



Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants

Sixteen of the 41 applicants in Round I of Race to the Top were identified on March 4th as finalists for the federal competitive grant program, which will award a total of \$4 billion in stimulus funds to states that present the most promising education reform plans. The finalists are: Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Applications were evaluated against a 500-point rubric, and a nationwide network of 58 peer reviewers that included teachers, principals, superintendents, college professors, scholars, business leaders and education advocates advised education Secretary Arne Duncan in his decision. All finalist states scored over 400 points; formal scores for all finalists will be available following the April announcement of the winners.

The finalists selected demonstrated a strong education reform platform made possible through innovative legislative action and a strategic plan for reform implementation. In our view, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana and Tennessee had the best overall applications. However, all of the finalists overwhelmingly displayed strong, bold and innovative common attributes, such as:

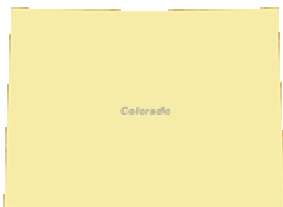
- State Success Factors, 125 pts: A clear articulation of the states' vision for reform, theory of action, implementation and sustainability plan, and track record of success in closing achievement gaps.
- Standards and Assessments, 70 pts: A commitment to implement the Common Core standards and enacting strategic plans to implement aligned formative, interim and summative assessments.
- Data Systems, 47 pts: An expansion of longitudinal data systems to include P-20 data, the use of data to drive decisions in the district and classroom, and revisions to current data portals and websites to ensure data accessibility.
- Great Teachers and Leaders, 138 pts: The development and implementation of new, multi-tiered principal and teacher evaluations that include student growth as a "significant factor" and the use of evaluation data to serve as a primary factor in human capital decisions; such as: staffing, tenure, retention and compensation.
- Turn Around Schools, 50 pts: The development or expansion of "partnerships" or "zones" of low-performing schools as a way to provide greater oversight in turnaround efforts.
- General Selection Criteria, 55 pts: The authority for charter schools and/or autonomous innovation schools.
- STEM, 15 pts: A well developed, articulated and comprehensive STEM plan and vision (*only in some applications*).

The road ahead for the 16 finalists includes a trip to Washington D.C. to meet with reviewers and senior staff from the Department of Education to verify and clarify the states' reform plan to ensure that implementation is possible. The winners in Round I of Race to the Top are scheduled to be announced in April and, following the announcement, the department will publish the scores and comments for each applicant. According to the Department of Education, fewer than 10 states will likely win in the first round and no more than half of the total grants will be awarded to ensure robust competition in Round II.

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Colorado: *Comprehensive Teacher Performance Pay System*



Denver, CO is recognized for its bold stance in implementing a performance pay system for teachers in 2004, and other school districts are taking notice and beginning to experiment with

their own plans. In Colorado's bid to win Race to the Top the state accelerates these innovations by aligning performance pay to student achievement results and scaling it statewide.

In addition, Colorado is also recognized for other bold education reforms, such as:

- *The Colorado Growth Model*, a data system that measures student progress from one year to the next and compares student to their academic peers;
- *The Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids*, a reform effort by Governor Bill Ritter that establishes definitions of school, college and work readiness based on proficiency and implements school readiness assessments;
- *The Accountability Alignment Act*, a law that aligns accountability systems into a single system for greater transparency and comprehension; and
- *The Innovation Schools Act*, a provision that allows public schools or groups of public schools greater school autonomy and flexibility to develop an innovative plan to improve student outcomes.

Who's Represented in Colorado's RTTT Application?	
% of Districts Represented	74%
% Students Represented	94%
% Schools Represented	90%
% Students in Poverty Represented	94%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	41%

Colorado "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core Standards prior to August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments for all grades and subjects by 2015.
- Participation in SMARTER and CCSSO/NGA assessment consortiums.
- The expansion of teacher and principal alternative route certification programs.
- The development of a "Race to the Top" office to manage strategy statewide.
- The ability to link P-20 data from District's and key P-20 state agencies to a common portal, SchoolView.
- Adoption of new teacher and principal evaluation model comprised of 50percent student growth data.
- The development of "Educator Impact Reports" for teachers and principals that include student growth data, and the use of these reports in teacher and principal evaluations.
- The creation of the nonprofit, the Colorado Turnaround Center, designed to supply highly effective teachers, leaders, provide turnaround assistance, and harness public support for turnaround school models
- Professional development for teachers and principals on Response to Intervention (RtI) data and how to better analyze data and determine appropriate student interventions.
- Authority for charter schools.
- Alignment of STEM instructional content to state standards and creation of the Colorado Math, Science and Innovation Academy to serve as a hub for STEM best practices in K-12.

