

**APPENDIX D**

**RECRUITING PROTOCOL WITH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR  
(DISTRICTS IN THE SCHOOL TURNAROUND  
MODEL [STM] SAMPLE)**

**RECRUITING PROTOCOL WITH DISTRICT  
ADMINISTRATOR**

**(DISTRICTS IN THE SCHOOL TURNAROUND MODEL  
(STM) SAMPLE)**

**IMPACT EVALUATION OF RACE TO THE TOP AND  
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 180 minutes per interview. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC, 20208.

## RECRUITING PROTOCOL WITH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

### (DISTRICTS IN THE SCHOOL TURNAROUND MODEL (STM) SAMPLE)

#### INTRODUCTION AND REACHING THE PROPER PERSON

*[FOR DISTRICT WITH ONLY SIG SCHOOLS: Use the SIG district application contact as the first point of contact. FOR DISTRICT WITH ONLY RTT-FUNDED STM SCHOOLS THAT USED SIG CRITERIA TO DETERMINE RTT FUNDS ALLOCATION: Use the RTT district application contact as the first point of contact. FOR DISTRICT WITH SIG SCHOOLS AND RTT-FUNDED STM SCHOOLS, start with the SIG district application contact and you may need to speak with the RTT district application contact as well. Text that is customized based on whether the district has SIG-funded or RTT-funded STM schools is highlighted in yellow.]*

#### IF YOU REACH THE GATEKEEPER:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education which recently sent a letter about the evaluation it is conducting of the School Improvement Grants and Race to the Top programs. The evaluation will involve all states and selected districts that were awarded grants and is a critical part of your state's and district's participation in this program. May I speak with \_\_\_\_\_ about this evaluation?

*[Before you are transferred, get the gatekeeper's name. If contact is not available, ask to leave voicemail on direct line.]*

#### IF YOU REACH THE CONTACT DIRECTLY:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education which recently sent a letter about the evaluation it is conducting of the School Improvement Grants and Race to the Top programs. The evaluation will involve all states and selected districts that were awarded grants and is a critical part of your state's and district's participation in these programs.

**[FOR DISTRICT WITH SIG SCHOOLS] According to our records, you are the main contact person in the district for the School Improvement Grant program. Is that correct?**

***[If not correct person for SIG, get name, title, phone number of correct person. Say thank you and goodbye. Contact the proper person and start again with above.]]***

**[FOR DISTRICT WITH RTT FUNDED STM SCHOOLS] According to our records, you are the main contact person in the district for the Race to the Top program. Is that correct?**

As you know, the School Improvement Grants and Race to the Top funds are designed to help states, districts, and schools implement educational reforms to turn around struggling schools and improve the academic performance of students. This evaluation

will help the Department of Education and other policymakers, including Congress, understand the implementation and impact of the programs.

I would like to first briefly describe the evaluation. After the study overview, I would like to ask you a few questions about the district's role in applying for and awarding the [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top grants] to schools for the purposes of implementing a school turnaround model and about your district's student data system. This information will help us finalize some key aspects of the study design. Then we can discuss how we can include the selected schools in your school district in the study.

## **BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND STUDY OVERVIEW**

*[Provide sufficient details about the study to proceed with call. Do not get bogged down in design issues.]*

The goal of the evaluation is to understand whether and how the Race to the Top and School Improvement Grant programs achieve their goals. In order to study the implementation of school turnaround models funded by School Improvement Grants and the reform efforts funded by Race to the Top, we'll be conducting telephone interviews with state and district officials and administering a web survey to school principals. We will also collect student-level and school-level data to examine student outcomes.

The interviews and surveys will take place in spring 2012, and also possibly in spring 2013 and 2014, if the Department of Education opts to continue the evaluation for two additional years. We will collect administrative data as they become available in the summer or fall of 2012 (and again possibly in 2013 and 2014, if the evaluation is extended).

In total, the evaluation will include all 50 states and the District of Columbia, approximately 220 districts, and approximately 1,200 schools.

This study is being conducted for the Department of Education by Mathematica Policy Research, American Institutes for Research, and Social Policy Research Associates.

Do you have any questions or concerns about the study? *[If so, answer to best of your ability but if you are not sure of the answer, please say "This issue has not come up before. I will bring it to the study team and get back to you as soon as I get an answer." Thank them for bringing up such a good question.]*

**[FOR DISTRICTS WITH SIG SCHOOLS]**To finalize the study components, we need to understand how districts determined the schools for which they would apply for School Improvement Grants and how those awards were made. We are interested specifically in the application for the School Improvement Grant funds that was awarded in Fiscal year 2010. This is the year in which there was \$3.5 billion available for School Improvement Grants due to additional funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The state applications for this round of funding were due to the Department of Education on February 8, 2010. The district applications were due to the state in spring or summer 2010. Are you the best person to discuss this?

[If NO] Who should I speaking with instead? [Get contact information and ask if he/she can notify the new contact that you'll be calling.]

