

**Florida Department of Education
Race to the Top
Frequently Asked Questions**

General

1. Who signs the Final Scope of Work? (9/3/10)

The superintendent signs the grant paperwork (Attachment I – Program-Specific Assurances and Form DOE 100-A) as is the protocol for all grants. Additionally, there is a signature page (Attachment II – Three-Party Assurances) for the superintendent, school board chair, and local teachers’ union representative to sign acknowledging “... that this Scope of Work is consistent with the MOU submitted by the LEA as part of the RTTT grant application and agree to use their best efforts to negotiate any terms and conditions in any applicable collective bargaining agreement necessary for its full implementation.” All three signatures to this statement are not required, but strongly encouraged.

2. When is the Final Scope of Work due? (9/9/10)

If feedback and an opportunity to revise are desired, it is due October 13, 2010 (by 11:59 PM EDT). Early submissions are encouraged to maximize feedback opportunities. The FLDOE will approve or return for feedback by October 27, and any revisions are due back by November 9. Submissions are acceptable between October 14-November 9, but no feedback or revision opportunities will be possible: FLDOE has to make final approvals and submit to USDOE by November 22.

3. Which documents are due? (9/3/10)

- Form DOE 100A – Project Application (superintendent signature required)
- Attachment I – Program-Specific Assurances (superintendent signature required)
- Attachment II – Three-Party Assurances (superintendent, school board chair, and representative of local teachers’ union signatures encouraged)
- Form DOE 101-RTTT (Budget submitted in web-based system)
- Final Scope of Work:**
 - Table of Contents
 - Section A Narrative
 - Form (A)1. *LEA Student Goals and Measures*
 - Work Plan Tables for 13 Projects
 - Appendix with Table of Contents (optional)

4. Is school board approval required before submission on October 13? (9/27/10)

The only required signature on the grant paperwork is the superintendent’s; however, USDOE will be reviewing these plans and is paying attention to the local support for plans in Florida, since there are not laws to require some of the work of RTTT. So

signature of the school board, union, and superintendent on the Three-Party Assurances form is important. If a superintendent wants to take the entire Final Scope of Work for board approval, they have the flexibility to do it before the Oct. 13 deadline or before Nov. 9 deadline.

5. How should the Final Scope of Work be submitted? (9/3/10)

A signed, electronic copy in PDF format (excluding budget) must be sent to RaceToTheTop@fldoe.org. The budget must be completed in the web-based system. A hard copy with original signatures (excluding budget) must be sent to Holly Edenfield, 325 West Gaines Street, Room 1502, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399. The hard copy must be received by October 15, 2010.

6. If an LEA submits a Final Scope of Work for RTTT, begins the action plan and then, for whatever reason, is not able to proceed with full implementation, what will happen? (9/9/10)

If a Final Scope of Work is not approved by the Department, an LEA is no longer obligated. An LEA with an approved Final Scope of Work that can not proceed with full implementation, for whatever reason, would not be required to repay funds for any period it was eligible to participate and was performing in compliance with its approved plan.

7. Must each Participating LEA implement all of RTTT at all schools or only in the persistently lowest-achieving schools? (9/9/10)

Unless otherwise indicated in the MOU, all timelines shall reflect a complete implementation for all schools before the end of the grant period.

8. In the Work Plan Tables, if an item in the Timeline is pre-populated with an “X” in the 2nd quarter of 2010-2011 should the LEA assume that it should be implementing that item *before* the Scope of Work is submitted and approved by FLDOE and USDOE? (9/9/10)

A prepopulated X means that is when the Deliverable should be delivered. In the case of an X for the 2nd quarter of 2010-11 (September-December 2010), the expectation is that planning should already be underway and the deliverable will be met during this quarter.

9. If multiple LEAs form a coalition and plan to submit identical Final Scope of Work does each LEA have to submit an individual Final Scope of Work or can the coalition submit one Final Scope of Work for all LEAs involved? (9/20/10)

Each LEA must submit a Final Scope of Work, but members of a coalition can submit identical plans. Note in the narrative which LEAs are part of your coalition and if there are any differences in your plan compared to other LEAs in the coalition.

10. With the window open for feedback from DOE does the entire application have to be submitted for feedback, or can individual sections be submitted for review as they are completed? (9/20/10)

The Department can provide feedback on individual sections submitted independently before October 13, but a complete application should be submitted by October 13 for official review and approval or additional feedback.

11. How should Race to the Top reforms be phased-in over the four-year grant period? (9/20/10)

As stated in the Final Scope of Work template, unless otherwise indicated in the MOU, all proposed timelines are meant to signal **complete implementation for all schools** before the end of the grant period. While each LEA will make somewhat different decisions, it is our expectation that activities will be phased in steadily over the four-year period. There are a couple of specific dates in the MOU to which we want to draw your attention. Specifically, section (D)(2)(ii) reads: “Implementation of the requirements for the LEA evaluation systems beginning in the **2011-12 school year** applies, at a minimum, to teachers in grades and subjects for which student growth measures have been developed...”. The LEA Final Scope of Work, Work Plan Table for Project (D)(2)(i)(ii)(iii) indicates this deliverable: “A completed teacher appraisal system that reflects the inclusion of an implementation process for each of the content and design requirements listed in s. 1012.34, F.S., and in the MOU...”. This minimum required evidence is due May 1, 2011.

12. The Final Scope of Work Projects are numbered differently than the MOU. Please explain. (9/24/10)

Florida’s MOU was numbered to correspond to sections of the grant application required by USDOE (letters and numbers in parentheses) and FLDOE used bullets under each to indicate what would be required. Those bullets have now been changed to numbers or lowercase letters **not** in parentheses for easier reference, for example (B)(3)4. and (D)(2)(iv)(b)1.a.

13. Is each assurance area providing sample Work Plan Tables for all Projects? (9/24/10)

FLDOE was hesitant to provide more than one for each assurance area so as not to be overly prescriptive. Please continue to ask the Department questions and seek feedback on your ideas.

14. Should the point of contact for each Project (as indicated on the Work Plan Tables) be the same person for all 13 Projects? (9/24/10)

Each contact box can be different and should list the person most closely associated with implementation of that project.

Budget

1. How were LEA allocations derived? (9/3/10)

USDOE directed state applicants to use the 2009-10 Title I allocation as the basis for the RTTT LEA allocations. Amounts listed are for the four-year period.

2. When will money be released to LEAs? (9/3/10)

An appropriate portion (based on the submitted and approved budget) will be released immediately upon FLDOE approval of the project application/Final Scope of Work. Awards are expected to be made in mid to late November.

3. Are LEAs required to spread funding over multiple years? (9/3/10)

Funding will be spread across all four years of the grant. The LEA will determine how much to expend in each year.

