



# INVESTING IN INNOVATION (i3): A RURAL SCHOOL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE INITIATIVE

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# Discussion Overview

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- What is i3?
- What is the Rural School Technical Assistance Initiative?
- How can we leverage the i3 initiative for long-term school improvement and partnerships?

# i3 Is One Part of Unprecedented Federal Direct Investment in Education

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ARRA K-12 Investment  
Aligned with Four Assurances

Formula  
Grants  
\$26B

SFSF  
\$48.6B

## Race To The Top and Other Grants (\$9.7B)

- **\$4.35B** - Race to the Top Fund, including \$350MM for development of assessments for Common Core State Standards
- **\$3.5B\*** - School Improvement Grants
- **\$650MM** - Investing in Innovation Fund
- **\$650MM** – Education Technology
- **\$300MM\*** - Teacher Incentive Fund
- **\$250MM** - Statewide Data Systems

\* Includes regular FY 09 appropriations

# Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund Summary

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## Purpose

To provide competitive grants to applicants with a record of improving student achievement, in order to expand the implementation of, and investment in, innovative practices that are demonstrated to have an impact on:

- Improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, decreasing dropout rates
- Increasing college enrollment and completion rates

# Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund Summary

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## Funding

\$650 million to be obligated by September 30, 2010

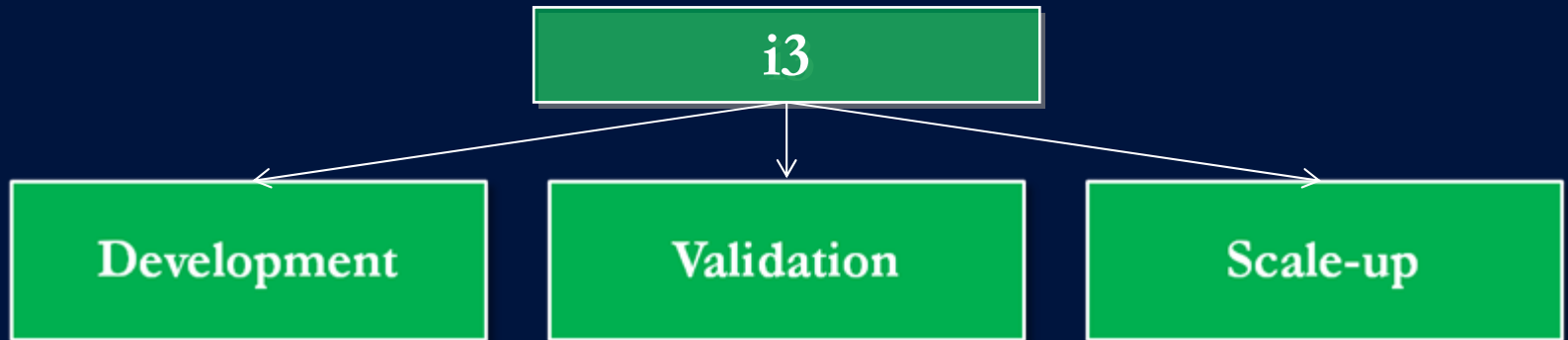
## Applicants

Eligible applicants are:

- (1) Local education agencies (LEAs)
- (2) Nonprofit organizations in partnership with
  - (a) one or more LEAs or
  - (b) a consortium of schools

# Types of Awards Available

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<b><i>Estimated Funding Available</i></b>	Up to \$5MM/award	Up to \$30MM/award	Up to \$50MM/award
<b><i>Evidence Required</i></b>	Reasonable – research findings or theories, including related ones in education or other sectors	Moderate – either high internal validity and medium external validity, or vice versa	Strong – both high internal validity and high external validity
<b><i>Scaling Required</i></b>	Able to further develop and scale	Able to be scaled to the regional or state level	Able to be scaled to the national, regional, or state level

