

## **Thinking Strategically for Coherence Transcripts**

Facilitated by: Trish Brennan-Gac

Maura Policelli, Senior Advisor for External Affairs  
Office of the Deputy Secretary of Education

*Trish:* Hello. Everybody ready to get started again? We hope you found the time during the break productive. We know there were some good conversations happening, so I think that achieved its purpose and hopefully it got everybody a little more comfortable in the room. The next place we're going to move to, Maura is going to talk a little bit more about this notion of coherence among the programs. I just wanted to share with you a story from August when I heard Secretary Duncan speak about the innovation program in DC. I was struck by one of the things that he said at the time. He said that one of the challenges is how the states are working in silos with all of these programs, there's sort of all these independent programs and that they need to get that to change, but then he said the reason that happens is because we at the Department have made that happen, the way we operate. So he said we can't expect you to change until we change. So there's been a lot of work happening in the department to change the way people think and work internally, so that when they come out to the people in the states and the districts and talk about these changes, they understand the challenges there because they've been experiencing it themselves. So that's going to be what Maura is going to talk about, sort of what they're doing in the Department and how that translates out into the states. It's a big reason why they're here to talk to you about all of this. So I'm going to turn this over to Maura.

*Maura:* I'm going to, before I forget, just quickly go back to two questions that came up this morning and then launch into our next session here. Valeria pointed out to me during the break that in the preamble in your packets in Race To The Top, on this issue of high quality assessment that this gentleman brought up earlier, it explains that there's actually been a revision from the NPP in Race To The Top and it says the definition of high quality assessment has been revised to clarify that test design must, to the extent feasible, use universal design principals in development and administration and incorporate technology where appropriate. You can obviously read it yourselves. It's on page ten, but that just is the specific high quality assessment definition for Race To The Top in the final notice. Then just to be clear to everybody, the eligibility requirements for Race To The Top, it is explicit, that the state has to submit in it's application that there's no legal, statutory or regulatory barriers at the state level to linking data on student achievement or student growth to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation. So that is an eligibility requirement, the gentleman who asked that is not here, but for all of you to know, that's very explicit. Jessica has a couple things she wants to add based on some of the questions that she got during this break. I just wanted to make the, I apologize for not having made this comment at the outset, because we at the Department are well aware of the general fervor around Race To The Top. My office happens to be literally right next door to the Race To The Top team and in the Secretary's office, in the Deputy Secretary suite up there, and now it's all being moved to the career shop for grant administration, but I am in awe. I've also been in a lot of the policy committee meetings along with my colleagues. This is an amazing effort. It's also given reasons I don't need to spell out for all of you given the economic climate and otherwise, under extreme scrutiny, the Race To The Top grant. I'm amazed at the thorough, thorough efforts to make this really, really extraordinary in terms of the

history of our school systems in this country. This is not your grandpa's federal grant. This is really, really innovative as a grant program and the sincere goal is that these reforms be nationwide and that all of our schools and all of our students end up with the same quality experience in the classroom and achieve a solid career or a college degree and it's intended, again, the achievement gap issue, no matter rural, suburban, no kid, no matter their race, if they live in a rural town, or suburb, a city, no child should have a different experience in their school in this country. It is a passionate principle in the Department of Education. Therefore this Race To The Top competition, the bar is high and the goal is that ultimately all states get to these reforms one way or another, that this is achieved and as Zollie is going to explain in a minute, this is a nice pot of money, but it's not like these reform priorities and these goals or these assurances vanish after Race To The Top or Recovery Act. In the context of Race To The Top, there are eligibility requirements, but no state is going into this process with a leg up. This is an equal playing field. The peer review process that's being set up, that in and of itself, I don't know how many people are supposed to be on the review boards, if you folks know, but...

*Jessica:* About 150. We got 1400 applications for people who wanted to review them. So they'll be very high quality reviews.