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Delaware: Robust Longitudinal Data System

The state of Delaware has a long history of education reform. Over the last 10 years, Delaware has taken significant reform strides by implementing statewide common standards, adopting a computer-adaptive formative and summative exam system aligned to state standards, and investing in an extensive longitudinal data system. Building on these reforms, Delaware passed legislation in 2009 that allows for student growth data to be a significant factor in the common, statewide teacher and leader evaluation system.

Who's Represented in Delaware's RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	100%
% Students Represented	100%
% Schools Represented	100%
% Students in Poverty Represented	100%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	100%

Delaware's other notable reforms include its school choice model and school turnaround measures. The state passed legislation in 2005 that allows for students and parents to have an extensive school choice option and, that authorizes charter schools in the state. Delaware recently revamped its accountability and performance measurement procedures to require more rigorous and comprehensive turnaround plans for low-achieving schools, including allowing the state's Secretary of Education to intervene if the local school district and union can't agree on a turn-around plan for a failing school.

Finally, Delaware's Race to the Top application shines due to its thoughtful and realistic implementation plan.

Delaware "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

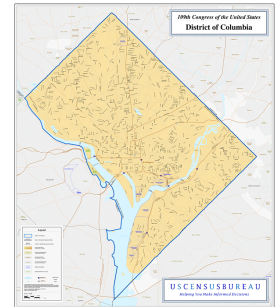
- Adoption of Common Core Standards by June 2010 —along with a plan to train all affected teachers in the new standards by the start of the 2010 school year— and commitment to adopt common assessments by 2015.
- The participation in four assessment consortiums.
- A commitment to implement statewide formative and summative assessments for all grades and make the data available to educators, parents, decisions-makers, researchers and the public.
- Deployment of "data coaches" to work with teachers and principals in every school on how to data to improve instruction and identify, replicate and scale proven instructional reforms in the classroom.
- A robust data system that links students, teachers and schools and allows for a complete picture of performance across the education system.
- The use of data as a means to equitably distribute teachers and principals to schools and students that are in need of high-impact, effective leaders.
- A requirement that teacher and principal evaluation system include a measure of student growth by 2011 school year—and that educators can't be rated "effective" unless they achieve this standard of growth with their students; also, all principals will be trained to conduct effective evaluations.
- Authority for charter schools.
- An expansive alternative certification routes for teachers (six alternative route programs currently exist).
- A commitment to turnaround low-performing schools by developing a new state Turnaround Office focused on building local capacity in the state's ten lowest-achieving schools.

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District of Columbia: Cutting-Edge “Further and Faster” Reform Agenda

The District of Columbia may best be distinguished for its daring and unconventional school chancellor, Michelle Rhee, and the reform efforts she has carried through since being appointed by Mayor Adrian Fenty in 2007. Almost immediately after her appointment, Rhee took measures to remove low-performing teachers and principals, expand charter school capacity, and turnaround the District’s lowest-achieving schools. And, given that the DC Public Schools are under mayoral control, Rhee has the autonomy and authority within the District to serve as a leader in education innovation and reform.



The District of Columbia’s Race to the Top application builds off of the work that Rhee has done and lays out a concrete theory of action plan the District will take to implement the reforms outlined in its proposal. This plan is rooted in a commitment to decrease the number of low-achieving schools and increase the number of high-achieving schools as a means to raise the overall performance of its students.

The District of Columbia “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by March 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- The required use of interim assessments that are aligned to the Common Core standards.
- A commitment to strengthen the current data system to allow for more robust information to support data-driven decisions and instruction.
- A comprehensive and bold teacher evaluation system, IMPACT, which includes 19 different measures in the teacher’s evaluation model – one measure being student growth.
- The further development of IMPACT by: (1) providing standard student growth measures to be used across the district, and not just in DCPS schools; (2) addition of human and technological systems to analyze results from IMPACT evaluations; and (3) development of online individualize professional development platform that uses IMPACT evaluation data to provide teachers with self-service clearinghouse for professional development.
- The development of a data integration tool to provide seamless flow of data between both public and charter schools.
- The development of a principal evaluation system.
- The launch of Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness (PLaCEs), which will use data from IMPACT to provide teachers with targeted professional development.
- A commitment to continue with the District’s bold efforts in turning-around low-achieving schools.
- A development of a statewide definition of “persistently low-achieving” schools and requires that turnaround plans exist for the bottom 20 percent of schools in the category.
- Authority for charter schools, no-cap on expansion.
- A detailed and comprehensive plan to attract, develop, and retain STEM teachers.
- The establishment of STEM schools, targeted professional development for teachers of STEM subjects and partnerships with STEM-centered institutions.

