

Stepping up for Success

A Year Three Progress Report on
Race to the Top in Rhode Island

2010-2013

August 2013





Race to the Top in Rhode Island

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Rhode Island **\$75 million** to help us raise **student achievement**.

During the past three years, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and local districts and schools have been **working together** to develop and roll out new **supports for educators and students**.

Race to the Top is a four-year grant. This report shares what Rhode Island achieved* in **Year Three**, between September 2012 and September 2013.

*This report highlights Rhode Island's major accomplishments in Year Three but is not intended to include every activity that is part of Race to the Top. A comprehensive view of Race to the Top in Rhode Island is found in the state's [scope of work](#).



Dear Friends of Education,

All Rhode Islanders were deeply honored three years ago when the U.S. Department of Education awarded our state a \$75-million Race to the Top grant to transform education and to accelerate our schools toward greatness. As we near the end of our four-year grant, we are proud to look back on our accomplishments to date.

As you can see from the *Year Three Progress Report on Race to the Top in Rhode Island* that we are releasing today, we have invested these federal funds wisely to improve teaching and learning in our state. Using Race to the Top funds, we have:

- supported implementation of the educator evaluation process in schools and districts statewide;
- developed and launched an online system to streamline the evaluation process;
- engaged teams from more than 134 schools in intensive professional development on the use of data to drive instruction;
- provided virtual learning mathematics instruction to more than 2,700 students who need additional support; and
- launched the Academy for Transformative Leadership, which trains aspiring principals to be turnaround leaders in our struggling schools.

We want to thank all Rhode Island school leaders, teachers, and students for their commitment to these important initiatives over the past three years. We are excited to see the continued application of these practices, and in the coming school year we look forward to creating deep and sustainable changes in teaching and learning.

Race to the Top has provided Rhode Island with the necessary foundation to improve our schools, and we are confident that, working together, we can continue stepping up toward successful outcomes for all students!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. D. Chafee".

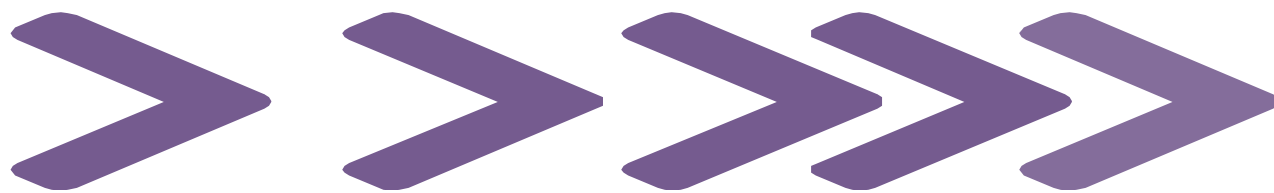
Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah A. Gist".

Deborah A. Gist, Education Commissioner

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Educator Excellence

Educator Evaluations: In Year Three, all Rhode Island school districts conducted teacher and building-administrator evaluations using a state-approved evaluation model. Rhode Island provided robust training for all evaluators, including a four-day intensive summer academy and two half-day modules. Additionally, Rhode Island launched online training to support evaluator calibration when observing classrooms and held forums for teachers on Student Learning Objectives. Districts continued to use state-trained Intermediary Service Providers to provide ongoing professional development on all components of the evaluation model to educators and building administrators.

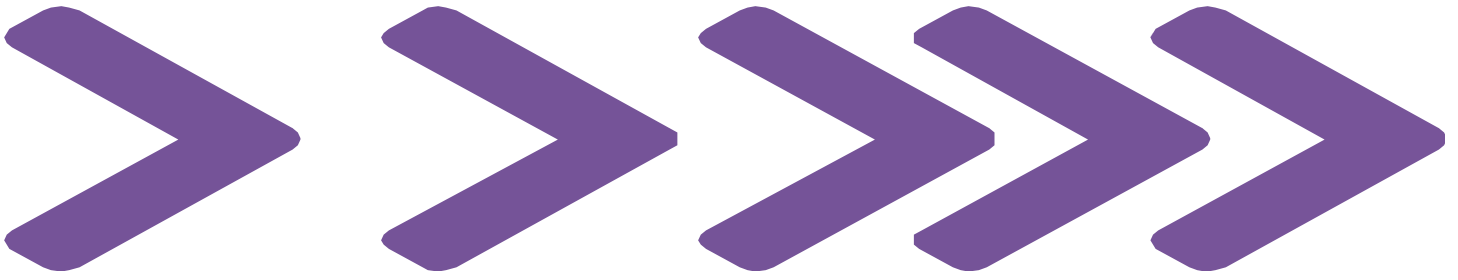
Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS): Rhode Island developed and launched the EPSS in Fall 2012. The EPSS streamlines the evaluation process by making all evaluation tools, guidance, and data accessible in a single location. As of the end of the 2012-13 school year, all districts used the EPSS to submit their evaluation ratings.

eCert: The new data system that will support Rhode Island's educator certification system, eCert, went live in Spring 2013 and allowed the public access to teacher certification records. The system also provides a link between teacher preparation programs, certification, and evaluation data. This will eventually allow our higher education partners the ability to assess the quality of their preparation programs.