*Maura:* So in the spirit of high bar, the number of applicants for those slots is high and that's a very intense process. So the political spotlight and pressure on the Department, on the administration to make this a very equitable process, the internal intent that this be a process that ultimately gets all states there is solidly in place. So we encourage everybody, and that's why there's all this outreach going on across the country, we want all states to compete well and to achieve these goals, partly by integrating your efforts around the Recovery Act will help in the Race To The Top application and ultimately get you there, but the competitive spirit is because this is America and we compete, but we compete fairly and nobody is starting this race with any step ahead of anyone else. So get out there and work with us, but please know that this is a very, very scrutinized process and it's being administered very fairly. Jessica had a few comments that she received during the break that she wants to answer before we do our last few slides.

*Jessica:* I just wanted to highlight because I did get a couple of similar questions during the break. With respect to the state fiscal Phase II application, where a state does not currently collect a given set of data you can certainly check the box. It's literally a check box all the way through the application, but you can certainly check the box that says no, we don't collect this information, but here's our state plan about how we will start collecting it. So, please don't think that by January 11<sup>th</sup> you have to have collected all of the data under all of the indicators. You do have to create plans, the timeline for which generally is by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. There are some nuances around that, that are explained in more detail in the notice and the application. But if you don't collect the data say no and give us a plan about how you will, including progress reports that you plan to post also on your website about how you're moving along in that plan. Were there any other questions about state plans? Thanks.

*Maura:* Okay, this is a quiet group. You guys should have been hanging out with the EDTEC directors a few weeks ago. I know that the pressure on all of you and the positions that all of you are in is pretty unique. So I can respect the weight on your shoulders in all these applications. So I feel the pressure in the room. But please let us be helpful. Okay, a few slides I'm going to go through on some planning ideas and then Zollie is going to wrap us up with some good information about other things in the Department. Okay, strategic planning, we talked about this a little bit, over in the top left corner here. We know many of you have plans in place you've been working on for years. I already mentioned this. Review them, you probably already have in many cases, blow a little dust off them if they've been hanging out and maybe look at it in that framework that I presented earlier. The continuum arrow is meant to represent and as other grant monies come along, that this be a living, breathing document. As these things get into place you're obviously revising your plans accordingly. This is, again, I made this point, I thought I'd create a visual and show you how I can make pretty big arrows. I've become this PowerPoint guru somehow in this new job of mine. I have no idea how, but being able to create swirly arrows was a day I'll never forget. Anyway, so this is stating fairly obvious things of mention. The monies that are already out there or in process, EDTEC, Title I, IDEA, and good old TQP. Don't forget about TQP. Those applications and/or monies are out there and just for efficiency sake, keep those people at the table in your planning. TQP, is obviously a little grant, and something that none of you applied for. It's not a state level grant. But it is part of the Recovery Act program and what I have, I just got yesterday, I will give to Barb and she will send out to all of you, what I did get was a list of who in your states, and these involve districts, higher education institutions as well as some non-profits who were the applicants for these grants. It will show you who the applicants were in your state, because you obviously may not even know this, and it has contact information. You can contact them directly and see what they came up with for their applications because some of their thinking around teacher quality could be very helpful in your applications for Race To The Top. So it's great to know these people are out there and they maybe could really help you. Same with EDTEC. These people are dynamite and bring them in, chat with them, walk them through Race To The Top, ask them for some thoughts and our big boys, our big formula folks with plenty of experience and thinking and work on Recovery Act dollars, Title I and IDEA. So the grants that we've been talking about, I know we've kind of been bouncing around grant to grant, but just listing them out for you. SLDS, December 4<sup>th</sup> coming right around the corner. Tate did a great job explaining that and there's a workshop, small group on that in a moment. SFSF is in red because that is, as we've explained, that's a baseline, good collection of information engaged in the districts, a great way to get yourself organized and that process should line you up well for these following grants. Race To The Top is out, SIG is coming out very soon and then the other ones, Innovation Fund is out for comment right now. The comment period closes soon.