Who’s Represented in DC’s RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	53%
% Students Represented	85%
% Schools Represented	83%
% Students in Poverty Represented	85%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers’ Union Represented (only 1 union)	0%

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Florida: Aggressive Education Reform Initiatives

The state of Florida is recognized within the education community as a trailblazer in education reform. Florida's existing education policies and structures incorporate many of the reforms sought by Race to the Top and, as such, the state was able to make bolder and stronger strides within its application.



With a comprehensive data system, well-structured accountability index and charter-friendly policies, Florida's ability to implement strong education reforms is evident. In addition, Florida's application includes a strategic plan and thorough "gap analysis" that identifies the process the state will take to meet the goals set forth in the state's application.

Florida "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards prior to August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments for all grades and subjects by 2015.
- Participation in CCSSO/NGA, Achieve and serving as the lead of the Florida assessment consortium work group.
- The benchmark of high school textbooks to entry-level courses in the state's colleges as a means to lower remedial rates.
- A commitment to use data to drive policy decisions and the development of a single, customer-friendly data interface and report.
- Professional development to teachers and principals in building systematic evaluation practices that incorporate data.
- Implement statutory requirements of differentiated pay; categories include additional academic responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas (including STEM) and level of job performance difficulties.
- The implementation of 13 state-led initiatives to support school turnaround through the development of human capital for turnaround, proven programs and community and business support.
- Longitudinal data system analysis available throughout the PK-20 education pipeline.
- Authority for charter schools, no-cap on expansion.
- A statewide evaluation system for charter school accountability.
- An "open school" choice system.
- A Tax-credit program for corporations who donate to private-school scholarship programs.
- The development of the STEM *Florida* plan by December 2010.

Who's Represented in Florida's RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	89%
% Students Represented	81%
% Schools Represented	82%
% Students in Poverty Represented	80%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers' Union Represented	8%

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Georgia: *Innovative Reform Model*

The state of Georgia is new to the national radar of education reform. Yet, its emergence as a finalist in the Race to the Top Round 1 application process is not a surprise. The state has recently established an outcome-based education environment that is seeded in innovative scale practices.



Georgia's reform model is primarily focused on using innovation as the key instrument in raising student achievement. This is demonstrated in Georgia's recent passage of a no-cap charter school statute and expanding provisions to allow for greater alternative routes to teacher certification.

In addition, Georgia's innovative reform model recognizes the importance of preparing, and encouraging, students to succeed in work, college and life. The state is committed to improving its current longitudinal data system to extend its reach to track post-secondary students and is revising its reporting system so it is more user-friendly. And, Georgia is taking innovative measures to help students succeed in high school by supporting rigorous, alternative diploma routes – all tailored to provide the link between the “what” of school to the “why” of a students' future –and developing an aggressive STEM agenda.

Who's Represented in Georgia's RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	13%
% Students Represented	41%
% Schools Represented	39%
% Students in Poverty Represented	46%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers' Union Represented	N/A ¹

Georgia “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by July 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- A commitment to develop programs to allow students to earn credits through proficiency-based assessment, rather than through “seat time.”
- A requirement that all elementary and middle schools make Science the second Adequate Yearly Progress indicator.
- Enhancements to the longitudinal data system by developing user-friendly reports and providing teachers and principals rapid access to student-level data.
- The development of partnerships with universities, researchers and intermediary groups to conduct a research study on how best to inform decision-making and improve student performance through the use of data.
- Establishes common, statewide definitions of teacher, leader and district effectiveness.
- The expansion of alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals.
- Development of teacher effectiveness measures in compensation, promotion, retention and placement.
- Signing “bonuses” to effective teachers and principals who choose to move to a rural high-need school for at least three years.
- Authority for charter school authority, no-cap on expansion and no-cap on the number of students that can enroll in charter schools.

¹ From Georgia's application: “Since GA is a right-to-work state and since LEAs do not employ teachers who are represented by a teachers' union, the signature of the local teachers' union leader is not applicable in the case of Georgia.”

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Illinois: Committed and Collaborative Efforts to Improve Instruction

The state of Illinois is not only recognized as the home to Secretary Arne Duncan, former Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools, but is also known for its strong commitment and collaborative efforts to accelerate and improve educational instruction.