4. Are pre-award costs allowed? (9/3/10)

Yes. Identify in your budget costs that are anticipated to be charged as pre-award costs to the grant.

5. Is there a cap on administrative costs? (9/9/10)

No; however, LEAs are encouraged to keep administrative costs to a minimum.

6. How much may Participating LEAs budget for indirect costs? (9/9/10)

Budget should reflect the district's current approved indirect cost rate to be adjusted annually consistent with the changes to the rate as approved by the Department of Education.

7. Is there a maximum and/or recommended percentage that can be dedicated to Personnel costs? (9/9/10)

No. The amount budgeted for personnel should be allocable, reasonable, necessary, and allowable consistent with the Work Plan Tables.

8. If funds are received and expended this year and district can't reach negotiated agreement, must the funds be returned? (9/13/10)

The Department will review budgets submitted and LEAs won't be asked to refund money in pursuit of approved work plans.

9. What if quarterly budgets are not met or are exceeded? (9/13/10)

They can be carried over and the Department will work closely with LEAs on the amendment process.

10. How will LEAs receive money from the state's 50% of the budget? (9/13/10)

All LEAs will benefit from the projects and tools developed from the state's money. There are also several competitive opportunities for participating LEAs only.

11. How will LEAs report on deliverables if not in narrative form? (9/13/10)

The Department will monitor deliverables through regular contact and expenditure reports.

12. Are RTTT funds 100% ARRA funds that are fully awarded as S project, or are they split between A and S projects like the School Improvement Grant funds? (9/13/10)

RTTT funds are 100% ARRA and are not split.

13. If any participating LEAs do not submit a Final Scope of Work, or do not receive approval, is their allocation divided up amongst remaining participating districts? (9/13/10)

USDOE has not provided final guidance on this.

14. Will budget reporting be quarterly for all four years of the grant? (9/13/10)

Yes.

15. Does the LEA have responsibility for charter school participating, including oversight and monitoring? (9/13/10)

Yes.

16. Do funds flow to participating charter schools through their participating LEA? (9/13/10)

Yes.

17. If newly approved charter schools participate in later years of the grant, how do LEAs forecast this in their budget? (9/13/10)

The Department will work with LEAs on necessary amendments.

18. When will Florida's total grant award be confirmed? (9/13/10)

This should come any day as all RTTT funds must be obligated by September 30, 2010.

19. If an LEA is assigning additional duties to a staff person, can RTTT dollars support a percentage of that person's salary? (9/27/10)

Yes; however, that individual will need to keep time and effort records to document the appropriateness of the percentages.

20. If RTTT activities are funded from other sources, will they be audited through RTTT? (9/27/10)

Funding will be audited/monitored in the program from which it is paid (e.g., Title I, etc.). All RTTT activities, regardless of funding source, will be monitored.

21. Is supplanting prohibited? (9/27/10)

There is not a supplanting prohibition associated with RTTT; however, since these funds are to be used for educational reform purposes, LEAs should not use them for basic or ongoing operational costs. USDOE reviewers will question budget items which do not appear to be consistent with the intent of the grant.

22. What is expectation of "at a minimum" for administrative costs? (9/27/10)

Any administrative expenses should be well justified and the price tag reasonable for the work that the LEA is planning to do.

23. Do LEAs need to budget for an overall evaluation? (9/27/10)

DOE will be conducting extensive evaluation of the overall grant, particularly the Great Teachers and Leaders area, as well as formative and summative evaluation of the state's implementation. There may be some of the strategies where LEAs might want independent evaluators but it is not required.

Section (B): Standards & Assessments

1. What is the definition of lesson study? Do all LEAs have to do lesson study? (9/3/10)

Lesson study is a form of long-term professional development in which a small group of teachers systematically and collaboratively conduct research on teaching and learning in classrooms. A lesson study cycle generally involves a group of teachers collaboratively

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planning lessons based upon research, implementing the lesson in a classroom, collecting data by observing others teach the lesson, collecting student assessment and observation data, reflecting upon and discussing the data, examining quality of student work, and developing a record of their activity to improve their practice and seek new solutions.

The MOU criterion (B)(3)1. requires modification of school schedules for at least one lesson study for persistently lowest-achieving schools per month. This should translate to every teacher participating in a lesson study meeting with their peers (subject area or grade level) each month during the regular school year for the life of the grant and hopefully, beyond.

The MOU criterion (B)(3)2. states that professional development programs in all schools will “employ formative assessment and the principles of lesson study.”

Additional Resources:

http://flbsi.org/pdf/Lesson%20Study%20TAG_Final.pdf (Differentiated Accountability Manual)

<http://www.tc.edu/lessonstudy/>

<http://www2.edc.org/lessonstudy/>

2. Does the additional STEM career and technical program have to be implemented in one of the persistently lowest-achieving schools? (9/13/10)

No, unless the LEA chooses this option under Project (E)(2)3. Implementing a new program as a part of (E)(2)3. would satisfy the requirement of (B)(3)4.

3. What qualifies a STEM career and technical program to meet the requirements of (B)(3)4.? (9/13/10)

It must result in an industry certification, be STEM related, include a course with 50% of Algebra I, Geometry, or Biology benchmarks, so that a student who completes that course could participate in EOC and potentially earn dual credit. If an LEA would like to propose others than those listed at www.fldoe.org/arra/racetothetop/stem.asp please contact the Department.

4. Does the increase in advanced STEM coursework have to be offered in the persistently lowest-achieving schools? (9/13/10)

No; however, districts should carefully consider the needs of these schools and how STEM coursework might be beneficial. As a reminder, Senate Bill 4 requires every high school beginning in 2011-12 to offer an IB or AICE program, or four AP or dual enrollment courses in English, math, science, and social studies. Persistently lowest-achieving high schools that do not already meet this new statewide requirement could use RTTT funds to meet the RTTT requirement and, in part, the Senate Bill 4 requirement.

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5. Will the State be developing all of the formative and summative instruments that are required under RTTT? Or will LEAs need to develop or purchase additional measures? (9/9/10)

The state will develop formative assessments for K-3 mathematics and K-8 reading. Resources will be provided (items and technology) for all interim assessments in core academics and Spanish. There are no additional summative tests being developed by FLDOE; however, the interim assessment resources can be used by districts for this purpose. FLDOE will work with districts in this effort. There will be a team dedicated to this support.

6. Will FCAT 2.0, addressing the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, be aligned to the formative measures being developed which are to address the Common Core State Standards? (9/9/10)

No. The plan is to develop formative items for the Common Core to support teachers as they begin instruction with the Common Core in 2013-14.

7. Is the state aligning the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards to Common Core State Standards? (9/9/10)

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics will stop being used beginning 2013-1014 and teachers should use the Common Core for instruction and assessment from that point forward.