*Jessica:* It has recently closed and they are in the rule making process now. So reviewing the comments and creating a final notice.

*Maura:* Okay, great. So that final notice is being developed. A little side note on that, you guys aren't applicants, but again great thinking is going to be going into that in a cross pollination process, those folks maybe should hear about the great thinking going into Race To The Top which could get some light bulbs going off for them as they start meeting and going... They, whoever is going to end up, a lot of your districts thinking about I3 are coming up with really great ideas of some super practices that could be eligible for this grant. Just talk to each other because you all, it's in your interest to have these I3 grants go to districts in your state. Then TIF is coming out a little bit later, so that is on a slower track. I'll show you the timeline in a minute. But that's also part of the Recovery Act. So coordination, some of you have seen this slide a few times. It's been out a while. We just love this slide because it has so many colors, but this is, if the arrows read correctly, this is meant to point to, between, basically in combination with SLDS up near the top corner, and then with the bottom corner here, the combination of all this funding over here is 95% of your [Inaudible] grants, 95% of the funding. Basically one way or another some more directly than others, based on who's applying and who's spending require, involve, state district coordination. TQP and I3, there should be an asterisk because there's obviously non-profits and others who are part of those applications, not just state and districts, but for purposes of demonstrating that lots of money involves lots of talk with your districts and we'll be trying to help in ways to facilitate that. Okay, the basic timelines, and I know that in your packets, Trish has created a good timeline document. You all probably have this in a big poster taped to your wall, but anyway we can help organize your thinking around it... Obviously SLDS is the soonest. SFSF comes next, shortly after Race To The Top Phase I and then SIG, then I3, then Teacher Incentive Funds. So we know these are all coming at you, boom, boom, boom. Throw in there recipient reporting which I've had a lot to do with at the Department, and is a lot of work that some of you may or may not be directly involved in and we know it is a lot. So it's compressed, but partly because the legislation was written with a certain timeline. We've got to get this out there. We've got to get this money out the door or snooze you lose on our part and we've not used the money and we're in bad shape. So we just have got to get this out the door. So, that's why we're here to do whatever help we can. Quickly, and this will keep getting revised as the time rolls on. But specific action steps during this time frame that we just went through. In the first box, state and local IDEA directors, identifying ways to complement each other's funding and we're trying to do that as much as we can in the Department, come up with ways that we can suggest use of funds and contribute information to the other grants and also during present day at this very moment, state level strategic plans are adjusted to reflect the reform priorities. It's just summarizing things we've talked about. In the middle box coming up for the mid-winter, December time period, again we're going to keep encouraging you to get the Title I and IDEA folks and EDTEC directors, applicants and good old SLDS project folks to share their thinking and their applications. I know Tate has been telling me that SLDS folks and other state level folks, a lot of you who are working on the other grants are already talking. Take and I have been talking about this, I apologize if I'm repeating Tate. Just big picture SLDS, Race To The Top, you probably said this already, SLDS in general is about creating the infrastructure for your states, but part of the reason we delayed the deadline for that is, Tate's team managed to delay the deadline and they get credit for that, is so that you can take a look at