[FOR DISTRICTS WITH RTT-FUNDED STM SCHOOLS]To finalize the study components, we need to understand whether and how districts had a role in determining the schools that received Race to the Top funds to implement a school turnaround model. We are interested specifically in the schools where the district used Race to the Top funds to implement any of the four school turnaround models specified by the Race to the Top criteria in the 2010-2011 school year. We're focusing only on the following four turnaround models; transformation, restart, turnaround, and school closure. Are you the best person to discuss this?

[If NO] Who should I speaking with instead? [Get contact information and ask if he/she can notify the new contact that you'll be calling.]

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS – DISTRICT APPLICATIONS

I'm going to start with some questions which will help us to confirm or clarify information from publicly available sources. [FOR DISTRICTS WITH RTT-FUNDED STM SCHOOLS] We understand from the state that it used the School Improvement Grant tiers to determine which schools were eligible for Race to the Top funding to implement a school turnaround model.

1. I would like to first confirm some information from your state's SIG application.
  - We understand there were \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier I for the district. Is this correct?
  - We understand there were \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier II for the district. Is this correct?
  - We understand there were \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier III for the district. Is this correct?
2. Can we confirm the number of eligible schools that received [School Improvement Grant/Race to the Top] funding?

[SKIP QUESTIONS FOR TIERS WHERE THERE WERE NO ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]

- We understand that SIG/RTT funds were given to \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier I. Is this correct?
- We understand that SIG/RTT funds were given to \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier II. Is this correct?
- We understand that SIG/RTT funds were given to \_\_\_ eligible schools in Tier III. Is this correct?

[IF ALL OF TIER I SCHOOLS RECEIVED AWARDS, SKIP Q. 3-4.]

3. I see that not all of the eligible schools in Tier I received [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds. Did your school district decide to apply for [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds for only certain schools, instead of all of the eligible schools?

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR ALL ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]: CONTINUE TO Q. 4

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]:

How many schools in Tier I did you decide to apply for?

Did your school district use a measure such as achievement rates or graduation rates to choose which schools to apply on behalf of?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS TO APPLY ON BEHALF OF. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION.]

- (a) [IF YES:] Please describe the measures that you used to choose schools, and the method used. For example, if you applied on behalf of the lowest-achieving schools, please tell me whether you used a cutoff value to determine which schools were lowest-achieving.

[IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

- (b).[IF NO:] How did you decide which schools to apply on behalf of?

4. Did your district have a role in deciding which Tier I schools would receive [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds?

[IF NO]: CONTINUE TO Q. 5 IF APPLICABLE

[IF YES]: How did you determine which schools would receive funds?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS WOULD RECEIVE FUNDS. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION. IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

[IF ALL OF TIER II SCHOOLS RECEIVED AWARDS, SKIP Q. 5-6.]

5. I see that not all of the eligible schools in Tier II received [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds. Did your school district decide to apply for [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds for only certain schools, instead of all of the eligible schools?

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR ALL ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]: CONTINUE TO Q. 6

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]:

How many schools in Tier II did you decide to apply for?

Did your school district use a measure such as achievement rates or graduation rates to choose which schools to apply on behalf of?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS TO APPLY ON BEHALF OF. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION.]

- (a) [IF YES:] Please describe the measures that you used to choose schools, and the method used. For example, if you applied on behalf of the lowest-achieving schools, please tell me whether you used a cutoff value to determine which schools were lowest-achieving.

[IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

- (b).[IF NO:] How did you decide which schools to apply on behalf of?

6. Did your district have a role in deciding which Tier II schools would receive [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds?

[IF NO]: CONTINUE TO Q. 7 IF APPLICABLE

[IF YES]: How did you determine which schools would receive funds?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS WOULD RECEIVE FUNDS. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION. IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

[IF NO TIER III SCHOOLS RECEIVED AWARDS, SKIP Q. 7-8]

7. I see that eligible schools in Tier III received [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] funds. Did your school district decide to apply for [School Improvement

**Grants/Race to the Top** funds for only certain schools, instead of all of the eligible schools?

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR ALL ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]: CONTINUE TO Q. 8

[IF DECIDED TO APPLY FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS]:

How many eligible Tier III schools did you decide to apply for?

Did your school district use a measure such as achievement rates or graduation rates to choose which schools to apply on behalf of?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS TO APPLY ON BEHALF OF. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION.]

(a) [IF YES:] Please describe the measures that you used to choose schools, and the method used. For example, if you applied on behalf of the lowest-achieving schools, please tell me whether you used a cutoff value to determine which schools were lowest-achieving.

[IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

(b).[IF NO:] How did you decide which schools to apply on behalf of?

8. Did your district have a role in deciding which Tier III schools would receive **School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top** funds?

[IF NO]: CONTINUE TO Q. 9

[IF YES]: How did you determine which schools would receive funds?