This commitment and collaboration was seen in Illinois' recent legislative session where Governor Pat Quinn signed into law four reform measures to improve student achievement: development of a comprehensive state longitudinal data system; alternative routes to teacher certification; authority to double the number of charter schools in the state; and rigorous teacher and leader evaluation models where student growth is a significant factor.

Specifically, work around the state's new evaluation model is a prime example of the state's collective effort to improve instruction. The evaluation system is representative of the differing positions around measuring and evaluating teachers on student growth data. The comprised model allows for each of the 869 school districts and their local teachers' union representatives to collaborate to develop a teacher and principal evaluation that incorporates the use of student growth data within a given period of time. If a district-based compromise is not met, the district must adopt the state's evaluation system, which will use student growth as 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation.

It is this type of commitment and collaboration by the state, legislators, districts and the union that is advancing Illinois' education reform efforts.

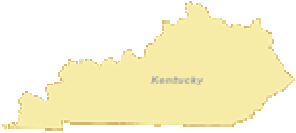
Who's Represented in Illinois' RTTT Application?	
% of Districts Represented	42%
% Students Represented	74%
% Schools Represented	64%
% Students in Poverty Represented	81%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	32%

Illinois "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments by 2012.
- The development of a statewide, comprehensive longitudinal data system that allows for a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students and a student-level transcript.
- Provisions to allow non-profit organizations to offer state certified alternative routes for teachers.
- Transparent, accessible data to the public on disparities around educator effectiveness.
- Establishes a new, enhanced multi-tiered performance evaluation system that is comprised of at least 50 percent student growth data.
- The identification of "Super LEA's" willing to implement "bigger, bolder, faster" reforms the states' lowest-achieving schools. Required reforms in "Super LEA's" include:
 - Implementation of a new teacher and principal evaluation system, by the 2011-12 school year.
 - Staffing autonomy provided for all decisions around intensive professional development, filling vacancies, and relocating staff through voluntary and involuntary transfers.
 - Participation in state intervention framework.
- Authority for charter schools with provisions to allow charter schools to receive equitable funding.

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Kentucky: Common Core Adoption

The state of Kentucky is the first state in the nation to adopt the Common Core – sight unseen – a clear indication of the state’s drive to lead the nation in education improvement reforms. This vision is centered in developing a system that can provide every student with a 21st century education. The state’s reform plan to implement such a vision is centered on two core elements: ensuring every student has a highly-effective teacher, and working, relentlessly, to continually improve teacher practices and instruction.

Kentucky’s vision is advanced through the Race to the Top’s assurances.

The state directs specific attention to the use of student, teacher and leader assessments to evaluate performance and raise student achievement; especially in rural areas of the state.

Kentucky is one of ten states nationwide that does not currently have charter school authority. However, the state does give expansive authority for schools to adopt “innovative” practices and be self-governed.

% of Districts Represented	100%
% Students Represented	100%
% Schools Represented	100%
% Students in Poverty Represented	100%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers’ Union Represented	100%

Kentucky “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Kentucky has already adopted the of Common Core standards
- Provide teachers and principals with a full set of tools to assist in improving student learning, such as:
 - Curriculum Resources to provide a cross-walk between new standards and previous standards.
 - Assessment Resources for teachers to help identify data in formative, summative, interim and annual accountability testing.
 - Instruction Resources to provide teachers with instructional strategies and interventions.
 - Professional Learning Resources to provide teachers and principals additional professional-development opportunities.
 - School Improvement Resources to allow districts to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of improvement efforts.
- A commitment to revamp additional standards in subject areas not included in the Common Core Standards.
- Longitudinal data system with state agencies committed to collaborate and share data across the P-20 system.
- Authority for state turnaround intervention and an aggressive, supportive model -- Assist and Support School Improvement Success Teams (ASSIST) -- which provides additional staff to the school.
- The development of new, multi-tiered evaluation models for teachers and principals which will include student growth.
- Authority for innovation schools and provisions allowing innovative schools to self-govern and make specific school-based decisions.
- A robust STEM Task Force comprised of 110 government, business and education principals focused on increasing the number STEM graduates in the state.

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Louisiana: Innovative and Catalytic Teacher Reforms

The state of Louisiana is a strong contender to win Race to the Top funding primarily due to the innovative programs that are being implemented through the Recovery School District, a district that represents those schools impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Reforms undertaken in the Recovery School District include revamping its teacher pipeline through close collaboration with the New Teacher Project and Teacher for America and lifting the cap to restrict the amount of charter schools.