# Key Term

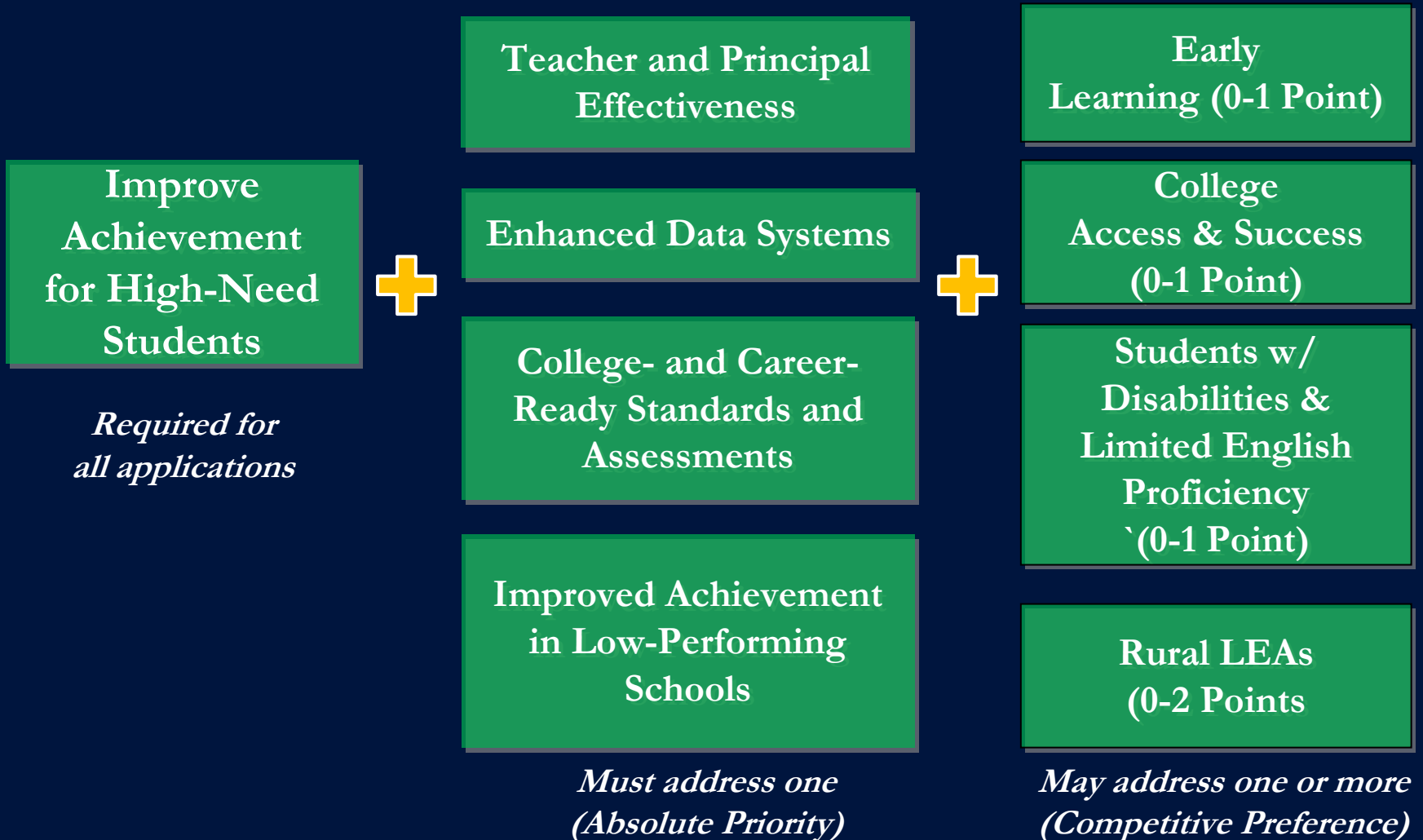
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## Priorities

The areas of focus to which an applicant must apply. These include absolute priorities, which the applicant must address, and competitive preference priorities, which the applicant may address to improve the quality of an application.

# i3 Priorities

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# Eligibility Requirements: LEAs

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- Address needs of high-needs students
- Address an absolute priority
- Demonstrate that it:
  - Closed achievement gap or improved achievement for all groups of students AND
  - Achieved significant improvement in other areas
- Establish partnership with private sector match
- Secure commitment for required private match (dollars or in-kind)
- Application must meet the evidence requirement for that type of grant

# Eligibility Requirements: Non-Profits

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**In partnership with LEAs or a consortium of schools...**

- Address needs of high-need students
- Address one absolute priority
- Demonstrate that the non-profit organization has a record of improving student achievement, attainment, or retention
- Secure commitment for required private sector match
- Meet the evidence requirement for the type of grant for which they have applied

# Evaluation Requirements: All Grantees

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- Conduct an independent program evaluation
- Cooperate with technical assistance provided by the Department and its contractor
- Share broadly the results of any evaluation (and data sets for Validation and Scale-up)

# Major Changes in Final Regulations

## Evidence Requirement Added

- Added an eligibility requirement that clearly states that an application for a Scale-up grant must be supported by strong evidence, an application for a Validation grant must be supported by moderate evidence, and an application for a Development grant must be supported by a reasonable hypothesis
- An application will not, no matter what score it receives in the peer review, be funded if it does not meet all relevant eligibility requirements including meeting the evidence standard

## Matching Requirement Modified

- Matching requirement will remain at 20% for all grant types, but the match need not be secured at the time of application
- Applications across all three grant types that are the highest rated following peer review will be asked by the Department to demonstrate that they have secured their 20% match before any grant is obligated, and given time to secure this match
- In-kind contributions and existing funds from the private sector that can be re-purposed for i3 efforts may count towards the matching requirement

## Awards to Lead Applicants Capped

- No more than \$55MM or two applications of any lead applicant will be awarded i3 grants
- In the instance where an applicant is recommended for more than \$55M or two i3 grants, we will reach out to the applicant and the applicant will decide which applications they would like to have funded