Beginning Teacher Induction: In the 2012-13 school year, Rhode Island Induction Coaches provided a minimum of 75 minutes per week of support to Rhode Island's 412 beginning teachers. Additionally, 41 teachers in our urban districts received a second year of support. The feedback from both beginning teachers and administrators continues to be positive, and as a result we continue to engage our district leadership around models for sustaining this impactful program.

What's ahead

Districts will continue to evaluate building administrators and teachers using a state-approved evaluation model. Some districts will begin piloting an evaluation model for support professionals. Enhancements to the EPSS and eCert systems will be rolled out at the start of the school year.



Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments

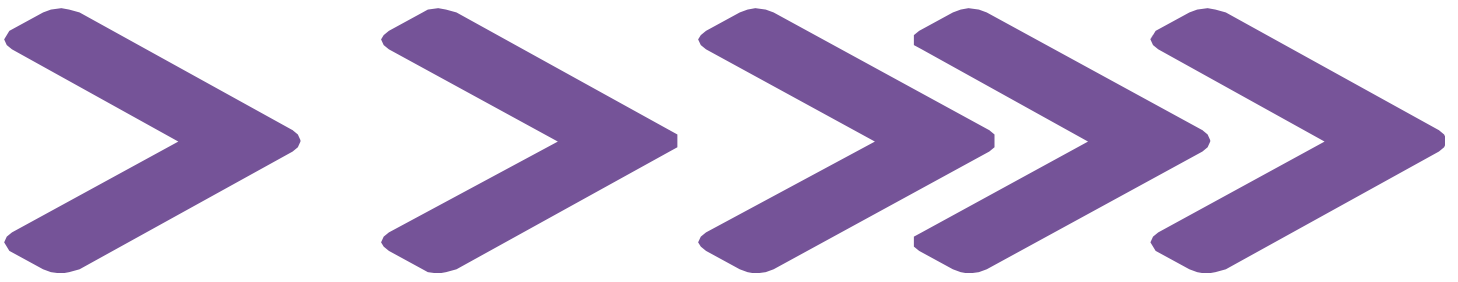
Transition to the Common Core State Standards: By the end of Year Three, Rhode Island trained 5,700 educators in *Study of the Standards* sessions. We continued to deepen educator understanding of key instructional shifts in the Common Core State Standards by providing intensive professional development around topics such as academic vocabulary and text complexity. Additional grant funding was awarded to nine districts and schools to support Professional Learning Communities related to advancing the alignment of curriculum to the Common Core State Standards.

Curriculum Alignment: Cohorts of districts, in partnership with Rhode Island content experts and the Dana Center, have completed model curricula in both mathematics and English language arts. These curricula have been made accessible to all districts through the Instructional Management System. In Year Three, Rhode Island awarded 19 districts additional grant funding to further LEAs' strategic plans for Common Core State Standards implementation through the development of curriculum-embedded assessments.

Interim Assessments: During the 2012-13 school year, 62 schools across 17 districts administered online and paper-based interim assessments in mathematics and English language arts to students in grades 3 through high school. The assessments are designed to help teachers assess mastery of content over the course of the school year and to prepare students for the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments that will be used in 2016.

What's ahead

Districts will begin implementing an aligned curriculum in Fall 2013. To support their work, Rhode Island will continue to offer professional development on key instructional shifts in the areas of mathematics and English language arts. Additional curriculum-writing cohorts will work on model curricula for science, social studies, mathematics, and English language arts.



Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments...cont.

Formative Assessments Professional Development: In Fall 2012, Rhode Island launched an interactive, online, formative assessment professional development program. The program has content modules designed to address a variety of topics on assessment, learning, and classroom culture. These modules combine direct instruction with interactive classroom videos featuring Rhode Island educators. Teachers across the state went through the course individually and as a team and then met to discuss the practices in facilitated communities of practice.

Data Use Professional Development: During the 2012-13 school year, School Data Leadership Teams representing 134 schools across 32 districts participated in a professional development series designed to teach educators how to collaboratively analyze relevant student data, to inform educational decisions, and to increase student-achievement outcomes. The 10-day series included three in-person visits from the individual school's data coach, who provided tailored, on-site support on the district's use of its own data. This initiative will continue into the 2013-14 school year, with the remainder of schools signed up to participate.

What's ahead

Districts that did not participate in these professional development opportunities will do so in the coming school year. Those that participated last year will work to deepen and sustain these practices in their schools.



