

# Transforming Education in Rhode Island



## The Race to the Top Opportunity

### Race to the Top Implementation Update – Key Accomplishments

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#### Year Three, Quarter One: September 1, 2012 - November 30, 2012

##### Administration and Progress Monitoring:

- Annual Performance Report to the U.S. Department of Education (ED): In September, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) compiled, reviewed, and submitted to ED all required information for the state’s Annual Performance Report on Race to the Top.
- LEA Performance Monitoring: Throughout the summer, RIDE met with each local education agency (LEA) individually to discuss LEAs’ Race to the Top progress to date and readiness to implement in Year 3. The information gathered at those meetings informed the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) meetings conducted with peer groups of LEAs this fall. The CLO meeting discussions focused on LEA strategies for deepening connections among major Race to the Top initiatives. LEA feedback indicates that they found the meeting discussions valuable.
- Budgeting and Spending: RIDE has been working with LEAs to be sure all unspent Year 1 and Year 2 funds are re-allocated through a budget amendment process. RIDE continues to partner with LEAs to aid them in the reimbursement process to receive funds for completed Race to the Top work.
- Engagement: In October, Rhode Island’s “Moving Forward” stakeholder group convened along with other state teams in Washington, DC, to develop specific action plans to further our Race to the Top efforts and include the perspectives of all stakeholders. The Moving Forward group’s most significant accomplishment of the last year has been the development of the “I Pledge” campaign, which launched publicly in September. To date, more than 8,100 pledges have been made by a variety of stakeholders on the campaign website, [www.educationpledgeri.org](http://www.educationpledgeri.org).

## □ Year-Three Projects:

- Standards and Curriculum: RIDE continues to support Rhode Island LEAs in their transition to the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessment. Cohorts of LEAs continue to develop and align curricula to the new standards in both English language arts and math.
- Data Systems and Online Tools for Educators:
  - The *Instructional Management System (IMS)* went live in September. Teacher-course-student (TCS) data collection, which is required for access to the IMS and related initiatives (i.e., interim assessments and the formative assessment online professional development modules), continues to be a large focus. RIDE continues to assist LEAs with their TCS data collection and reporting and the overall use of the IMS.
  - The *Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS)* also launched in September, and while this system will ultimately help streamline the evaluation process, the initial learning curve and system configuration have required significant support from RIDE. RIDE has conducted demonstration sessions of the EPSS for teachers and evaluators via webinar, and RIDE continues to update the EPSS website with frequently asked questions, forms, and video recordings of system functionality.
  - Some LEAs have begun implementing the *formative assessment online professional development modules*. RIDE has been providing those LEAs with technical support around enrollment, scheduling, and access.
  - The *interim assessments* went live in October, which allowed LEAs to download the software and begin using practice assessments with their students. LEAs then began administering the fixed-form assessments to students in November.
  - All LEAs participating in *data-use professional development* have completed the first four days of this training.
- Educator Evaluation: RIDE hosted a variety of opportunities for teachers and evaluators to receive additional information and support around setting Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as part of the evaluation process. Participants had the opportunity to collaborate with educators from other LEAs to build their capacity for assisting teachers in the SLO writing and revision process. RIDE developed additional SLO resources for the field, including new SLO samples, a narrated PowerPoint for teachers, and new guidance for writing SLOs. Feedback on the helpfulness of the SLO sessions has been overwhelmingly positive and reinforced our belief that ongoing and varied supports will be necessary to implementation success. As part of our effort to provide timely, high-quality guidance, we posted over 100 responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about educator evaluation. The FAQs both clarified existing guidance and addressed new issues that have come up since the beginning of this school year.
- Beginning Teacher Induction: Induction coaches are meeting with and observing the beginning teachers in their caseloads on a regular basis, providing each beginning teacher with, on average, 90 minutes of coaching per week. RIDE is currently providing induction coach services to 45 LEAs. To date, 398 beginning teacher new hires have been confirmed for this year. All of those teachers, in addition to 34 teachers in our urban core LEAs who are receiving a second year of service, have been matched with an induction coach. RIDE continues to provide support to induction coaches through biweekly forums and a quarterly training academy.

- School Transformation: RIDE is working with the 13 persistently lowest-achieving (PLA) schools identified during Year 1 and Year 2. Each identified PLA school has developed a school reform plan, which RIDE has reviewed and approved. All PLA schools have submitted to RIDE periodic and annual reports on progress being made. The Turnaround Leadership Program principal residency training has started for four aspiring turnaround school leaders.
- Virtual Learning Math Modules: RIDE has held a variety of training sessions for the virtual learning math modules (VLMM) with LEAs from around the state. RIDE also updated the VLMM guidebook and collected feedback from LEAs who participated in the spring and summer pilot.