

Race To The Top Mini Grant Application Instructions

RIDE is pleased to announce a new round of mini-grants to support the work being completed under our Year 5 Race to the Top (RTTT) no-cost extension. The Rhode Island Race to the Top no-cost extension supports continued development and use of our Rhode Island data systems (Instructional Support System, Educator Performance and Support System, and the Growth Model).

In this document RIDE has provided ideas for possible projects as well as an option to create personalized grant proposals based on LEA needs. Because many schools and districts found the Data Use Professional Development under Race to the Top helpful, RIDE has drafted grant ideas to extend that work. Districts may use these ideas to propose a project they will complete on their own or contract with a vendor/consultant to facilitate the work with your district educators.

Grant awards will be based on the scope of the project and the number of educators involved. Grants may include consultant costs and costs for substitutes or for stipend reimbursement. We expect that grants for individual LEAs will range between \$5,000 and \$50,000. An LEA may also submit a proposal for a consortium of LEAs to work collaboratively. Those proposals may request more than \$50,000 by demonstrating how the partnership will result in a shared body of work benefitting all LEAs. All funds must be obligated by June 15, 2015, and liquidated by September 1, 2015.

Please use this document for further explanation of the grant application. For additional questions, please contact Kate Schulz at kate.schulz@ride.ri.gov or 401-222-8489.

In order to receive a RTTT mini-grant all participating LEAs must:

- Propose a project plan with goals, theory of action, deliverables and audience that includes using data systems (ISS, EPSS, Growth Model and/or RI Interim Assessments) to improve instruction and student achievement in an innovative and sustainable way.
- Demonstrate capacity- both past and future- to carry out the terms of the grant and sustain any work in the future. This includes both fiscal and program responsibilities.
- Report and share results and deliverables to RIDE before payment of last invoice submitted. Report form will be made available to grantees upon award.

General Instructions

- LEAs may apply for multiple projects but must complete a separate application for each project. Each project should stay within recommended funding ranges. RIDE may award one, all or no projects. LEAs may reference directly, through direct quotes or paraphrasing, the grant ideas at the end of this document. Make sure to note certain grant ideas that have limited capacity.
- Applications will be scored using the RTTT mini grant rubric. **Applications that do not meet rubric criteria will not qualify for a grant.**

Section Instructions

1. Information: LEA
 - a. Application is not considered complete until signed by the superintendent or charter school director of the LEA
 - b. Project lead for LEA will be considered primary point of contact for RIDE as well as the primary person accountable for the project.

2. Project Summary (30 points)

- a. Project information that can serve as an executive summary of the project
- b. A narrative to include:
 - i. goals and theory of action
 - ii. complete description of activities
 - iii. audience
 - iv. other relevant information (e.g. needs assessment, how this project connects with prior work, data analyses).

3. Goals and Deliverables Project Plan (30 points)

- a. Plan must include:
 - i. Deliverables with start/end dates for all
 - ii. Persons responsible for each deliverable
 - iii. Description and numbers of project participants
 - iv. Relationship of deliverables to CCSS implementation plan

NOTE: Timeline for goals and deliverables is from grant award to June 15, 2015

4. Demonstrated capacity (30 points)

- a. LEA must show, using concrete examples, their capacity to plan, execute and evaluate the grant project.
- b. LEA must also demonstrate how past projects prove their ability to implement and sustain grant activities over time. This includes, but is not limited to, program and fiscal responsibilities.

5. Budget (10 points)

- a. Must identify a fiscal agent for an LEA cohort (if applicable)
- b. Is considered tentative based on current thinking, may be subject to change based on RIDE feedback
- c. Should include:
 - i. Personnel costs – please include rate/day x # of days x number of people
 - ii. Professional and technical services (e.g.: content area expert, digital media expert) – number of people x number of hours x rate/hr (or per day)
 - iii. Materials
 1. cost may not exceed more than 15% of total grant award
 2. food and beverages and durable goods **are not allowed**. Reasonable meeting costs may be included.

Instructional Support System Overview Grants

These grants may be limited by RIDE facilitator capacity. LEAs may want to consider train-the-trainer model or other methods of scale up. Proposals for overview grants should build-in the following approaches to provide educators with an orientation to all the components of the Instructional Support System, (Data Dashboards including an Early Warning System, Assessment Tools including test construction tool and interim assessments, and a Teacher Resource Library).

Instructional Improvement System Overview Training

1. **Flipped Model:** Educators view online module training on the Instructional Improvement Systems features and functions, giving them a basic understanding of the functionality. Educators then attend a full or half day session of professional development with a RIDE facilitator. Participants can learn in-depth use of reporting, resources or data tools using scenarios and inquiry protocols.
2. **Introductory Model:** Educators attend a two-hour, in person session on the basics of the Instructional improvement system. Attendees will leave the session with an understanding of the system through limited scenarios. No data based inquiry will be possible in this session due to time limitations
3. **Online Model:** Educators view a one-hour module on the Instructional Improvement System to learn basic functionality. This could be combined with other session training, such as data-use

Other Grant Options

1. Data Use for Leadership Teams

District leadership teams work with a coach to evaluate questions and gaps that present the greatest challenges to improved student outcomes. Special focus will be placed on analyzing EPSS data and its impact on teaching and learning.

