working on the same allowable activities/actions.

Overview of Race to the Top (RTTT) Manual

CDE's intention for the Race to the Top Manual is to give LEAs and BOCES participating in RTTT a clear understanding of the grant's objectives and requirements. The manual includes detailed overviews and descriptions of the following:

- The monitoring structure CDE will be using for LEAs/BOCES participating in RTTT;
- Reporting requirements and support activities;
- Amendment processes; and
- Budget information and instructions to request funds.

Tiered Monitoring System

In order to provide a level of monitoring and support consistent with LEA and BOCES needs, CDE will use a two- tiered monitoring system for all LEA/BOCES. Level One LEA/BOCES will submit their scope of work (SOW) progress updates on an annual basis; no later than July 10 of each year. Level Two LEA/BOCES will submit their scope of work progress updates on a semi-annual basis; no later than July 10 and January 10 of each year. The exception to this schedule is the first report of the grant period. For this report, all LEA/BOCES are expected to submit their scope of work progress update by October 10, 2012.

Colorado's RTTT office determined the tier designation for each LEA/BOCES based on the following criteria:

1. Accreditation Status of the District. For districts pooling funds, the accreditation status of the majority of the districts was taken into account.
2. Amount of Funds Awarded

Below is a graphic representing the tiered structure:

	Accredited with Distinction	Accredited	Accredited with Improvement Plan	Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan	Accredited with Turnaround
$1,000 - $99,999	1	1	1	2	2
$100,000 - $149,999	1	1	1	2	2
$150,000 - $499,999	1	1	2	2	2
$500,000 - $2.4 million	1	1	2	2	2

Some LEAs/BOCES were placed in a different level than indicated using these criteria. In those instances previous experience and planned activities were considered in the final designation of level.

LEA/BOCES will be notified of the tier to which they are assigned via email by Colorado's RTTT office.

Once an LEA/BOCES' funds are expended, they will no longer be required to submit semi-annual updates and will report on an annual basis only. CDE will notify each LEA/BOCES via email to confirm when they qualify for annual reporting.

Scope of Work Progress Update and Annual Reporting (Rev. January 2014)

The scope of work (SOW) progress update is designed to be an easy and streamlined way to gather information for monitoring and support purposes on the activities, progress, and challenges LEAs and BOCES are facing in implementing the RTTT grant. Colorado's RTTT office will also use this update to provide additional technical support to LEAs and BOCES, as well as connect LEAs and BOCES with one another for support and resources.

The SOW progress update is the LEA's/BOCES's RTTT scope of work with an added column for the LEA/BOCES to report progress on each activity. Colorado's RTTT office has created a progress update example based on the example workplan in the SOW template. Please use this example as a guide when filling out your LEA/BOCES progress update and feel free to add as much detail to the "Status of Action" section as you want. These progress updates are meant to be working documents to assist you in the management of your RTTT grant.

The SOW progress update also includes an expenditure update and performance target update. LEAs/BOCES will fill out the Expenditure portion of the "Part 5 - Summary Budget" tab in their SOW document as part of each progress update until all funds are expended. At the end of each fiscal year, subgrantees are required to submit a progress update on their performance targets to CDE. The performance target update has been built into your scope of work document.

Only LEAs and BOCES managing activities/funds will submit progress updates. LEAs that are pooling funds with a BOCES or other districts do **not** have to submit any progress updates.

Scope of Work Progress Updates Deadlines
Progress Updates will be due on semi-annually or annually based on the LEA/BOCES' tier status.

Tier One: October 2012, July 2013, July 2014, July 2015, and December 2015

Tier Two: October 2012, January 2013, July 2013, January 2014, July 2014, January 2015, July 2015, and December 2015.