8. Will the "implementation of the requirements for the LEA evaluation system...at a minimum...to teachers in grades...for which student growth measures have been developed" include the FAAR for ESE students? (9/13/10)

Yes, this would include FAAR for ESE students with significant cognitive disabilities who participate in FAAR as stated in their IEP.

9. If an LEA implements lesson study through Project (B)(3)1., is it required for all grade levels and all content areas in all schools? (9/15/10)

Project (B)(3)1. is required only for persistently lowest-achieving schools and optional for other schools. If the school is a middle or high school, then lesson study should be conducted by content area. If the school is an elementary school, then lesson study should be conducted by grade level.

10. To meet the requirement of (B)(3)4., does FLDOE have a preference that the additional career and technical program be in a persistently lowest-achieving school? (9/15/10)

Yes, that seems the most strategic application of these resources.

11. When will lesson study toolkits be available? (9/15/10)

They will be available next year for K-3 math aligned with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Toolkits aligned with Common Core State Standards will be available in Year 4. These toolkits will be a good model for LEAs interested in doing more with lesson study.

12. For district-developed student assessments for instructional effectiveness, is there a mechanism for LEAs to collaborate and share those assessments? (9/15/10)

The RFP could be structured to allow sharing and perhaps have a repository of items. FLDOE is committed to working with LEAs to ensure there is not redundancy or wasting of resources. How this happens will be discussed through the respective implementation committee.

13. What is the difference between interim assessments and formative assessments? (9/15/10)

Formative assessment is an informal collection of information between teachers and students that informs instruction; it is the work that good teachers do all the time. It includes structured activities that provide feedback on students' knowledge of the standards and guides teachers on what to do with the information they glean. Interim assessments are designed to be given periodically, like FAIR. Data is aggregated and compared across classrooms and can indicate potential performance on summative assessments. Also please see the definitions that are provided in the definitions document.

14. Are LEAs expected to mirror the large fiscal commitment to Standards & Assessments in their budgeting? (9/15/10)

No. The state's portion of the funds are being used to assist districts with resources that will benefit all districts and achieve some economy of scale.

15. If an LEA wants to use their allocation to develop local summative assessments, where should this be reported on the Work Plan Tables? (9/15/10)

If these assessments will be used for teacher evaluation, they should be included in the Work Plan Table for (D)(2).

16. If all schools in an LEA already meet the advanced coursework requirement of (B)(3)5., can RTTT money be used to expand into middle schools or to underrepresented high school populations? (9/24/10)

It is acceptable to provide greater access to underrepresented high school populations which should include more course availability, keeping in mind new SB 4

signature of the school board, union, and superintendent on the Three-Party Assurances form is important. If a superintendent wants to take the entire Final Scope of Work for board approval, they have the flexibility to do it before the Oct. 13 deadline or before Nov. 9 deadline.

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It is acceptable to provide greater access to underrepresented high school populations which should include more course availability, keeping in mind new SB 4

requirements. The only acceptable expansion into middle schools would be for high school credit-earning AP, IB, and AICE programs.

17. If an LEA without any persistently lowest-achieving schools is already implementing lesson study or wants to expand lesson in their schools, what is required? (9/24/10)

It would be advisable that the LEA includes in their narrative that they already implement Lesson Study. This is a research-based practice and would improve the quality of your Scope of Work. If any LEA plans to use RTTT funds to implement lesson study as described in Project (B)(3)1., completion of the Work Plan Table for (B)(3)1. is required. Otherwise, Project (D)(5) on professional development is appropriate.

18. With LEAs competing to develop hard-to-measure content areas, how will validity and reliability be ensured? (9/15/10)

The implementation committee on district-developed assessments will define expectations of the work for these partnerships and LEAs. The outcome would be optional but available for all LEAs. The state would not want to invest in any work we didn't believe had a plan in place to ensure that outcomes are valid, fair, and reliable.

19. How should LEAs go about providing professional development for the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that are not implemented until year 4, while teaching to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS)? (9/15/10)

Similar to preparing teachers for the NGSSS, LEAs should develop a plan that addresses how teachers will be prepared to teach the CCSS four years from now. This might start with information pieces about the CCSS and the timeline for implementation, then as implementation nears provide examples of CCSS for lesson study and comparisons of the differences between the NGSSS and CCSS. At least a year prior to full implementation, provide training on tools for teachers to prepare them for implementation of the CCSS.

20. Will CTE items will be a part of test item bank? (9/15/10)

FLDOE will look into this.

21. What is FLDOE doing to assist districts with (B)(3)6.? (9/15/10)

Two Instructional Technology consultants will be hired to make sure all RTTT tools are talking to each other.

22. Will LEA technology directors be involved in the implementation committee for district-developed student assessments for instructional effectiveness? (9/15/10)

Yes. They will be important in all three Standards & Assessments implementation committees and in other assurance area committees as well. Information will be available at www.fldoe.org/arra/racetohtop.asp.

23. Can an LEA budget for interim assessment items in years 1 or 2 (before the state item bank is available in year 3)? (9/15/10)

Yes.

24. Which approved CTE courses are equivalent to Algebra I for purposes of taking the end-of-course exam (EOC)? (9/15/10)

CTE courses are not “equivalent” to Algebra I or Geometry or Biology but each of the approved programs has at least one course that includes at least 50% of the standards in this course. Thus, a student who is successful in the CTE course has the opportunity to take the related EOC and possibly earn their core course credit as well.

25. Can a CTE Stem Academy that opened in 2010/2011 qualify for Project (B)(3)4. so long as it meets all other requirements? (9/20/10)

Yes.

26. If an LEA does not have any persistently lowest-achieving schools and does not submit Project (B)(3)1., but rolls its lesson study and formative assessment needs into Project (D)(5) on professional development, do they have to implement lesson study once per month as required in (B)(3)1.? (9/20/10)

No.

27. Is it possible for DOE to put together a checklist of assessments that will be developed so that the state and LEAs don't duplicate efforts or expense? (9/24/10)

The state is prohibited from using RTTT to develop summative assessments, so the existing list of assessments (FCAT, EOC, FAIR) and others such as SAT, ACT, career/technical tests, are the only statewide assessments. However, the DOE will try to assist districts in collaborative planning to avoid duplication of effort.

Additionally, through RTTT the state will provide:

- Mathematics K-3 and Reading K-8 Formative Assessments
- Items/bank for reading, mathematics, social studies, science, and Spanish available for interim assessments and teacher-level student growth measures. This resource is available for district(s) to build assessments such as grade 6 science.

We also will have a team of content specialists for core academic areas that will assist in some of the collaborative work of districts.

28. If an LEA already meets Senate Bill 4 requirements, must they still show an increase of courses offered during RTTT, or can they submit documentation to show they meet SB 4 requirements? (9/27/10)

For RTTT, the LEA is required to provide documentation of an increase in accelerated course offerings and student enrollment even if the district already meets SB 4 requirements for 2011-2012.