- 1 Day Off-Site Kick-Off Workshop topics:
 - Assessment of current data practices
 - Defining leadership roles for improvement
 - Leveraging EPSS data for school improvement
 - Goal setting for leadership teams
- 4+ Full-Day On-Site Visits

2. Connecting Data Sources

Teams of educators will meet with a coach to analyze data sources of data that are: 1) most important to school improvement; and 2) leading indicators of student achievement. Educators will be able to identify significant gaps highlighted by these data sources and develop action plans to address them.

- 1 Day Off-Site Kick Off Workshop topics:
 - Exploring data from the Instructional Support System
 - Exploring data from the Educator Performance and Support System
 - Dimensions of Data/Intersection Analysis
 - Connecting Formative Data Practices to Summative Data Sources
 - Aggregated and Dis-aggregated Data: Significance and Limitations
- 4+ Full Day On-Site Visits

3. Getting Results with Action Research

Teams of educators will work with a coach to implement the Sustainability Plans and Action Research Projects developed during the Data Use Professional Development Series. Each school will ensure the Action Research Project is fully implemented and that the supports are in place to continue data-informed instruction. Action Research Project must include using one or more of the Rhode Island data systems (ISS, EPSS, Growth Model and/or RI Interim Assessments).

- 1 Day Off-Site Kick Off Workshop topics:
 - Review/Update Sustainability Plans and Action Research Projects
 - Discover high-Stakes Data Patterns
 - Assess Current State of Data-Informed Instruction
 - Establish timeline and Action Research Goals for the Year
- 4+ Full-Day On-Site Visits

4. Vertical Articulation - CCSS, DOK and Rigor

Vertical teams (PreK-12) work with a coach to examine curricula to find gaps and to develop action plans to increase rigor and address Depth of Knowledge in assessments. Educators will create plans to strengthen the connection to the CCSS and bolster the district's Comprehensive Assessment System. Examination of vertical articulation must include using one or more of the Rhode Island data systems (ISS, EPSS, Growth Model and/or RI Interim Assessments).

- 1 Day Off-Site Kick Off Workshop topics:
 - Assess current state of vertical articulation in the district
 - Examine CCSS shifts
 - Conduct Data Inventory
 - Evaluate District Assessment System
 - Evaluate Rigor and DOK in Curriculum
 - Create Action Plan and Articulate Goals for the Year
- 4+ Full-Day On-Site Visits

5. Expanding Data Use to Support Professionals

A group of support professionals with varied roles explore the Instructional Support System to identify data available. The group will brainstorm ways other support professionals can use the data to meet the needs of students and determine service delivery goals. Professional learning opportunities are provided to other support professionals as a result of this study. This work supports students but can also support the development of strong Student Outcome Objectives (SOOs).

6. Focusing on Gap Closing

Building level or grade level teams from districts use the growth model visualization tool to identify gaps in sub groups. Using this information, they work collaboratively with educators from their own district or with other districts with similar populations, to determine resources and instructional strategies to address student needs. Over the course of the school year, teams begin to implement the identified strategies, monitor success through data collection and by conducting walkthroughs that include feedback to educators.

7. Professional Development Tied to Evaluation Observation Data

School and district leaders will use observation data and professional responsibilities data from EPSS to determine if there are any trends across larger numbers of staff, within certain grade levels or content

areas. This team may also review student data from the Instructional Support System, Growth Model Visualization tool and other sources to identify student learning needs and effective instructional strategies that would support those needs. An alignment of the broad instructional needs with the teacher practice rubric used in the district will be reviewed. Utilizing this data, focused and differentiated professional learning for staff can be created and implemented.

8. Calibrating SLOs with Multiple Data Sources

School and district leaders will use student information for the Instructional Support System, Growth Model Visualization tool (if applicable) other local assessments and Student Learning Objective (SLO) Results from the past two years. The team will review student results from all 3 sources and conduct an SLO audit (RIDE can provide a protocol) to better understand the quality of objective statements, targets and results. The SLO audit also assists leaders in understanding the level of alignment among student assessment evidence sources as well as understanding potential gaps and future needs for students and their teachers. As a follow up to the data analysis, teams will calibrate their understanding around high quality SLOs and could use this information as part of their comprehensive assessment system design. Professional development plans may also be created that are designed to address trends or needs identified in the data study.

9. Leadership Series

Central office staff along with building principals will form cohorts to analyze school-wide data together using the EPSS, Growth Model Visualization Tool, and the Instructional Support System. After analyzing the data groups of building administrators and central office staff will convene with a facilitator to discuss trends across the school and district and plan ways to address those trends. Building Administrators will have an opportunity to meet to discuss and plan using a PLC format to support each other. Ongoing analysis of data throughout the school year will be a focus of the group.

10. Early Warning System and Graduation Readiness

The data systems make it easier for educators to follow students closely to ensure that all students are making academic progress each year. Educators may want to use the Early Warning System and other data systems to identify a cohort of students to follow closely to ensure that they have the supports needed for them to attend school regularly, engage productively with peers and teachers, and demonstrate that they are learning what is most critical to their courses. This project may focus on the cohort of students who will be part of the graduating class of 2020 so that the school and district can learn how students' progress should be monitored in order to ensure that achievement gaps are not widening and that the focus is on teaching and learning rather than remediation at the end of high school.

11. LEA Designed Proposals

Proposals may be offered that address data use beyond the examples previously described. They should be created by the LEA and based on individual needs or strengths. Any application from this category **MUST** use the Instructional Improvement System, Educator Performance Support System, the Growth Model or RI Interim Assessments.