Scope of Work Progress Update for LEAs/BOCES who have remaining RTTT funds

Colorado's RTTT office will e-mail each LEA/BOCES their SOW which will include added columns for the progress updates. In the same email the RTTT office will inform each LEA/BOCES to which reporting tier they are assigned. You will build off of your last progress update for each new submission. To complete the SOW Progress Updates:

1. Open the SOW (Excel document) sent from RTTT and click on Tab "Part 4a – Progress Update." You will notice the added yellow columns, which signify the progress update portion of the SOW. Some of the future "Status of Action" columns are hidden. For instructions on how to unhide them, please see below.
    a. In addition to reviewing the RTTT Progress Update example*, please read the "Steps for Filling out the Progress Update" section at the top of the SOW before filling out the yellow column.
2. Fill out Part 4a –Progress Update.
    a. "Status of Action" Section
        i. Provide a status update for each action in your SOW. This should include the status on the timelines and budget, along with the overall status of the action.
        ii. If you have any actions for which the timelines have not started, please mark "N/A" for that action.
    b. "Dollars Spent to Date" Column
        i. Provide the dollar amount spent to date on each action.
    c. "Progress to Achieving Performance Targets" Section. This section is only to be filled out annually for your performance target update
        i. State your progress on your performance targets. Please include quantitative data when possible.
3. Fill out Part 5 - Budget Summary
    a. Indicate all expenses for which you have requested reimbursement in each budget line and fiscal year
4. Save your progress update as "LEA Code – Year.Month.Day Document Name". Example: 0000 – 2012.07.10 Progress Update
5. Submit file via Race to the Top's email address (Race ToTheTop@cde.state.co.us) by the due date
    a. In the email's subject line, please write "LEA Code – Race to the Top Progress Update" Example: 0000 – January 2014 – Race to the Top Progress Update

A Scope of Work Progress Update example is located in your scope of work as tab eight (Sample Progress Update) and on Colorado's RTTT's website (http://www.cde.state.co.us/RTTT/LEA_Information.asp).

Hidden Columns in Excel: Colorado's RTTT has hidden the future reporting columns in your SOW, so your excel document isn't overwhelming when you open it. To access these columns, look at the top of your excel sheet where the column letters are located, highlight columns "B" and the next column after it, right click, and choose "unhide." You can use this same process to hide certain columns, too.

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Annual Report for Participating LEAs/BOCEs that have expended their RTTT funds

For the districts and BOCES who have expended all Race to the Top funds, the only reporting requirement will be an Annual Report due July 10th of 2014 and 2015. The Annual Report will consist of an brief overview of the implementation of the Race to the Top initiatives (alignment of standards to curriculum and assessments, educator effectiveness evaluation system, and integration of STEM content) within the district/BOCES.

Requirements of the Annual Report:
- Word or PDF document
- One page minimum - five page maximum*
- Cover page – include "Race to the Top – Annual Report", LEA/BOCES name and code, date, and LEA/BOCES contact person with phone/email
- This narrative is intended to be a broad overview of your progress and plans and should address the following point, at a minimum.
  - Progress on aligning curriculum to Colorado Academic Standards
  - Progress on implementing principal and teacher evaluation systems, including professional practices, measures of student learning, using evaluation to inform professional development, etc.
  - For districts integrating STEM (Allowable Activities 14, 15, and 16), an overview of the progress in implementing STEM activities, programs, classes, instructional practices and/or resources.
  - A description of how your district or BOCES is ensuring these new practices will be implemented with fidelity in the schools
  - Key accomplishments in this work
  - Greatest challenges in this work and how these challenges were addressed
  - Area(s) of focus for the upcoming school year (i.e. professional development opportunities; creating formative assessments for gap areas)

How to submit an annual narrative report:
- Save your annual report as "LEA Code – Year.Month.Day DocumentName". Example: 0000 – 2014.07.10 AnnualReport
- Submit file via Race to the Top's email address (Race ToTheTop@cde.state.co.us) by the due date
  - In the email's subject line, please write "LEA Code – Race to the Top Annual Report"   Example: 0000 – July 2014 – Race to the Top Annual Report

*page limits do not include the cover page

Dissemination of Feedback/Information via Calls, Emails, and Site Visits

CDE's goal is to ensure that each LEA/BOCES is successful in achieving its desired goals and outcomes as described in its scope of work. To achieve this goal, Colorado's RTTT office will schedule phone calls with each LEA and BOCES twice a year to discuss progress towards stated activities, goals, and outcomes in their scopes of work. Colorado's RTTT office will also provide written feedback via email on all submitted reports within 30 days of submission at which time CDE will indicate if a follow-up phone call or site visit is required.