Section (C): Data Systems to Support Instruction

1. For (C)(2), who is expected to have single sign-on access? (9/15/10)

The Department will provide single sign-on access to its data and applications through an integration with LEAs. LEA users including teachers, superintendents, and other LEA staff as appropriate will have access. The state applications that will be made available include the following:

- Teacher Standards Instructional Tool – Web-based access to standards information, course details, and standards-aligned instructional resources [refer to (B)(3)]
- K-12 Interim Assessment System for Reading – K-12 computer-based interim assessment system for reading [refer to (B)(3)]
- FACTS.org – online college and career advising tool for students and parents
- Interim Assessment Item Banks and Test Platform – computer-based system to include item/task banking, test builder, fixed form or adaptive test-delivery; and computer or paper-based functionality [refer to (B)(3)]
- eIPEP – Web-based collection and analysis of candidate and completer performance data from educator preparation institutions [refer to (D)(4)]
- FloridaSchoolLeaders.org – Web-based interactive tools and resources for teacher and principal leadership development [refer to (D)(5)]

LEAs are expected to provide Local Instructional Improvement Systems that are also accessible by students and parents.

2. For (C)(2), the sample Work Plan Table seems simple. Are you expecting this high-level approach for all LEAs? (9/15/10)

The number and type of additional/optional deliverables will vary by LEA based on their current technology environment and resources. LEAs with current technical capabilities able to integrate with the department to provide single sign-on access to state data and applications will have fewer optional deliverables.

- 3. For (C)(2), Deliverable 1.b. requires a report on the number of each type of staff accessing state resources via single sign-on. Is this report for those accessing the LEA data system or the state's data system? (9/15/10)**

The report is of LEA staff accessing state resources via single sign-on. The department currently provides two applications and confidential data to a selection of LEAs using single sign-on; however, not all of the staff use the resources. The report based on 2009-10 is intended to establish a baseline to measure success and for reporting back to the USDOE.

- 4. For (C)(3), what elements are included in a Local Instructional Improvement System? (9/15/10)**

The Department will work with the Data Implementation Committees to establish the minimum standards or elements of a Local Instructional Improvement System in year one of the grant.

- 5. For (C)(3), what is the expected time commitment to respond to technology surveys and prepare reports? (9/15/10)**

The Department does not anticipate the need for a full-time resource to respond to technology surveys or prepare reports.

- 6. For (C)(3), what should be included in the baseline report on Local Instructional Improvement Systems in place in 2009-10? If an LEA has multiple systems, should they all be included in the report? (9/15/10)**

Yes, they should all be included in the report.

- 29. For (C)(2), Deliverable 1.a. requires the number of each type of staff in the district and indicates that FLDOE will provide a template. When will the template be available? (9/27/10)**

This template will be posted online in October.

- 30. For (C)(3)(i), what is the difference between the RTTT initiative and the (LIIS) Instructional Improvement System project being completed by CELT? (9/27/10)**

The project with CELT was kicked off with focus group meetings in Ft. Lauderdale, Orlando, and Tallahassee in July, before Florida was notified of winning RTTT. The efforts of the CELT project and RTTT have now been combined to deliver the results stated in Florida's RTTT application.

- 31. For (C)(3)(i), will CELT or FLDOE provide a LIIS for the districts as defined in RTTT? (9/27/10)**

Through RTTT, FLDOE will define the minimum standards for a LIIS. LEAs will then compare the systems they have in place to these standards to determine if their systems meet or exceed those standards and make changes as needed.

32. Are LEAs required to create a local portal?

No, LEAs are not required to create a local portal as a condition of RTTT. FLDOE will create a portal to centralize access to state resources including data, reports, and applications (as listed in RTTT).

Section (D): Great Teachers and Leaders

1. Is using a model for evaluating teachers that uses terminology other than “effective” and “highly effective” permissible? (9/3/10)

If other terminology is used, the LEA must identify which category(ies) would be equated to "effective" and "highly effective," since all LEAs will be reporting using the terms in the grant.

2. If an LEA’s current evaluation system includes a student goal-setting process currently, will that meet the requirement to include one additional metric (in addition to the principal’s evaluation and the student performance component) as part of the multi- metric system required by the MOU? (9/13/10)

Yes.

3. Will there be specific guidance from the state on evaluating the impact of Professional Development? (9/13/10)

The state has set aside funding to provide expert consultant services to the state and to LEAs in evaluating professional development. Those services will start in year 2.

4. At what point do collective bargaining agreements need to be ratified by the teachers’ union? (9/13/10)

Collective bargaining will continue throughout the grant. As stated in the September 7th webinar, each LEA is expected to include a timetable in its Final Scope of Work for the issues that will need bargaining and when those issues will be dealt with and finalized throughout the grant period. One of the required deliverables for section (D)(3) is annual submission of the district’s collective bargaining agreement. Changes to the agreement to meet grant requirements would be expected to be shown based on the district’s established timetable.

5. When will a growth model be available? (9/13/10)

We expect to have a growth model(s) for FCAT-related grades and subjects before the end of the school year. Work on example growth models and guidelines for developing

growth models in areas not included in FCAT will become available during year 2. FCAT models will be examined after a year of use based upon district feedback and data analysis to determine whether adjustments to the model need to be made.

6. Would it be acceptable to use a performance pay model that allows teachers to opt-in (particularly existing/experienced teachers)? (9/13/10)

Yes. The grant requires initiatives, including performance pay, to be rolled out LEA-wide by the end of the grant period (except those initiatives specified only for the schools in the lowest 5%), so that reforms take hold. So, a performance pay plan has to be designed so that it will permeate enough of the district teaching staff so that it actually becomes the LEA's primary pay system; however, it does not preclude allowing certain teachers the ability to opt in to a performance pay plan. The example provided in the question of allowing experienced teachers the choice to opt in to the new pay system is a good example, because it illustrates this point, and because a well-designed opt-in model could be a mechanism for an LEA to work the new pay system into its budget to support sustainability.

7. Can the 50% student performance part of the evaluation be calculated to include a team concept? For example-

- **50% Student growth (individual teacher)**
- **5% District learning gains**
- **5% Team/Department learning gains**
- **5% School learning gains**
- **35% Principal evaluation**

Can these percents vary as long as they meet the minimum requirement of 40/10 or 35/15?

Fifty percent of the teacher's or principal's evaluation is attributed to their individual performance (including the required breakdown of 35/15 and 40/10 as described in the MOU and in the question above). The remainder of the evaluation, yes, may certainly include school, team or other student performance indicators in which the teacher or principal participates. The district should be sure that the individual can have some influence in the outcome of any indicator selected for inclusion in the evaluation system. The example provided in the question is an acceptable example.

