



Race to the Top for Districts
How The National School Climate Center Can Support and Improve your Application

FY 2013 Race to the Top - District Competition
 CFDA Numbers: 84.416
 Program Type: Discretionary/Competitive Grants
 Optional Intent to Apply Due: August 23, 2013
 Application Due: October 3, 2013
 Grant Award Announcements: December 2013

The [National School Climate Center \(NSCC\)](http://www.schoolclimate.org) is the nation’s leading school climate reform organization, with more than seventeen years of experience supporting thousands of schools, districts, and State Departments of Education in creating safer, more supportive, and successful school communities. NSCC’s work falls into three overlapping categories: Assessment (including readiness evaluations, valid and reliable comprehensive school climate evaluations, and process evaluations); Transformation (professional development, technical assistance, online learning and other resources); and, efforts that Sustain school climate reform work (policy, research, leadership development and training) (www.schoolclimate.org and <http://srcr.schoolclimate.org>).

NSCC’s Approach to Innovation and Student Success

The U.S. Department of Education’s recent release of the **Race to the Top-Districts (RTTT-D) competition** emphasizes the power of innovative approaches and partnerships to improve student learning and ensure equity in education. The Department of Education recognizes the critical role that school climate plays in meeting these goals. This new round of funding offers an exciting opportunity for districts and LEAs to include school climate as a critical component of overall teaching and learning improvement efforts. NSCC’s comprehensive array of resources directly supports the criteria for a high-quality proposal. Importantly, the new *Competitive Priority clause* offers additional points for districts that work in partnership with organizations like NSCC to directly address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of students - particularly students who attend high-need schools.

Alignment of NCSS Services with RTTT-D Priorities

Below is an outline of how NSCC’s services directly align to the priorities established in the RTTT-D application:

NSCC SERVICE	DETAILS	RTTT-D CRITERIA ALIGNMENT
5-Stage School Climate Improvement Process A cyclical, research-based model for school improvement that lays the foundation for successful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSCC has extensive experience supporting States, Districts, and networks of schools in crafting timelines, proposal tasks, and school improvement plans that meaningfully include all stakeholder voices using our field-tested resources 	<i>IX. Selection Criteria</i> B(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points) E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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<p>and sustained whole-school improvement</p>	<p>and best practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 5-Stage Process is a field-tested, research-based model of continuous improvement that shapes effective (i) planning/preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, (iv) systemic and/or instructional implementation, (v) re-evaluation for school success. • NSCC’s 5-Stage Road Map is designed to recognize and support existing and proposed SEL and/or health promotion efforts within the district. NSCC works with many of the nation’s leading prosocial curriculum/skill building organizations, and can consult with district leaders about the pros and cons’ of various resources and programmatic efforts. 	<p>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points) (E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points) (E)(3) Performance measures (5 points) (E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</p> <p><i>X. Competitive Preference Priority (10 points)</i></p>
<p>School Climate Resource Center (SCRC)</p> <p>An interactive, on-demand learning site that provides school communities with personalized and targeted professional development from leading SEL, Character Ed, and School Climate experts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed resources on forming a representative leadership team, creating a “no-fault” framework for communication, and stronger school-home-community partnerships • A Readiness Assessment and End-Of-Stage Assessments create detailed profiles for building and district leaders to target their resources to resolve areas of need and increase educator and administrator effectiveness. It also allows them to track their progress over time. • The SCRC creates an interactive community in which schools can advance their expertise, share best practices, and learn from other networks of schools and districts nationwide. 	<p><i>IX. Selection Criteria</i></p> <p>B(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</p> <p>C(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</p> <p>D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)</p> <p>D(1) LEA practices, policies and rules (15 points)</p> <p>D(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</p> <p>E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)</p> <p>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points) (E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points) (E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</p>

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<p>Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI)</p> <p>The leading valid and reliable school climate survey that provides an in-depth profile of the entire community’s perception of school climate (students, parents, staff, and potentially the wider community) on <u>12 core dimensions</u>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSCI resources provide concrete tools and guidelines for maximizing voice, and effectively engaging the community throughout the entire improvement process. • The resulting data and reports provide concrete guidance on areas of need and strength, and support the development of a targeted action plan for sustained improvement directly related to indicators for student success (including graduation rates, attendance, academic achievement, and teacher retention). • Custom survey development, analysis, reporting, and evaluation systems based on project needs are core areas of NSCC’s expertise in measurement support for school systems nationwide. 	<p>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</p> <p><i>X. Competitive Preference Priority (10 points)</i></p> <p><i>IX. Selection Criteria</i></p> <p>B(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</p> <p>C(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</p> <p>D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)</p> <p>D(1) LEA practices, policies and rules (15 points)</p> <p>D(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</p> <p>E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)</p> <p>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</p> <p>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</p> <p>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</p> <p>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</p> <p><i>X. Competitive Preference Priority (10 points)</i></p>
<p>Direct Professional Development</p> <p>Customized trainings, coaching, and workshops on a variety of essential topics including: Breaking the Bully-Victim-Bystander Cycle, Infusing Social-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSCC’s Professional Development supports directly address barriers to highly effective teaching through in-person coaching and classroom management techniques, as well as by increasing collaboration and engagement between all stakeholders (students, parents and staff). 	<p><i>IX. Selection Criteria</i></p> <p>C(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</p> <p>D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)</p> <p>D(1) LEA practices, policies and rules (15 points)</p>



Emotional Learning effectively into the curriculum, Classroom Management, Advisories, and more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSCC has consulted to State Departments of Education, Education Ministries, and large-scale district networks on the implementation, maintenance, and improvement of social, emotional and character educational efforts.	D(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points) <i>X. Competitive Preference Priority (10 points)</i>
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In addition to the resources outlined above, NSCC’s Research Department published a [Review of School Climate Research](#) (Thapa, 2013), which is a meta-analysis of current research studies that underscore the importance of school climate as a critical component of any school improvement/ reform efforts.

NSCC also published the [School Climate Practice Briefs](#) series with leading experts from Harvard Graduate School of Education, National Dropout Prevention Center, Special Olympics, and more. These Briefs summarize effective practices that support implementation and sustainability efforts.

The National School Climate Center has the resources and practical experience to enhance your RTT-D application and improve student outcomes in your districts. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with your district as you continue to improve educational outcomes for all students. To learn more about how we can help you create a winning bid, please contact Amy Berg (212-707-8799 x11 or aberg@schoolclimate.org) or Jonathan Cohen (212-707-8799 x29 or jonathancohen@schoolclimate.org) You can also visit our website www.schoolclimate.org