When possible, Colorado's RTTT office will combine efforts with other CDE units (federal programs, field services, etc.) to conduct joint site visits to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

The purposes of the site visit are to:
- support ongoing quality improvement;
- verify subgrantee accountability for program implementation and management;
- review the progress toward the goals in the scope of work; and
- assure compliance with federal and state RTTT requirements.

For LEA/BOCES managing funds and activities, Colorado's RTTT office will conduct a site visit or phone call to review your SOW and assist in filling out the first progress update between August and October 2012. The Colorado RTTT office will work with the primary contact as indicated on the scope of work to set up these calls or visits and will email the questions that will be asked during the visit/call to the LEA/BOCES at least one week prior to the meeting.

LEA/BOCES Subgrantee Amendment Process (Rev. January 2014)

An LEA/BOCES subgrantee may request a revision to its approved RTTT grant project. LEA/BOCES may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided the following conditions are met:
- Such revisions do not result in the LEA/BOCES' failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions;
- The revisions are aligned with Colorado's RTTT application; and
- The CDE and the LEA/BOCES mutually agree in writing to such revisions.

CDE has sole discretion to determine whether to agree to such revision or modifications.

Circumstances requiring submission of an amendment request:
- **Changes in activities.** An LEA/BOCES must request an amendment for any proposed revision that constitutes a substantial change in activities from the approved grant project, regardless of budgetary impacts. Colorado's RTTT office can help you determine whether the change is substantial. Such changes may include, but are not limited to, changes in goals, activities, timelines, or performance targets.
- **Major budgetary changes.** Budgetary changes include transfers among direct cost categories (i.e. personnel, travel, equipment) and among separately budgeted programs, projects, function, or activities that exceed 10% of the current annual approved budget. In such cases, an LEA/BOCES must request an amendment to its budget. For additional information, please read the "Allowable Budget Revisions" section under Module 2 in the LEA/BOCES RTTT Manual.

What to include in the amendment request:
- **Allowable activity(s) that would be affected by the change.**
- **Description of the requested change.** Include a brief explanation of the original work/activities/budget and a detailed description of the new work/activities/budget being requested. Please include in your explanation the rationale for the proposed change and how it will help the LEA/BOCES meet its goals.
- **Impact statement regarding performance targets.** Explain how this change would affect the LEA/BOCES performance targets, and how the requested change helps the LEA/BOCES meet its goals.
- **Budget documentation.** Include the most recent relevant project-level budget table(s), and indicate with "track changes" the requested changes. Colorado's RTTT team may request additional information, as needed. If the requested change impacts the budget, please determine if the budget must be amended according to the guidelines.
- **Signatures.** For LEAS/BOCES receiving amounts greater than $200,000, the RTTT main contact person identified in the scope of work for the LEA/BOCES and the Superintendent must sign the request. For

LEA/BOCES receiving amounts less than $200,000, only the main contact person needs to sign the request.

When and how to submit an amendment request:
- All requests should be submitted to the Colorado's RTTT office via e-mail.
- Amendment requests must be submitted and approved prior to implementing any changes to grant activities.

Amendment requests can be submitted to Colorado's RTTT office any time during the months of April and October. The RTTT office will make every effort to review and make a determination on submitted amendment requests within fifteen business days. In cases where a decision cannot be made without more information or clarification from the LEA/BOCES, decision timeframes will be adjusted on a case-by-case basis.

Decision to withdraw from RTTT Grant
An LEA/BOCES may decide to withdraw from the RTTT grant project, as long as the terms of the withdrawal are consistent with the termination terms in the MOU signed between the State and the LEA/BOCES and, if applicable, with the SOW.