what the Race To The Top is looking for in terms of input, use of data, what's the point of all this, why are we creating this system, what's the use of it and it kind of gets back to the issue of aligning information and ultimately informing instruction. So that may, may not, but it may adjust your SLDS application a bit to see okay, I see where this is now all supposed to go with Race To The Top in terms of the use of this. So a chance to just kind of align those, make sure there's no tweaks that need to be made. I already mentioned TQP and then there's going to be a lot of need to talk to your LEA's and then the last one here, SIG will be out, keep talking, bringing SIG into the picture. Again, talk to your LEA's about all of them at once if you can. We'll create as many materials as you can including these to help make it a comprehensive conversation and then I'm just going to mention I3 in this third bullet. What a just said a few moments ago, probably a lot of you had not had the time to look at that application, but yes, the four assurances are in it and yes, there's some good coherence and really talk to folks in your state. What would probably be a good role for the states is convene a forum and again, this is non-profit groups. Part of this whole community aspect of our larger reform structure, about parent groups, community organizations, non-profits, etcetera is something that overall is being encouraged, but I3 you actually have some of these folks as applicants. So convene the discussion in a few different parts of your state. Bring in people how are thinking about this grant and as conveners, you'll hear some of their thinking. You can exchange yours, even though you're not an applicant. Then the last bullet here, points that Trish and others have been making and obviously is something that is happening right here today, exchange best practices, talk to each other and in general again, just relating it to Race To The Top, people that don't win round one will get a thorough feedback from the Department and there's Phase II in that whole process of the applications themselves there's no reason why states shouldn't be talking to each other. There's an encouragement that there will be consortia and common standards. So there's no reason, even though it's a competitive grant, besides literally sharing your applications maybe in the end, but talk, exchange ideas, think of the best ideas out there. That's where we ultimately all, all ships will rise. So really, as much as you can, keep doing all of this and our folks that have pulled this together are really helping with that. Okay, Zollie is going to bring us home here.

*Zollie:* What I wanted to do was to focus on funds that are going to be available in 2010 and I need to talk with you a little bit about where we are with that process. The House this summer actually approved a budget and it covered the areas. We recently received, a little later than that we received from the appropriations committee of the Senate, their proposals for funding for this year. So that means the President submitted his budget proposal, the House has acted on it, some things signed off on, some things not. The Senate, at least the appropriations committee has submitted what they are recommending as the marks for the various areas and some of them are the same as suggested by the House and others are not. So what I wanted to do was to walk through. Right now we're operating under a continuing resolution and it's through December 18<sup>th</sup> I believe. I know there's a desire to bring closure to this aspect of the budget, but we're not clear at this point what that timing is going to be. So I just wanted to talk about some of these because they reflect the priorities of the President and Secretary Duncan in terms of the

education reform agenda and as you're thinking about these dollars and at this point not everyone has determined how they're going to spend the Title I dollars for this year, including the RO (SP?) dollars and the same thing with IDEA. So thinking about what's going to be available in 2010, what's going to be available on June 30<sup>th</sup> and how you'll be able to use some of these dollars to extend some of the things you're thinking about doing as a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. My thought was that you need to think about how you can avoid the funding cliff which everybody is thinking about. Some of these sources of funding may assist with that. So the effort there is to try to talk through some of them. The one that is still undefined at this point is the first one and this is the early learning excellence program. We know that approximately 800 million dollars was proposed in the budget by the President. We know that there's some separate work going on by Congress. This would be a new program and it would consolidate some of the funding that has been made available. This is the conversation from Early Reading First, and from some of those programs into a more comprehensive approach to zero to five or zero to eight years, depending on who you talk to. Those are the ages that would be covered. So there's still a need for the authorization language to come forth from this because it really is a new program. But there would be that 800 million dollars if this piece of it is funded. Also note that one of the uses of Title I dollars and this is not a supplement [Inaudible], so you don't have to worry about those in quite the same way are, except that there are some contextual issues related to it. You can use Title I dollars for preschool and that's been the case for a long time. There are some districts in the country that put most of their Title I dollars toward preschool programs and they serve only the other schools in their district that have 75% or greater poverty. So this is something to think about, even without the early learning excellence. I do believe though that the early learning focus is going to be a dominant part of this administration as we form agenda. Again, we're looking at college and career ready youth and you can't wait until they start elementary school to begin providing services, particularly for those kids that are at the greatest risk of not being successful and not learning to read in a timely way. So that's the first piece. The next is Striving Readers. Spending a little bit of time, just going back through the budget, I'm connected to the department's website and I went through the budget summary just to look at what the House approved and what the Senate approved in terms of this. So there is a gap. We expected at least 150 million dollars will be awarded in fiscal year 10 for Striving Readers and Striving Readers is actually being expanded in terms of the President's proposal and it appears that the funding that has been approved by the House, which is the lower amount and then by the Senate, the higher amount, will also cover ages eight up through high school and it will focus on Striving Readers. The emphasis is a little different than the case with Reading First. This is a reading initiative for struggling readers, those kids that are having the greatest challenges in learning to read over time. So we anticipate that the funding will be somewhere between the 150 million and 300 million. Title I of course, both ARA (SP?) and the regular funding can be used to support reading for students who are eligible to receive those services either through targeted assistance or if they're in a school wide program. All the kids can have access to the services that would be provided through Title I for reading purposes. High schools, districts have always had the ability to use some of their Title I dollars to support school improvement for high schools. Most choose