8. Does an LEA's plan have to address district-level administrators' salary as well? (9/13/10)

The MOU only addresses district administrators relative to their performance evaluations and their accountability for their responsibilities relative to personnel evaluations and human capital decisions. It does not address their salaries.

9. What scores will 3rd grade students' FCAT scores be compared to for purposes of teacher evaluation, since it is the first grade that takes the FCAT? (9/15/10)

This topic will be considered in the implementation committees for the student growth and district-developed student assessments for instructional effectiveness.

10. Must LEAs address merit pay for district-level administrators in their work plans? (9/15/10)

No, only school principals.

11. Does the May 1, 2011, deadline for the district to submit a teacher evaluation plans take into consideration time for feedback from DOE on whether the plan is approvable, or will that come after May 1? (9/15/10)

Feedback will come after May 1, 2011.

12. For (D)(5) and the Deliverable “implementing the new elements into the professional development system,” what is the definition of “new elements” and what should be included? How specific do the items need to be described/defined? (9/15/10)

There is a checklist attached to the last page of the (D)(5) template that summarizes the list of professional development content and initiatives from all sections of the RTTT grant. This should be a guideline for LEAs of the areas that need to be addressed in their professional development systems by the end of the grant.

13. In the (D)(1) Work Plan Table, second Deliverable, does the term “principal leadership candidates” refer to the Educational Leadership (level 1) Program or does it refer to the Human Resource Management Development (level 2 program) for School Principals? (9/27/10)

The reference is to the level 2 program.

14. Can “highly effective” teachers be defined as something more than simply being certified in the subject taught? (9/27/10)

Highly effective is not the same thing as highly qualified. The entire application addresses teacher effectiveness without ever mentioning highly qualified status.

15. Can “milestone events” be defined an LEA? Will they differ by LEA? (9/27/10)

Yes, they are set by the LEA and will look different from one to another; however, it should be apparent that before an LEA places someone in a greater position of academic responsibility or gives them the next level of reward, effectiveness needs to be considered.

16. What does the fifth deliverable for Work Plan Table (D)(3) mean: “Submit documentation of the accountability process for administrators to ...”? (9/27/10)

There may be different processes among LEAs in how this is accomplished. In general, there should be school board-adopted policies that administrators must follow as well as checks and balances to see that they are followed, and consequences if not followed.

Issues to think about may include by what method do administrators know what is expected of them, know how they are to accomplish it, know how compliance is monitored, and know what consequences may follow for non-compliance.

17. When will the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices be revised?

The Florida Educator Accomplished Practices are currently under review. The most current draft will be posted to the DOE website October 1 and will be available for public comment through October 18. Recommendations will then be sent to the Commissioner for anticipated adoption by the State Board of Education at its December 2010 meeting.

18. Please provide guidance for LEA planning on Section (D)(2)(i), Measuring Student Growth, and (D)(2)(ii), Implementing Improved Evaluation Systems. (9/27/10)

Teacher Evaluations under Race to the Top (RTTT)

- Once fully implemented, a *minimum* of 80% of teachers in all participating districts must have “qualifying” annual evaluations, which are those that include the required elements *as described in the RTTT RFP and further clarified in the Phase II MOU*, in order to meet the state level goals for (D)(2) and (D)(3) in the state’s RTTT application. Required elements for a qualifying evaluation include (paraphrased):
 - Student assessments that are based on next generation or common core (per timeline) standards, and that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms;
 - A fair and accurate method of measuring student growth; and
 - A core of effective practices (the *Florida Educator Accomplished Practices* – this applies to all teachers).
- To be included in the 80% of teachers with a qualifying evaluation for a school/district, the teacher does need to receive an evaluation with all required elements; however, all required elements may not be present in the evaluation for every course, class period, or subject area that s/he teaches.

For example, a teacher may teach 8th grade Language Arts, for which student growth is assessed using FCAT and measured using the state’s value-added calculation, 5 periods per day. This teacher also teaches a drama class 1 period per day, for which the district has an assessment, but has not determined a student growth measure by the end of the grant. Once the district implements the evaluation system for this teacher in all classes based on the *Accomplished Practices*, and for the Language Arts classes using the results of state assessments and student growth measures, then this teacher will be reported as a teacher with a “qualifying” evaluation system under RTTT.

Student Assessments Used for Measuring Student Growth

- Participating schools and districts should identify what percent of classroom teachers are or will be covered by existing assessments (FCAT, state EOCs, AP, IB, , acceptable district EOCs, etc.).
- DOE is providing a list of tests that are given in the state, including those for career/tech certification.
- DOE is providing a list of courses ranked by enrollment numbers with those that encompass approximately 80% of students as a proxy for 80% of classroom teachers.
- As districts/LEAs prepare plans and budgets,
 - Consider such costs as:
 1. Staff to assist with additional assessments.
 2. Paper, printing and associated costs
 3. Resources for committee meetings, teacher work groups, etc.
 4. Scanners, scan sheets, or resources for these services
 - Consider that each district should plan to exceed the state goal of 80% of teachers to ensure that this goal is achieved by the end of the grant period.

From the Technical Assistance Call: (D)(2)

**19. When will teacher and principal evaluation results be reported to the state?
(9/24/10)**

Currently, LEAs report evaluation results through the student and staff survey (Survey 5). There is a new principal survey reported through Survey 2 this year and it will include results from principals for last year. At end of the 2010-11 school year ALL results will be reported in Survey 5.

**20. As the Community of Practice networks develop and implement new policies, how often will LEAs be able to meet with the state-provided consultants?
(9/24/10)**

The Community of Practice networks will engage as LEAs send teams to discuss issues with all participating LEAs. The consultants will be on the ground working in your LEAs. Phone and computer access and onsite visits will be routine. Consultants should be ready to work with LEAs by January 2011.

21. What is the definition of a milestone event that would require two evaluations per year for a teacher? (9/24/10)

There are examples in the MOU like promotion from teacher to coach, or the issuance of a professional services contract. Some LEAs already do multiple evaluations throughout the school year.

**22. For teachers receiving two evaluations per year, can one be an observation?
(9/24/10)**

The purpose of this component of RTTT is to make evaluations helpful and to get away from, for example, one twenty-minute observation each year. There must be at least two decision points per year about teachers requiring two evaluations. Information considered in those decisions may include observations; parent, student and/or peer feedback; reviews of student performance data; or other measures of teacher performance determined by the LEA.

23. How broad is the definition of teacher and principal? (9/24/10)

For purposes of RTTT, references to teachers means classroom teachers of all subjects. Principals means the school-wide principal (not assistant principals or deans).

24. Will state law be changed to extend the timeline for all evaluations of teachers for reappointment to beyond April 1 as student achievement data is not available then? The time period to advise teachers of their deficiencies is six weeks before end of grading period. (9/24/10)

This is an ongoing concern, but RTTT may help with opportunities to look at student performance more than once per year. The timeline in statute is decision making, and the Department will keep this in mind moving forward.