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LEA/BOCES RTTT Budget

Colorado chose to change its RTTT grant fiscal years to align with the academic year (July-June), which required a shift in the allocation of funds. In order to make sure your reimbursement requests are aligned with your activities by fiscal year, please review your LEA/BOCES budget and make sure that all costs associated with activities are located in the correct fiscal year in the budget included with your scope of work. If you notice funds are located in the wrong fiscal year, please change the budget and email it to Colorado's RTTT office (racetothetop@cde.state.co.us) with a description of what was changed and why. Below are the correct fiscal years that should be used for all LEA/BOCES budgets. Please note that the final fiscal year covers an 18 month period.

RTTT Fiscal Years
> Year 1: December 22, 2011 to June 30, 2012
> Year 2: July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013
> Year 3: July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014
> Year 4: July 1, 2014 to December 22, 2015

Fiscal management requires that the subgrantees expend funds in accordance with their approved scope of work goals, activities and budget as well as comply with federal and state requirements.

Fiscal Responsibilities
- Understand your grant budget and allowable expenditures.
- Use clearly defined fiscal procedures and processes.
- Maintain accurate records of funds received and dispersed.
- Manage revenues and expenses in accord with federal and state requirements.
- Complete required reports accurately and in a timely manner.
  - **Requests for Funds** are to be submitted via email to the RTTT office (racetothetop@cde.state.co.us). The deadline for submitting requests for funds for the previous period is the 10th of each month.

RTTT funds are subject to Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and the reporting requirements associated with Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). Please see your subaward Terms and Conditions letter for all applicable regulations.

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How to fill out Request for Funds document (Rev. January 2014)

To comply with the federal requirements from the US Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) will require **ALL** LEAs (including LEAs that are part of a BOCES or pooling district) to request reimbursement funds via email. The Request for Funds form needs to be emailed to Grants Fiscal by the 10th of each month.

Process for LEAs/BOCES Pooling Funds: For LEAs that are pooling funds, the BOCES or lead district will invoice the districts for their expended amount, the LEA will request funds from CDE, and CDE will send a check directly to the LEA. The LEA is responsible for paying the BOCES or lead district.

1. Open the "RTTT Request for Funds" document in Excel emailed to the LEA or BOCES lead contact for the grant
2. In the highlighted box select your district from the dropdown menu. "Total 4-Year Allocation," "Year-by-Year Funds Available," and "Current Year – Total Funds Available" amounts will be automatically populated.
3. Enter the total expenditures to date. For subsequent requests after your first, enter the previously requested funds for the current year. The "Current Request for Funds" amount will calculate automatically. The "Remaining Funds Available" for the current year will automatically populate.
4. Save your Request for Funds Excel sheet as "LEA Code – Year.Month.Day Document Name". Example: 0000 – 2012.07.10 Request for Funds
5. Print document and have fiscal authority sign the request for funds form
6. Submit the scanned file via Grants Fiscal's email address (GFRFF@cde.state.co.us) by the due date
   a. In the email's subject line, please write "LEA Code – Race to the Top Request for Funds" Example: 0000 – January 2014 – Race to the Top Request for Funds

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Allowable Funds

All costs should align with approved activities in your Scope of Work (SOW). Approval must be granted before funds are expended for activities not listed in your SOW.

An **allowable cost** is:
- Necessary: A cost is necessary if it is required for the proper and efficient performance and administration of the grant. The program goals and objectives can be a helpful lens for determining if the cost is necessary to implement the approved grant.
- Reasonable: A cost is reasonable if it is an amount that a "reasonable person" would expend. Another test would be to assess the market value of comparable goods or general recognition that cost is considered "ordinary and necessary" for performance of the grant.
- Allocable: A cost is allocable in relation to the benefit that particular grant program receives. If a grantee charges 100% of a cost to the grant then the entire (100%) benefit from the expenditure must serve the grant.
- Authorized or not prohibited under state or local laws and regulations