[THE GOAL HERE IS TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THE DISTRICT USED ANY KIND OF CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOLS WOULD RECEIVE FUNDS. ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION. IF THEY USED A CUTOFF ON A CONTINUOUS MEASURE, FIGURE OUT WHAT THE CUTOFF WAS, AND WHAT THE CONTINUOUS MEASURE WAS.]

**STUDENT-LEVEL DATA AVAILABILITY** *[To the extent possible (to save time for respondents), please look up information on the data elements below based on publicly-available sources (so that you're simply confirming the information below with respondents).]*

Because we'll also need some student-level data for the study, I'd like to now ask you some questions about the type of student-level data that the district maintains.



However, if we can obtain this data from the state, we may not need to request this data from the district.

9. Now I'm going to discuss the data we are interested in for the study and ask you a few questions about each data element. But before we do this, can you tell me who is responsible for preparing or handling the data and can answer questions about the data system? [GET THAT PERSON'S CONTACT INFO.]

For each element, can you tell me if the district has these data at the student level and for how many years back?

- a. Do you have student ID numbers? For how many years back?
- b. Are these student IDs stable over time?
  - (1) [IF NO:] When did they change? Do they change every year, or did they change only during one or more specific years?
- b. Are the student IDs used by the district different from the student IDs used by the state?
- c. Do you have standardized state test scores (from the tests used for No Child Left Behind) at the student level? For how many years back?
  - (1) What is the name of the state English/language arts test used for NCLB?
  - (2) What is the name of the state math test used for NCLB?
  - (3) Do you have scale scores (NCEs) or percentile ranks for each test?
  - (4) Do you have numbers of questions correct for each test?
  - (5) Do you have proficiency levels for each test?
- d. Do you have standardized test scores from other tests (such as statewide quarterly assessments, DIBELS, or SAT) at the student level? For how many years back?
- e. Do you have an indicator for whether students graduated from high school? For how many years back?
- f. Do you have an indicator for whether students enrolled in college after leaving high school? For how many years back? We are interested in any post-secondary enrollment (four-year or community college), because the Department of Education is interested in whether School Improvement Grants and Race to the Top funds have any effect on the number of students who enroll in any kind of college after leaving high school.
- g. Do you have data on whether students completed one year of college credit? For how many years back? If not this exact variable, what kind of information do you have on college credits? [NOTE EXACTLY WHAT DATA ARE AVAILABLE.]
- h. Do you have student-level data on average daily attendance rates (or number of days absent)? For how many years back?

- i. Do you have year-by-year school affiliation for students who change schools within the state? For how many years back?
  - j. Do you have year-by-year information on students' English language learner (ELL) status? For how many years back?
10. What is the process and what are the requirements for obtaining the kinds of data we've been discussing? For example, do we need to submit a formal data request?
  11. Are there any other requirements for participating in the study that we should be aware of?
  12. Do you charge anything for providing data? If so, what do you charge?
  13. What is the turnaround time for receiving these data? Does it differ for different tests (for example, English/language arts test, math test, elementary-level tests, middle school tests, and high school tests)?
  14. Who should be our main contact person for collecting student records data? [GET NAME, TITLE, PHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL.]

## **SCHOOL COOPERATION**

As I noted earlier, specific schools from your district have been selected for the study; these may include schools that *have* received grants to implemented a school turnaround model and/or those that have not. These schools' participation will entail completing a web survey on school turnaround activities and policies. We hope that you can discuss the study with these schools and encourage their school administrator or principal to cooperate with the survey. We can provide a handout for the schools that will describe the school administrator survey topics and length.

[IF DISTRICT INDICATES THEY DO NOT WANT TO DO THIS] Could you help me understand the nature of your concerns?

[IF NECESSARY] We can follow up directly with the schools if you would prefer that.

## **CONTACTS FOR DISTRICT INTERVIEWS**

We will be conducting telephone interviews with district administrators about the implementation of [School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top] and school turnaround reforms.

15. In addition to you, are there other district administrators or staff who are involved with general school turnaround reform efforts with whom we should speak? We would also like to identify staff who may be able to speak to whether and how those reforms may specifically target English Language Learners.

GET A NAME, TITLE, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL AND INDICATE IF CONTACT CAN SPEAK TO BROAD AND/OR ELL ISSUES.]

## **WRAP UP**

Thank you for this extremely helpful information. In the next three weeks, I will be submitting a memorandum of understanding for the district to review and sign. We will be contacting the staff involved with the district student data systems about the collection of student level data.

Before we end the call, I just want to check to see if you have any questions? Thank you so much for your time.

## **AFTER THE CALL**

MAKE SURE YOU:

1. SEND AN EMAIL TO THANK THE CONTACT AND CONFIRM ANY NEXT STEPS THAT YOU AGREED TO DURING THE CALL.
2. ENTER INFORMATION FROM YOUR CALL IN THE RECRUITING DATABASE AND UPDATE PROTOCOL DOCUMENTATION TOOL.