25. Where does the MOU requirement to tie LEA-level staff evaluations to student achievement fit in the Work Plan Tables? (9/24/10)

(D)(2) or (D)(3) Deliverables could include documentation of this deliverable. Their evaluation system will need to change, but the Department is not reviewing this part of the system at this time and it is not due May 1, 2011, as the revised teacher evaluation system is. The LEA will need to include in its work plan the deliverable that will be used to document that this has occurred and when this will take place. Examples include employment manuals, school board minutes, and evaluation procedures manual showing the requirement.

26. Is the Department offering metrics for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and vocational centers? (9/24/10)

The Department will be looking at ways to measure student growth for subjects other than those with statewide assessments. The Department will provide guidelines for development of student growth models in other subjects and grades by Year 2 of the grant along with some example models. In addition, ESE teachers and career and technical area teachers will be represented on the Department's Student Growth Implementation Workgroup.

27. What student achievement data will the Department provide to LEAs? (9/24/10)

The Department will provide student achievement data for statewide assessments and data on each teacher by course for statewide value added modeling. Additional details

about state level student data to assist LEAs will be determined through the work of the Student Growth Implementation Workgroup and the RTTT grant.

From the Technical Assistance Call: (D)(3)

28. Some LEAs currently have a LEA-level staffing plan designed for the school level. Do the (D)(3) requirements mean that the plan must now include details related to teacher performance and how many teachers with certain performance levels are assigned to specific schools? Are we expected to review teacher performance data when making assignments to schools? (9/24/10)

This is a very good example of what is expected. The information must document how these decisions are made at the local level, including what data are reviewed to make these decisions. Timelines related to collective bargaining and contracts need to be reviewed. Each participating LEA will be reporting to the state their effective and highly effective teachers and principals, and these data will be reported at the state level by school type to the USDOE in fulfillment of RTTT grant reporting requirements.

29. How will considerations be made for teachers' performance if that performance changes when they are transferred to a school with different demographics? (9/24/10)

Value added models, which the state is pursuing as a better measure of student growth, are designed to account for variables that can affect student performance, and therefore learning growth. The variables (for example, student characteristics) that will be included in Florida's value added model have not been pre-determined. This is the work that will be done through the RTTT grant with the Student Growth Implementation Workgroup and expert contracted services.

In addition to the student growth results coming from the use of a value added model, a LEA will be implementing "multi-metric" evaluations for its teachers. So, the final result of a teacher's effectiveness rating will include many factors.

30. How can new salary schedules be sustained after the grant? (9/24/10)

Florida has a history with bonus programs that reward performance and other things. Florida's RTTT application focuses on a redesign of the salary schedule. It is not advised that LEAs use grant funds to provide bonuses, except in situations where the LEA is transitioning to a new schedule or to jump-start a new program until the LEA's regular budget can sustain the program afterward. The Department will provide example salary schedules that are sustainable.

From the Technical Assistance Call: (D)(5)

31. If there are things that are required in the grant that the LEA is already doing, will the LEA just include documentation of those activities in its Scope of Work? (9/24/10)

Yes. Note in the narrative of each project, where applicable, and attach in the appendix.

32. If an LEA's professional development system has more than just a classroom focus (i.e., noninstructional personnel training), can just the professional development components that relate to classrooms and student outcomes be evaluated? (9/24/10)

Yes.

33. When will the Lesson Study Toolkits be available? (9/24/10)

FCR-STEM has built Lesson Study Toolkits in K-3 mathematics. FLDOE is working to have those available on the Standards Database in early 2011. Other areas that focus on the Common Core State Standards will not be available until Year 4 (K-8 reading, mathematics and reading data). LEAs may use their RTTT funds to support local efforts in these areas.

34. On page 39 of the Final Scope of Work template, what does FLDOE see as enhancements to the data collection for professional development? (9/24/10)

Right now FLDOE gets limited information, such as number of hours, subject area and method of evaluation. We are working on enhancing the data reporting systems to be able to collect and share information on effective professional development, including contextual information, so that other LEAs and schools may determine the feasibility of that professional development in their locations.

35. On page 42 of the Final Scope of Work template in the item related to Common Core State Standards (CCSS), emphasis was made on a planned rollout strategy. Will FLDOE be helping LEAs by providing a state-level rollout schedule? (9/24/10)

There were federal funds that provided information on the math/science standards. The next round of funding will focus on professional development for the NGSSS in science and the CCSS in math and will be available for LEAs as well. FLDOE is using RTTT funds to develop teacher tools for multiple subject areas that will be available statewide (see question 27).

36. Regarding the checklist on page 42 of the Final Scope of Work Template, how will all of these elements be incorporated into the Final Scope of Work? Is the LEA expected to have the protocol language in its professional development system? (9/24/10)

Most LEAs' professional development systems use language similar to that in Protocol Standards. All areas of professional development must be addressed within the four-year grant timeline.

37. Items on slide 25 of the Great Teachers and Leaders technical assistance presentation for beginning, first- and second-year teachers are very expensive to incorporate. Please address. (9/24/10)

DOE will have some examples of existing systems that include these components, and we will be sharing what other LEAs are doing through the Community of Practice. Studies do show the cost effectiveness of investments in support in the early years of a teacher's career reduce the amount of funds spent on hiring new teachers.

38. Will DOE still support Classroom Walkthroughs? Are there other systems that DOE will support? (9/24/10)

FLDOE support continues for Classroom Walkthroughs, and in fact, there is a new version of the look-fors that is aligned to the Differentiated Accountability instructional review process. RTTT, however, does not limit LEAs to one statewide system or observation instrument to use in teacher evaluations.

Section (E): Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

1. What is a persistently lowest-achieving school and where is the list found? (9/3/10)

A persistently lowest-achieving school is one of the 71 Title I or Title I-eligible schools identified in Florida's application. They are sometimes referred to as the "lowest 5%." Some elements of the MOU are applicable only for LEAs with a school on this list. See Tables E1-5 and E1-6 of Florida's application appendix (pages 263-265) at www.fldoe.org/arra/racetothetop.asp for the list of schools.

2. Which Projects (Work Plan Tables) are applicable only to LEAs with a persistently lowest-achieving school? (9/3/10)

- Expand Lesson Study – (B)(3)1.
- Drive Improvement in Persistently Low-Achieving Schools – (E)(2)1.-2.
- Implement Proven Programs for School Improvement – (E)(2)3.

The following Work Plan Tables also involve Section (E), and are required for all districts:

- Use Data Effectively for Human Capital Decisions – (D)(2)(iv)(b)(c)(d), (D)(3), and (E)(2)4.-5.