Allowable Budget Revisions: 10%Rule

- Budget revisions include any changes to funding in budget lines.
- Any budget change must remain within the scope and objectives of the grant program.
- Within a fiscal year, budget lines may be revised without prior written approval from Colorado's RTTT office if the cumulative amount of the transfers is less than 10% of the **total** budget during a single fiscal year.
- If the cumulative amount of the transfers is 10% or more, written notification of the budget change, using Colorado's RTTT Amendment form, must be provided to Colorado's RTTT office prior to implementing any changes to grant activities.
- Any budget change must be made no less than 90 days prior to the end of the fiscal year
- Changes are subject to review by Colorado's RTTT office

Carryover of Funds

- Funds should be expended in accordance with the submitted scope of work and budget.
- If necessary, funds may be carried over to complete fiscal responsibilities encumbered at the end of the preceding fiscal year.
- A maximum of 15% of annual budget funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year will be carried forward automatically to the next fiscal year.
- This carry over is automatic and will carry forward funds in existing budget categories/lines.
- If there are remaining funds at the end of the four-year grant period, those funds will be returned to the US Department of Education.

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BOCES-Pooling LEAs Accounting Codes

For LEAs who are pooling funds from the Race to the Top grant (CFDA #84.413/Grant # 4413) with a lead district or BOCES, below is an example on how each party will account for this exchange of funds.

Example:
BOCES invoices LEA for activities arranged/performed by the BOCES.
LEA submits reimbursement request to CDE (via Tracker).
LEA receives reimbursement check from CDE.
LEA reimburses the BOCES for amount invoiced.

LEA/District:	BOCES:
- 4000 source - $ 10,000	- 4951 source - $ 10,000
- 0591 object - $ 10,000	

LEA receives funds from CDE and books Source (4000) then issues payment using Object (0591).

BOCES receives funds from LEA and books Source (4951)

Fund	Location	SRE	Program	Source/ Object	Job	Grant	Amount
LEA:							
22 —	XXX —	XX —	XXXX —	4000 —	XXX —	4413 —	$ 10,000
22 —	XXX —	XX —	XXXX —	0591 —	XXX —	4413 —	$ 10,000
BOCES:							
22 —	XXX —	XX —	XXXX —	4951 —	XXX —	4413 —	$ 10,000

Next Steps: Check List-Timelines

July 10, 2012

- First time to request funds via Tracker for May/June expenditures

August-October 2012

- Colorado's RTTT office conducts phone calls to assist with completing the first progress update and expenditure report and to discuss questions sent to the LEA/BOCES via email at least one week prior to the meeting.

October 10, 2012

- All LEA/BOCES submit progress update via Tracker

January 10, 2013

- Tier 2 LEA/BOCES submit progress update via Tracker

March-June 2013

- Colorado's RTTT office conducts phone calls to touch base with LEA/BOCES about the progress of their RTTT work

July 10, 2013

- All LEA/BOCES submit progress update via Tracker

August-November 2013

- Call with Colorado's s RTTT office to review annual progress update. Specific questions to be addressed during the call will be emailed to the LEA/BOCES at least one week prior to the call.

January 10, 2014

- Tier 2 LEA/BOCES submit progress update via email

March-June 2014

- Colorado's RTTT office conducts phone calls to touch base with LEA/BOCES about the progress of their RTTT work

July 10, 2014

- All LEA/BOCES submit progress update and annual reports via email

August-November 2014

- Call with Colorado's s RTTT office to review annual progress update. Specific questions to be addressed during the call will be emailed to the LEA/BOCES at least one week prior to the call.

January 10, 2015

- Tier 2 LEA/BOCES submit progress update via email

March-June 2014

- Colorado's RTTT office conducts phone calls to touch base with LEA/BOCES about the progress of their RTTT work

July 10, 2015

- All LEA/BOCES submit progress update and annual reports via email

August-November 2015

- Call with Colorado's s RTTT office to review annual progress update. Specific questions to be addressed during the call will be emailed to the LEA/BOCES at least one week prior to the call.

Check out Colorado's RTTT website for additional information, webinars, and materials – http://www.cde.state.co.us/RTTT/

Race to the Top Contact Information

Race to the Top Main Office
Email: racetothetop@cde.state.co.us
Website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/RTTT/
Address: Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax Rm 515, Denver, CO 80203

Race to the Top Director – Tricia Miller
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