not to do so. There's several reasons for that. Back in the early 90's you were encouraged not to spend them, to focus the dollars on elementary, to teach kids to read in the elementary grades, therefore you avoid the need to focus those dollars on reading as they get older. But we're finding over time that there is still a great need to prepare teenagers to be able to read. I'm the uncle of a child who went through a K through 12 school program and at the end of it he graduated, but he can't read. He literally cannot read. So, there's still a need to focus dollars there. Literacy is certainly a key area of that focus, but also to focus on the drop out factories. To figure out how strategies that can be put into place to help turn around both schools and to provide incentives and strategies to encourage the kids that are at the most risk of dropping out to stay in school. Those would actually be competitive funds and it's in the amount of 50 million dollars and both the House and the Senate have agreed on this amount, at least through the Senate appropriations committee. So we pretty much envision that there will be some money made available for this and will be discretionary. They will have to compete for the dollars. But this is something else that can help us support the turn around schools efforts, particularly for the Tier II schools which are to be served through SIG. I guess I should say the school improvement grants, and get away from department acronyms. School turn around focusing on the lowest performing schools. The President's budget proposal requested 1.5 billion for this effort to extend the large amount of money that was made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support school turnaround. Congress at this point, the House has approved 545 million and the Senate appropriations committee has approved the same amount. So we envision that for 1003G, which is one of the sources of school improvement dollars, that these funds will be made available and of course these go to states via formula and then states accept applications from districts and use that to disseminate the dollars. We'll still be looking at the four reform models and the Tiers as a part of this effort. I had to confer with Tate on this one, but for the P20 longitudinal data systems, the proposed budget approved by the House, still awaiting the Senate, 65 million dollars in discretionary grant dollars to support longitudinal data system development in states. So that's in addition to the competition that's going on that will close in the next couple of weeks. These are additional dollars that will be competed for next year. The support of common learning standards and assessments. The secretary, of course it's important that the focus on common standards and common assessments, it's not coming from the Department. Some of you were around back in the 90's when the voluntary national tests were proposed. Do I see some head nods in here, remembering that? Do you remember how that turned out? Well, I think it was a federal effort and it was an effort by the federal government to try to put into a place a set of assessments that would show common performance across the 53 state education agencies. It was only for two grades, fourth and eighth and I think it was one content area for one grade and another for the higher grade. It didn't fly. So I think it's important as this agenda moves forward, I think states understand the cost of developing assessments and the length of time it takes to develop them. There [Inaudible] economies of scale by working together on this and figuring out a strategy with multiple forms of an assessment to be able to benefit from this. So 350 million dollars, you've already heard about this through the Race To The Top. It's been taken off the top and set aside to support the development, half of it for state summative assessment. So 175 million for that and 175 million