Who's Represented in Louisiana's RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	67%
% Students Represented	47%
% Schools Represented	48%
% Students in Poverty Represented	51%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers' Union Represented	78%

Additional reforms by the state build off the initiatives underway within the Recovery School District. The state has taken strides to revamp its teacher and principal evaluation model to include the use of student data as a significant factor and, in addition, has developed a comprehensive data system to link student achievement data to teacher effectiveness as a means to improve instruction.

Finally, Louisiana's commitment to develop and recruit great teachers and principals is evident in the state's large alternative routes programs and the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), a research-based school reform initiative focused on recruiting, motivating, developing, retaining and rewarding high-quality teachers through various professional growth and career path opportunities and performance-based compensation.

Louisiana "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments for all grades and subjects by 2015.
- The use of value-added data to measure teacher effectiveness for those teachers hired within the last three years.
- The expansion of alternative teacher preparation programs as a means to create a pipeline of high-quality teachers and principals.
- The implementation of new end-of-course assessments in high schools.
- Greater professional development to teachers and principals on Response to Intervention (RtI) data and how to better analyze data and determine appropriate student interventions.
- Adoption of new teacher and principal evaluation model comprised of 50 percent student growth data.
- The creation of a teacher and leader incentive program for educators willing to work in low-achieving, high-poverty schools for at least three years.
- Identification of schools requiring turnaround interventions and measures to determine if school is to be closed, transformed or turned into a charter school. If the school is to be transformed, all staff will be interviewed and no more than 50 percent of teachers and principals rehired.
- Tax-credit program for corporations who donate to private-school scholarship programs.
- Authority for charter school authority, no-cap on expansion.

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Massachusetts: Individualized Learning by Effective Teachers

The state of Massachusetts is well-respected as a state driven to improve student learning and implement reforms to raise student achievement. Massachusetts' existing reform platform is focused on individualizing learning, developing and retaining effective teachers, heightening the focus on college- and career-readiness and using innovation to drive change. This, coupled with recent legislative reforms to expand the number of charter schools and provide additional authority to the state to intervene in low-performing districts, boosts an already strong reform agenda.



Massachusetts' focus on individualized learning has proved successful in improving student growth; specifically, the state leads the nation in both 4th grade and 8th grade reading and mathematics, as identified by NAEP. And yet, despite the strong data, the state recognizes that individualized learning and course requirements is varying across the state, and action must take place to standardize requirements so all students in the state are gaining the skills necessary to be college and career ready. The state is committed to improving and scaling MassCore, the state's high school curriculum model, improve the 10th grade proficiency test and implement a common curriculum that is linked to the Common Core standards. These measures, coupled with an Early Warning Indicator System designed to identify students at risk of dropping out, will further Massachusetts' efforts to provide every student with strong, aligned and individualized learning education.

Who's Represented in Massachusetts RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	65%
% Students Represented	72%
% Schools Represented	73%
% Students in Poverty Represented	86%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	51%

Massachusetts "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- Improvements to the current longitudinal data system to provide accessible, actionable, comprehensive and timely data to all K-12 educators and stakeholders and better support usability and comprehension.
- The implementation of a student growth data in all tested grades by end of 2010—to be used in the coming years as a significant factor in teacher evaluations—and continued efforts to build measures of student growth for non-tested subjects and grades.
- The development of a multi-tiered licensure system that is both performance- and portfolio-based.
- Targeted professional development to teachers and principals – especially in using data to drive decisions for individualized student learning needs.
- A commitment to turnaround of low-performing schools; established specialized turnaround teacher corps and teams.
- The creation of a non-profit school-improvement intermediary organization to accelerate and ensure the quality of school turnaround work by building, identifying and managing high-quality turnaround providers.
- Authority for charter schools; ability to expand number of charter schools.

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New York: Broad State Authority

The state of New York has extensive authority over its public education system; more-so than any other state in the nation. The New York State Board of Regents (Regents) is the body responsible for supervising all educational activities and, in recent years, has lead the state down a path of reform that includes the development of a P-16 data system and adoption of statewide learning standards and summative assessments tied to these standards.



New York recognizes that these recent reforms are a start to a fuller, more vigorous, effort to implement systems that will prepare all youth for a 21st century environment. Embedded in New York's Race to the Top application are change elements the state seeks to build upon.

The state specifically seeks to drive reforms that would implement internationally benchmarked standards and assessments, develop a P-20 data system, establish a system to require high-quality teachers and principals to serve in high-needs schools, strengthen turnaround school provisions, establish conditions to allow for middle and secondary virtual instruction and virtual school models, and a focus on STEM subjects.