- Focus Effective Professional Development – (D)(5), (B)(3)2.-3., (C)(3)(ii)1. and 2., (D)(2)(iv)(a), (D)(3)(ii)2., and, if applicable, Leadership Academy in (E)

3. Are the School Improvement Grant funds referenced in this section the 1003g funds? (9/3/10)

Yes.

4. For Project (E)(2)3. of the scope of work (Implement Proven Programs for School Improvement), what constitutes evidence and proof? (9/24/10)

These are research-based/evidence-based (must be supported through measurable means/documentation) programs that have been demonstrated to have had a substantive impact on student performance outcomes as demonstrated by:

- Successful school turnaround
- Improvement in AYP subgroup attainment in areas of Reading, Writing, Math and Science
- Improved letter grade or comparable accountability measure
- Increased graduation rate

Section (F): Charter Schools

1. Must all charter schools in a Participating LEA be included in implementation? (9/3/10)

They are not obligated to participate but must be allowed if they are interested and committed. See Guidance for Charter School Participation document.

2. Is it appropriate to plan to treat charter schools like traditional public schools during the planning phase of the development of the LEA Final Scope of Work (involving charter schools to the same level as all other public schools)? (9/3/10)

Charter schools should be involved to the same degree as all other public schools. However, there may need to be more interaction with charter schools based on the fact that they have more flexibility to determine whether or not to participate in RTTT and, in some areas, whether to be included within the A Final Scope of Work or development a plan of their own. On issues for which charter schools are able to develop their own plan, they may only do so provided that it meets the requirements of the MOU. For example, a charter school or group of charter schools may choose to develop their own teacher evaluation and compensation system separate from the LEA’s collectively bargained plan. However, that plan must still meet the requirements set forth in the MOU in order for the charter school or group of charter schools to participate in RTTT.

3. Is it appropriate to give charter schools the option to opt in to the plan when it is submitted to FLDOE in October, and give charter schools the two weeks while FLDOE is reviewing the plan to make a decision? (9/3/10)

Yes, that scenario is acceptable. Charter schools should be included in the development of the draft plan as well so that they have a clear understanding of the responsibilities and benefits of participation in the grant before making a decision.

4. Do charter schools have the option to opt-in to only certain sections of the LEA RTTT plan or must they agree to fully participate or not participate at all? (9/3/10)

Charter schools that choose to participate must still meet all appropriate requirements of the MOU as referenced in the guidance provided for the participation of charter schools in RTTT. There are certain areas such as principal and teacher evaluation and compensation and data systems where a charter school must be given the option of developing their own plans; however, these plans must meet the requirements of the MOU. The LEA will be responsible to make sure that the charter school agrees to comply with RTTT requirements and to monitor that compliance throughout the grant.

5. Do charter schools receive the same level of dollars and services as traditional public schools within the plan, or can they access the dollars instead of the services even if traditional public schools are only provided services not dollars? (9/3/10)

Charter schools that choose to participate must be allowed to equitably benefit from funds and services provided through RTTT. It is not a requirement that charter schools must receive funds rather than services. The determination of whether funds or services should be provided to the charter school will depend on the particular RTTT program or initiative being proposed.

6. If an LEA doesn't have any charter schools at the time of Final Scope of Work submission, but has charter school applications pending, can those schools participate in RTTT if it is their desire? (9/9/10)

Yes.

7. Will charter school activities be integrated into the LEA Final Scope of Work or must they submit a separate Scope of Work? (9/9/10)

Charter schools may be integrated into any or all of the LEA Final Scope of Work if they choose to participate. The LEA should work with its charter schools to help them to determine what areas they will participate in for the LEA's Scope and in what areas they will develop an acceptable plan of their own. In any case, the charter school must be able to show how it is meeting each portion of the MOU as noted in the Guidance for Charter School Participation document.

8. If there are no charter schools on the persistently lowest-achieving schools list, must an LEA budget for charter schools? (9/9/10)

Charter schools would not be included in the LEA's Section E portion of its plan. However, they should be included, if they choose to participate, in the remainder of the LEA's plan as provided by the guidance for charter school participation.

9. Must the LEA allocate funds directly to participating charter schools? If so, what are the guidelines for the allocation? (9/9/10)

There is no requirement to allocate funds directly to the charter schools; however, charter schools should be included as appropriate in the Final Scope of work and the needs of the charter schools taken into consideration in the development of the budget.

10. Can a charter school whose educational leader does not meet the requisite educational leadership participate in the grant (no requirement for Charter School Principal to hold a Master's Degree, etc.)? (9/13/10)

Yes. Charter school leaders must follow the requirements of the MOU if the school wishes to participate in the grant.

11. If charter schools sign on, must they use district-developed documents and procedures, or can they develop their own and include them as separate deliverables? If they can develop their own do they then access the grant to develop them? (9/13/10)

Charter schools can develop their own documents and procedures if they so choose, provided that those documents and procedures comply with the MOU. If districts are free to access the grant for the development of such documents and procedures then charter schools are free to do so as well.

12. What are "other innovative schools"? (9/13/10)

See p. 3 of USDOE Definitions: Innovative, autonomous public schools means open enrollment public schools that, in return for increased accountability for student achievement (as defined by USDOE), have the flexibility and authority to define their instructional models and associated curriculum; select and replace staff; implement new structures and formats for the school day or year; and control their budgets.

13. Do charter schools have the option to opt in or out once, or annually? (9/13/10)

Existing charter schools must opt in at the start in order to participate. If they later are unwilling or unable to meet the requirements of the MOU they would be unable to continue under the grant.

14. If a charter school can opt out during the period of RTTT funds, what are the school's obligations to deliverables, data and sustainability? (9/13/10)

Charter schools should be treated by their sponsor in the same way as LEAs are treated by the state. Charter schools with an approved plan or scope of work that can not proceed with full implementation, for whatever reason, would not be required to repay funds for any period it was eligible to participate and was performing in compliance with its approved plan. See FAQ General #5.

15. Is the competitive money for charter schools in addition to the LEA RTTT allocations? May a charter school apply individually and even if they are not in a participating LEA? (9/13/10)

This is part of the state-level competitive grant that any entity with a product or service that benefits a sufficient group of charter schools is eligible to apply for as long as the product or service aligns with one or more of the four assurances. The amount is \$10 million over the four years of the grant and it may or may not be distributed equally over those four years. The \$10 million grant is part of the state's funding and is separate from the issue of charter schools' participation in the district's RTTT plan.

A charter school, a school district, or any other entity or individual with a product or service that meets the above-referenced requirements may apply for this grant at the appropriate time.

Any charter school may benefit from the products and services funded by the state's \$10 million grant, but they will only be able to receive a share of the LEA RTTT allocation and/or services if their LEA sponsors have chosen to participate and have an approved Final Scope of Work.