for the development of local assessments, such things as benchmark assessments, formative assessments, interim assessments that are worked on through a consortium of districts, and could be across the country to develop assessments that could be used to provide more immediate feedback to teachers about how kids are performing, our children are performing in those schools. Now this is funding that we're anticipating that these awards will be made during the early part of the summer, probably June 2010. So that's why I listed it under FY10, even though we know that there are conversations about it now it's connected to Race To The Top. But this is the one that will be competed later, because we're still trying to get input from the field and from the public about what the design of these ought to be, what we ought to include in the notice that is shared with the public about those assessments. I will also add that for FY10, and I didn't put it on here, 410 million dollars will be provided through 6111 grant. Those are the grants that fund state assessment systems. 400 million will be available by formula to states and if you know the amount, for those of you that are the assessment people in the room, if you know the amount you got this year, it will be basically the same amount in FY10 because after it reaches a certain cap of 400 million and it's been at that now for about five years. The amount doesn't change. You get a proportion of those based on the extent of poverty in your state and also there's a minimum amount that every state would receive. So that will have in the field, something close to 750 million dollars to focus on assessments and I imagine the 400 million that I talked about that is formula grant will probably shift from development to administration. One of the things that we've heard very clearly over the last few years from the field is that the cost of administering these assessments becomes very expensive. In particular if you're moving toward a model that looks at what constructive response items or performance measures, the cost of scoring those is greater and you need to have some money for use in administering them. This slide covers the last areas and I'm just going to put them all up at one time so we can see what's here, but these are the funds that will be made available on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Both the House and the Senate appropriations committee agree on the 1.2 billion that will focus on improving teacher quality and these are the effectiveness grants and they will cover a broad scope of things as well, there's a difference in the House and the Senate on the funding to be made available for recruiting and training high quality teachers and principals, but it ranges from 300 million to 445 million for fiscal year 10. So at minimum, 300 million will be available we project. One of the programs that I think is an exciting program is the Promised Neighborhoods program and there's 10 million for some demonstration projects on that, but this is the notion of those community schools programs and particularly for those schools that are the lowest performing that have so many concerns in the communities where they're located, whether they be rural, suburban or urban. There's a need to have certain social services supports and health supports in those communities as well. So these dollars will be used to support some pilot efforts, some demonstration efforts on the Promised Neighborhoods and I'm just really excited. It's not in my office and I guess that's the thing that I'm not excited about, but it's in a great office. It will be in office of innovation and improvement with Jim Shelton who has a clear understanding of the needs in these areas and the House and the Senate have agreed on this 10 million for the demonstrations. So these are some that I wanted to bring to your attention as you work with districts and in the conversations that you think from your state department levels, as you think

*Thinking Strategically for Coherence Transcripts Continued*

*Facilitated by: Trish Brennan-Gac*

*Maura Policelli, Senior Advisor for External Affairs*

*Office of the Deputy Secretary of Education*

from your comp center roles. These are dollars that need to be a part of the conversation and the thinking about how to apply the dollars that are being made available through ARA (SP?) that have not been obligated at this point and through the regular formula awards from 2009.

*Trish:* Now, if you look at your agenda, we're going to go back into team discussions and that's cut a little bit shorter, but I think this is really important information and I hope it gets you thinking a little bit about the other opportunities that are going to be coming your way. I do want to point out that in your folder there's a little worksheet. It's really just a tool for you if you want to take notes and sort of be coordinated about what you're hearing and keep it all in one place, they put this in there for you, so feel free to use that. What's going to happen now is we're going to break a little bit for team discussions and then we're going to go into the sessions for the afternoon, for the rest of the session. So look at that and make sure in your team conversations you know who is going where. We'll take a break for lunch. What we've asked at lunch is we've asked our friends from the Department if they could each sit separately at different tables so that if you have questions and conversations you want to have that people will be disbursed so you can have those informal conversations and then after lunch we'll go then into the second set of topic focus conversations. So if we could take maybe five or ten minutes at the most to talk with your teams and then go into the small groups. Nothing has changed for the locations of the sessions. You've got the rooms to go to for those. Does anybody have any questions?



**Great Lakes East & Great Lakes West**

Comprehensive Centers at