New York "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Potential adoption of Common Core standards, if not viewed as rigorous enough, by June 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- A robust pipeline of alternative teacher certification programs.
- Improvements to teacher and principal preparation programs; incorporation of performance-based assessments to ensure teachers placed are highly-effective.
- Revisions to the teacher and principal evaluation model and process; includes demonstration of ability to drive student achievement as evidenced through student growth measures and comprehensive evaluations that include measures of student growth and achievement.
- The pursuit of an integrated accountability system that includes a student growth model.
- Current progress to improve longitudinal data system to develop a P-20 database.
- A commitment to establish new programs and options for educational routes to graduation.
- Aggressive measures to turnaround low-performing schools; including professional development, formative, comprehensive reporting and instructional system, the use of interim and summative assessments to closely monitor student growth, and state turnaround assistance from nonprofits and intermediaries.
- Authority for charter schools; 200 cap limit.
- STEM strategies focused in each of the four assurances: (common core math & science standards, recruiting STEM teachers and supporting development of STEM school models).

Who's Represented in New York's RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	66%
% Students Represented	82%
% Schools Represented	40%
% Students in Poverty Represented	94%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	61%

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North Carolina: Continuous and Rigorous Evaluation

The state of North Carolina has a foundation of strong leaders, collaborators and a base of ongoing innovation initiatives aimed at developing a 21st century school experience for its students.



North Carolina's reform efforts have been historically rooted in the use of evaluation and data to drive decisions. This practice serves as the foundation to their Race to the Top application.

Interwoven throughout each of the four assurances, the state places heavy emphasis on the benefits evaluations have in ensuring all programs and practices have a sustained impact on student achievement. North Carolina has developed a comprehensive evaluation strategy that includes a scale-up plan to implement evaluation models through the state's education system.

Who's Represented in North Carolina's RTTT Application?	
% of Districts Represented	100%
% Students Represented	100%
% Schools Represented	100%
% Students in Poverty Represented	100%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers' Union Represented	99%

The state's current technology infrastructure and resources assist North Carolina with its evaluation initiative implementation. The state's longitudinal data systems (NCWISE and CEDAR) provide broadband access and timely data to help inform instruction and the infrastructure provides an online system for recording teacher and principal evaluations – technology that will make student growth and student achievement data available to teachers, principals, districts, schools and the public.

North Carolina "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by August 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- The development of "Next Generation Assessment System" which creates three assessments:
 - *Daily Assessment*: a network to exchange and share student work within classroom;
 - *Cognitive Diagnostic Assessment Model*: diagnoses of student learning along the trajectory;
 - *Curriculum Monitoring*: periodic assessment of progress at the classroom, grade, subject or school level.
- The development of a PK-20 longitudinal data system.
- Broad arrays of alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals.
- Provides incentive bonuses to teachers and principals that meet and exceed student growth targets.
- A comprehensive Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) that provides customized information to educators about individual student growth and analyzes multiple aspects of a student's academic history.
- The ability to remove ineffective principals and teachers; teachers after three years of poor evaluations and principals after two years.
- A commitment to integrate student growth in educator evaluations.
- Pledge to use data to evaluate all programs, practices, and policy decisions surrounding program and practice investments.
- Authority for state intervention in low-achieving schools and a State Turnaround Program that provides training, support and coaching in research-based practices to school principals and teachers.
- Authority for charter schools; 100 cap limit.

Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants



Ohio: Seeking Innovation and Educational Entrepreneurship

The state of Ohio serves as an example of the education reform possibilities when leadership, business and nonprofit organizations come together with a goal of raising student achievement and improving the school system.

Best notable in the creation of the Ohio's STEM Learning Network, but evident also in efforts to pass comprehensive education reform laws and the creation of the School Innovation & Support Network, these public-private partnerships demonstrate a statewide commitment to provide a college and career-ready education to all of the Ohio's youth. Specifically, the Ohio STEM Learning Network has been recognized as a promising model in connecting, leveraging and improving STEM education opportunities for students and is currently being replicated nationwide.

Who's Represented in Ohio's RTTT Application?	
% of Districts Represented	51%
% Students Represented	50%
% Schools Represented	53%
% Students in Poverty Represented	57%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers' Union Represented	37%

Ohio's recent education reform initiative (H.B.1) also demonstrates the direction the state is taking to implement stronger, bolder reforms. The state sent a clear message that it is focusing on improving student performance and graduation rates by updating, overhauling and internationally benchmarking its state standards, assessments and curricula.