16. For the MOU requirement (B)(3)6., must LEAs allocate funds to charter schools to ensure the charter schools have the technology, hardware, connectivity to provide teachers and student access to tools for instruction and computer-based assessment? (9/13/10)

Charter schools must be provided with a commensurate share of what is spent by the district to make sure its schools meet this requirement. If that is not sufficient to cover the cost of providing the necessary infrastructure then the charter school would be responsible for covering the remaining costs in order to participate.

24. Does the LEA have responsibility for charter school participating, including oversight and monitoring? (9/13/10)

Yes.

25. Do funds flow to participating charter schools through their participating LEA? (9/13/10)

Yes.

26. How should LEAs include their participating charter schools' Final Scope of Work information when submitted to FLDOE? (9/15/10)

Districts do not need to include the specifics of the charter schools' plans within their Final Scope of Work submission to the Department. They do need to include evidence of the efforts that have been made to include charter schools in RTTT and which schools have and have not chosen to participate.

27. If a charter school chooses not to use LEA resources, for example, the Local Instructional Improvement System (LIIS), does the LEA have to then give them funds to pay for them to have their own LIIS as well as the applicable professional development? (9/15/10)

The grant requires charter schools to receive a commensurate share of funds or services under the grant. If that amount does not cover the cost of the LIIS, the charter school would need provide the necessary funding to pay for the LIIS in order to be eligible to participate.

28. The Sample Work Plan Table for (F)(2) requires a budget in Quarter 1 listing commensurate amounts allocated to charter schools. To which year does Quarter 1 refer? (9/20/10)

LEAs must provide a budget with their Final Scope of Work, beginning September 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010 (first “quarter” of the RTTT grant period) or Year 1. However, we expect there to be amendments over the course of the grant and the Department will work with LEAs on those amendments whether they affect charter school participation or some other area of the grant. A charter school must opt in prior to the deadline for when an LEA submits their Final Scope of Work, unless they are a newly chartered school. The Department is looking for a budget that shows the effort of the LEA to fairly include charter schools.

29. Do charter schools have to determine if they want to participate with their LEA on things where they have the option to do their own, like teacher evaluation systems and LIIS, by the November 9 Final Scope of Work deadline, or can they make decisions once they see what the LEAs will provide? (9/20/10)

Charter schools should be given the same flexibility as LEAs in this regard. The charter school should indicate an initial choice of whether to participate with their LEA in any specific area or whether to develop their own plan. This decision will enable LEAs to propose an appropriate budget as part of its application to the Department (no later than November 9). However, once the specifics of a teacher evaluation system or LIIS are available, the charter school must make its final choice and stick to that choice.

30. If a charter school does its own teacher and principal evaluation system, how does that affect an LEA's Final Scope of Work and evaluation systems? (9/20/10)

Charter schools (or a group of charter schools) that want to develop their own evaluation and compensation systems need to provide their proposed systems to their LEA and the LEA will review for purposes of the grant. The Department is required to report the number of teachers and principals that are effective and highly effective. If a charter school's system does not use these exact rating categories, they must indicate what the equivalent categories are.

31. What are the competitive grant opportunities related to charter schools? (9/20/10)

There is \$20 million available to partner with national charter school funding organizations with a track record of funding high quality operators to start charter schools in the neighborhoods of the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools. The funding organizations would recruit operators to take on this challenge. There is also \$10 million available for entities with a product or service that benefits charter schools and aligns with one or more of four RTTT assurance areas.

32. As charter schools are deciding to opt in or out, to what extent will charters who opt out be required to comply with state level mandates? (9/20/10)

Some things are already required in statute and some may be in future statutes, but unless otherwise required there are no additional mandates for a charter school that opts out.

33. For (B)(3)6. is there a standard for sufficient technology? (9/20/10)

A certification tool for schools that offer Algebra I was recently sent to all LEAs with charter schools pre-populated. The LEA has to fill in several items and then opens up the tool for all schools to fill out their part. If you offer Algebra I, you should hear from your LEA on the certification. If not, contact them. The LEA is ultimately responsible to affirm that they have looked at all schools' data and agrees with the findings.

34. If a charter school has what they need already in terms of sufficient technology, could they still be eligible for RTTT funds to supplement technology? (9/20/10)

Yes, but RTTT funds must be used only for grant-related items. Charter schools in need of technology upgrades may be given priority to receive a pro rata share of the LEA's technology budget, but LEAs should treat their charter schools as equitably as possible in terms of funds and services available under the grant.

35. What safeguards are in place to ensure that LEAs treat charters equitably, especially with respect to technology? (9/20/10)

The Department will review each LEA Final Scope of Work with this lens.

36. When will state publish requirements for LIIS? (9/20/10)

In Year 1 prior June 1, 2011.

37. Can charter schools access state data downloads? (9/20/10)

The LEA would have an LIIS with access to pertinent data. If a charter school has their own LIIS, the Department would work with them on access to pertinent data.

38. Can an LEA submit with their Final Scope of Work submission a list of charter schools that have signed a non-binding agreement to participate and then update their submission with a binding list by the November 9 deadline? (9/20/10)

Yes.

39. (D)(2)(ii) states that charter schools must be allowed to collaborate in the development of the teacher evaluation system. Since this is a bargained item per most counties' collective bargaining agreements and charter schools are not part of the bargaining agreements or bargaining unit, how should LEAs address this disconnect? (9/20/10)

Charters that wish to use the LEA's evaluation system should be included in any pre-collective bargaining discussions regarding the development of the system. If they are unhappy with the results of collective bargaining they must be ready to implement a system that complies.

40. Do conversion charter schools whose employees fall under the bargaining unit of the LEA also need to fully participate in the entire RTTT initiative? (9/24/10)

The conversion charter school may opt in or out of RTTT regardless of the collective bargaining agreement. However, conversion charter school employees that are members of the collective bargaining unit would be bound by the collective bargaining agreement regardless of whether the conversion charter school chose to participate in RTTT or not.

41. If charter schools do not handle their fiscal reporting in a timely fashion, will it delay the LEA's access to its other funding under Race to the Top? (9/24/10)

Any such situation would be handled on a case by case basis. Should a charter school have difficulty with fiscal reporting, staff from the FLDOE would provide technical assistance to both the LEA and the school to remedy the situation before instituting any delay in funding.

42. If an LEA submits a budget that includes additional compensation for teachers that are effective and highly effective, must the charter school receive those same compensation amounts? (9/24/10)

Charter schools must receive an equitable share of the budget (in the form of products and services if they join the LEA's plan in a given area and in the form of funds if they develop their own plan in a given area) in all MOU areas that require participation by charter schools in order to participate in the overall grant. For information as to what those areas are please see the Guidance for Charter School Participation document found at www.fldoe.org/arra/racetothetop.asp. The charter school's funding is a share of the dollars provided to the LEA that the school will use to execute the school's plan based upon full participation in RTTT (as approved by the LEA).