# Major Changes in Final Regulations

## Requirement Added That Evaluation Data Be Made Available

- Added a requirement that data from the evaluations of Scale-up and Validation projects must be made available to third party researchers
- To support the sharing of data with third parties, the Department will work with grantees to set up procedures to make data available to other researchers while safeguarding privacy

## Definitions Aligned to Race to the Top

- Aligned our definitions to those articulated in RTT
- Note that under Absolute Priority 4, i3 does not limit the possible schools in which to focus reform efforts to those deemed persistently low performing (as defined in SIG/RTT), nor limit the possible interventions to the four articulated in SIG/RTT - turnaround, restart, closure or transformation

## Definitions Added to Help Differentiate Partners

- Added the terms official partner and other partner to differentiate between those partners who may receive sub-grants and are considered part of the eligible applicant (official partners) from those who may not receive sub-grants and are not considered part of the eligible applicant (other partners).

## Application Process Streamlined

- Eliminated the pre-application initially proposed for the Development grants
- All applicants will now work against a common timeline

# i3 Selection Criteria and Points

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Selection Criteria	Development	Validation	Scale-Up
A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design	25	20	15
B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect and Magnitude of Effect	10*	15	20
C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant	25	20	15
D. Quality of the Project Evaluation	15*	15	15
E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale or to Further Develop and Bring to Scale	5	10	15
F. Sustainability	10	10	10
G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel	10	10	10
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Development grants will be judged in two tiers: all eligible applications will be scored on Criteria A, C, E, F, and G and the competitive preference priorities; then high-scoring applications will be scored on Criteria B and D by a different panel of reviewers. Note: These slides are intended as guidance only. Please refer to the official notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria in the *Federal Register*. The criteria may apply differently to different levels of grants.

# Important i3 Dates

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<u>Event</u>	<u>Date (<i>Anticipated</i>)</u>
Notice in <i>Federal Register</i>	<i>March 12, 2010</i>
Letter of Intent to Apply	<i>April 1, 2010</i>
Federal TA Workshops	
- Denver	<i>March 24, 2010</i>
- Atlanta	<i>March 30, 2010</i>
Applications Due	<i>May 11, 2010</i>
Application Review	<i>Late Spring/ Summer 2010</i>
Awards Announced	<i>September 2010</i>

# Other Important Resources

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## Investing in Innovation Fund Website:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>

- Notice of Final Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and Selection Criteria
- Application Package (includes the Notice Inviting Applications)
  - Eligibility Checklists
- Frequently Asked Questions
  - Evidence Summary Table
  - Selection Criteria Summary Table
- i3 Overview (power point)
- i3 At-A-Glance (quick reference)
- Call for Peer Reviewers:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/peerreviewers.html>

Open Innovation Portal: <https://innovation.ed.gov>

*All questions about i3 may be sent to [i3@ed.gov](mailto:i3@ed.gov)*

Note: These slides are intended as guidance only. Please refer to the official notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria in the *Federal Register*.



# i3 TA Initiative: Potential Funding Pool

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- For Successful i3 Applicants
  - Establish guidelines for re-granting match funds
  - Manage the re-granting process
  - Evaluate the project against specific criteria
  - Manage grant process beyond i3 (if funds are available)

# Rural Trust i3 Initiative: Outreach

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- To Rural Districts and Regions
  - Targeted low-resourced, high needs districts
  - Rural 900
  - Experience and capacity in select places
  - Networks
  - Web-based outreach and webinars
  - Face-to-face cluster meetings

# Technical Assistance

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- Capacity-Building
  - Identify innovations that are aligned with specific needs
  - Refine and name home-grown innovations that work
  - Develop i3 grant application

# Beyond i3...?

# Compliance vs. Innovation

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## □ Administration goal:

To transform the Department from a "compliance-driven agency" to an "engine of innovation and education reform"

# Entitlement vs. Competition

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## FY 10 Levels

- Competitive Grants: \$4.2 billion
- Formula Grants: \$20.8 billion
- TOTAL: \$25 billion
- Percent Competitive: 16.8%

## FY 11 Levels

- Competitive Grants: \$7.8 billion
- Formula Grants: \$20.3 billion
- TOTAL: \$28.1 billion
- Percent Competitive: 27.7%

# A Regional Approach

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## Where We Have Partners or Strong Connections

- Ozarks
- Central Appalachia
- Black Belt
- Mississippi River Delta
- Northern Native
- Southwestern Native
- Northern New England
- Borderlands
- Hawaii
- Alaska
- Plains Native
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# Regional Rural Trust Contacts

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- South/Southeast
  - Jereann King Johnson – [jereking@ncol.net](mailto:jereking@ncol.net)
- Northeast, Alaska, Arizona, and Hawaii
  - Margaret MacLean – [margaret.maclean@ruraledu.org](mailto:margaret.maclean@ruraledu.org)
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- All Other Regions
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# Questions and Discussion

# The Rural School & Community Trust

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## Rural School Technical Assistance Initiative