Ohio "Raced to the Top" because the states' existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- Adoption of new internationally benchmarked standards in science and social studies by June 8, 2010.
- The creation of task forces to work with LEA's, higher-education and Ohio Board of Regents to ensure that college-entry requirements are aligned with high-school exit requirements and teacher prep programs provide instruction aligned to those standards.
- The expansion of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy program.
- Modifications to the current data system to provide user-friendly data reports.
- Expansion of Ohio's student identifier data system to include higher-education students.
- Provisional period for teacher certification ("tenure") of seven years.
- Requiring all new teachers to enter into a four-year teacher residency program beginning in fall 2011.
- Additional professional development, mentorship programs and leadership training for educators.
- Establishing an eight-pronged plan to address the state's lowest performing schools.
- Authority for charter schools.
- A requirement that every student receives an education rooted in STEM by requiring students to complete a rigorous course of study in STEM, supporting teachers in inquiry-based learning approaches and building student motivation to pursue STEM academics and careers. The Ohio STEM Learning Network will be used to accelerate these efforts.

Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants

Pennsylvania: Doubling Student Proficiency by 2014

The state of Pennsylvania has a history of education improvements – improvements that increase student achievement. With significant funding resources provided by the state, strong accountability statues and an effective charter school network, it is not surprising the state has seen reading and math achievement scores improve by nearly 30 percent over the last seven years.



Districts participating in Pennsylvania’s Race to the Top application are fully committed to implementing bold reforms to assist the state with meeting its goal of doubling the number of students who meet statewide proficiency targets by 2014.

In partnership with 120 school districts and 59 charter school organizations, the state has designed a Race to the Top application that is built on clear standards, assessments, curriculum frameworks, differentiating instruction, targeted resources and proven interventions.

Pennsylvania “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards and commitment to adopt summative, benchmark and diagnostic common assessments.
- Online instructional tools for teachers that provide diagnostic assessments and customized lesson plans and units – all aligned to the state’s standards, assessment, instruction and intervention framework.
- A commitment by union and local affiliates to reform the current teacher placement and evaluation models —using either a state model or locally developed models that rely significantly on student growth but also incorporates other measures—for more than a third of the state’s teachers.
- The creation of an integrated, easy-to-access online tool that integrates school and district data; all designed to allow teachers, principals and parents can access student data.
- Assigning data facilitators to districts, one for every 30 schools, to provide instruction on using data to drive instruction and develop a school-level data-driven culture.
- The development of highly specified standards for all teacher preparation programs, including alternative routes, by 2011.
- A one-year professional development residency program, Turnaround Academies, for principals focused on effective tactics used in turning around low-performing schools.
- Expansion of “Science: It’s Elementary” program to all participating elementary schools.
- Advancement of STEM through mandatory exams in biology, chemistry, Algebra I and II and geometry to ensure rigor and consistency across the state.
- Pledge to advocate for the advancement of pending legislation to create alternative certification pathway for mid-career STEM professions.
- Authority for charter school authority, no-cap on expansion.

Who’s Represented in Pennsylvania’s RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	28%
% Students Represented	38%
% Schools Represented	36%
% Students in Poverty Represented	58%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers’ Union Represented	100%

Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants

Rhode Island: Partnering for Reform

The state of Rhode Island is small, but mighty. Over the last ten years, the state has worked diligently to build partnerships and create policy conditions for comprehensive reforms. With two strong unions that have, historically, made education reforms difficult, Rhode Island has been able to establish a working relationship that allows for compromise and negotiations on policy reforms – especially evident in the state’s progress in turning around low-performing schools.



The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) has developed a strategic plan and reform agenda designed to deliver dramatic improvements in student achievement. The reform agenda is focused on two theories of action: (1) all students achieve at high levels when effective teachers are in the classroom and effective leaders are in the building and, (2) in order to create effective teachers and leaders, consistent reforms to systems, policies, resources based on student needs are required.

Rhode Island “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards prior to August 2, 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- Implementation of a teacher and principal evaluation model based on at least 51% student growth data by 2013-14.
- Development of a statewide model to measure value-added and growth for individual students by 2011-12.
- An evaluation system designed to provide data that will serve as the basis for all human resource decisions, including: certification, selection, tenure, professional development, supports for individual and groups of educators, placement, compensation, promotion and retention.
- Improvements to the current data system to advance reporting capabilities and build customized data dashboards for teachers, principals and administrators at the district and local levels.
- The creation of a statewide Data Governance Board responsible for overseeing the management of the state’s education data system.
- The expansion of efforts to recruit, incubate and bring to scale high-quality education preparation programs through alternative certification routes.
- Authority for the state to intervene in low-performing schools; strong track record of state success in turning around low-performing schools.
- Authority for charter schools; minimal limitations on charter school expansion.
- Support for virtual learning networks and virtual learning high schools.
- Adoption of Engineering and Technology standards benchmarked to the International Technology Educators Association’s (STE) *Standards for Technology Literacy*.

Who’s Represented in Rhode Island’s RTTT Application?

% of Districts Represented	92%
% Students Represented	93%
% Schools Represented	94%
% Students in Poverty Represented	97%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	FUS
% Teachers’ Union Represented	4%

Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants

South Carolina: “INSPIRED” Reforms

The state of South Carolina’s education platform, INSPIRED, reflects a deep commitment to reform and change through: “innovation, next generation learners, standards and assessments, personalized instruction, input and choice, redesigned school, effective teachers and leaders and data systems.” This platform is built to turnaround the state’s struggling education system – a system that is producing 70% of America’s dropouts – by focusing efforts and aligning programs based on data results to ensure that collective resources and energy are going to programs that are successfully meeting the state’s unified goal of ensuring dramatic growth in student achievement, graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates.



With a strong longitudinal data system already in place, plans to expand to a PK-20 system, and a common statewide teacher and principal evaluation system that includes measures of student growth, South Carolina has the data necessary to implement INSPIRED and dramatically improve student achievement.

South Carolina “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by July 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- The completion of a statewide alignment of curriculum resources and instructional materials and a pledge to address gaps by 2011.
- State participation in multiple assessment consortiums: SMARTER, MOSAIC and Balanced Assessment.
- A common, statewide teacher and principal evaluation model.
- A conceptual framework and detailed plan for the expansion of the teacher evaluation model (ADEPT) and principal evaluation model (PADEPP) to include a value-added component.
- A strong data system with the capability to consolidate data to enable cross-district and cross-school comparisons.
- Support for alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals.
- The creation of a State Turnaround Coordinator role designed to assist the state with implementing turnaround school models.
- Authority for charter schools.
- Focus on STEM teacher pipeline, strengthening skills of teachers in STEM subjects and encouraging more students to enter STEM classes.

<i>Who’s Represented in South Carolina’s RTTT Application?</i>	
% of Districts Represented	95%
% Students Represented	99%
% Schools Represented	98%
% Students in Poverty Represented	98%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers’ Union Represented	N/A



Race to the Top: Round One Finalists Announced

The End is in Sight for 16 Race to the Top Applicants

Tennessee: Bold, Innovative Reforms and Strong Partnerships

The state of Tennessee has been considered a “front runner” for Round I of Race to the Top and, as such, it is not a surprise to see that it was selected as a finalist by the Department of Education.



With strong support from Governor Philip Bredesen (D), the state legislature implemented key reforms in 2009 that were aligned closely to the Race to the Top application guidelines. Furthermore, the Memphis City Schools was selected by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to participate in the Teacher Effectiveness Initiative, a \$90 million grant targeted to reforming and overhauling current human capital systems – a clear sign of the state and district’s willingness to implement reforms to improve teaching and learning.

Through both the advancement of new education policies and innovative partnerships between the district, union and community, Tennessee has demonstrated its willingness for reform and a track-record for implementing such reform.

% of Districts Represented	100%
% Students Represented	100%
% Schools Represented	100%
% Students in Poverty Represented	100%
Forced-Unionism State (FUS) or Right to Work State (RTW)	RTW
% Teachers' Union Represented	93%

Tennessee “Raced to the Top” because the states’ existing and proposed reforms include:

- Adoption of Common Core standards by July 2010 and commitment to adopt common assessments.
- A strong longitudinal data system, Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), that allows for student progress data to be collected and assessed.
- A revised teacher and principal evaluation system that consists of 50% student growth: 35% from TVAAS data and 15% from other objective measures.
- The use of teacher and principal evaluations in tenure decisions.
- Teacher access to value-added data specific to his/her classroom and/or school.
- The Teacher Equity Plan, a plan to ensure that lowest-achieving districts with the largest teacher equity gaps are addressed by placing high-performing teaching teams in these districts and schools.
- Professional development to teachers and principals in the use of value-added data to improve instruction.
- The development of an Early Warning System on a user-friendly dashboard to help teachers identify struggling students.
- A commitment to align high school and college-entry requirements by 2013.
- Authority for charter schools with an expansion of the charter school cap from 50 schools to 90 schools.
- The creation of an “Achievement School District”, a district made up of the state’s 13 persistently lowest-achieving schools to be overseen by the state education Commissioner. All collective bargaining powers in these schools are removed to allow for unprecedented levels of human capital support.
- The creation of new curriculum, STEM schools, and multi-sector regional partners to focus on STEM.