Transformation and Innovation

School Transformation: In Year Three, Rhode Island has worked with district leadership to facilitate conditions for success in schools identified as “persistently low-achieving.” Through bi-monthly tactical meetings and ongoing collaboration, we are able to monitor progress against school improvement plans. For the leaders of those schools, Rhode Island has offered intensive professional development focused on turnaround strategies. Additionally, four aspiring and current principals attended a year-long Turnaround Leadership residency program. Following the completion of that program, the principals were hired by districts across the state.

Virtual Learning: More than 2,700 students across the state have enrolled in virtual learning math modules, which provide additional support in mathematics to students in pre-algebra, algebra I, and geometry. Students enrolled in the course are also able to take advantage of tutoring support while completing the modules. The modules were rolled out in various ways, including integration of the modules into classroom instruction, and many districts are using the modules as one support for students who are working hard to earn high-school diplomas.

High-Performing Charter Schools: Rhode Island awarded two expansion grants: to International Charter School, a K-5 tri-lingual school expanding to K-8, and to Paul Cuffee, a maritime-themed K-12 school. Additionally, development grants were awarded to Village Green, the state’s first virtual public high school, and Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy, a K-4 school .

What’s ahead

Eight new aspiring principals will begin their year-long residency in the Turnaround Leadership Program.

The use of virtual learning math modules will expand to include a pilot with three adult education programs.



Managing Race to the Top

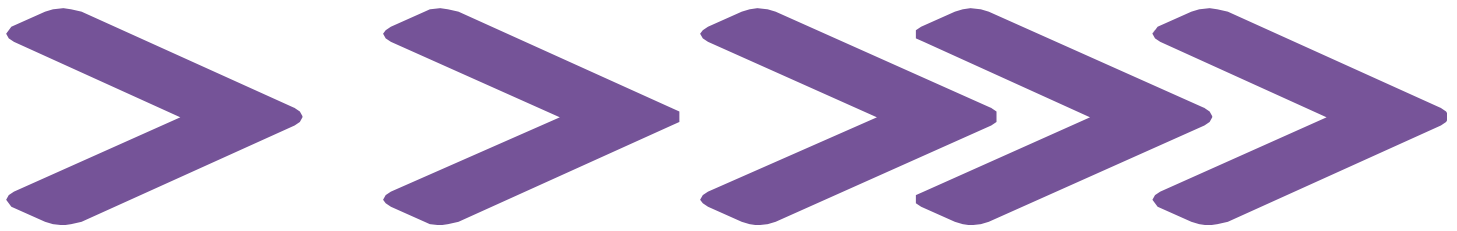
To manage the complex development, implementation, and integration of Race to the Top projects at the state and local levels, RIDE has invested significant time and attention in progress monitoring and quality assurance. The methods described below were acknowledged by the U.S. Department of Education's Reform Support Network and shared with other Race to the Top states.

State Level: Rhode Island monitors the progress and quality of implementation of Race to the Top projects using a performance management system called EdStat. The U.S. Department of Education created an article titled "The Rhode Island Approach to Monitoring and Performance Management."

Local Level: Rhode Island monitors the progress and quality of implementation of Race to the Top projects using the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) process. All 52 Rhode Island districts, charter schools, and state schools are participating in Race to the Top. All of these entities attend CLO meetings, in which leadership teams from around the state share promising practices and challenges with one another. By the end of Year Three, 92 percent of CLO participants indicated that the sharing of practices has been valuable to them, and 85 percent of participants were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the meetings overall.

What's ahead

Rhode Island will continue using EdStat and Collaborative Learning for Outcomes to monitor state and local progress on Race to the Top projects in the 2013-14 school year.



Investing Race to the Top Funds

Race to the Top Investments through the End of Year Three (9.24.2010 - 9.30.2013)			
Budget Categories	Spending to Date 9.24.10 – 6.30.13	Cost Projections 7.1.13 – 9.30.14	Total
State Spending Only			
Study of the Standards and Curriculum Alignment	\$3,779,355	\$537,371	\$4,316,726
Student Growth Measures (for educator evaluation system)	\$761,312	\$172,511	\$933,823
Certification and Licensure System	\$418,338	\$602,499	\$1,020,837
Multiple Pathways (virtual learning and innovation)	\$136,696	\$848,138	\$984,834
Early Warning System	\$110,328	\$27,989	\$138,317
Compensation Reform	\$105,248	\$94,728	\$199,976
Quality Teacher PD	\$59,576	\$547,924	\$607,500
Project Management and Collaborative Learning for Outcomes	\$1,243,716	\$304,944	\$1,548,660
Administration Expenses (such as travel, equipment, and supplies)	\$1,179,713	\$1,626,862	\$2,806,575
Legal Counsel	\$51,492	\$37,748	\$89,240
Personnel and Fringe Benefits	\$3,758,714	\$2,432,534	\$6,191,248
State and Local Spending			
Educator Evaluation System	\$4,192,329	\$3,740,888	\$7,933,217
Instructional Management System	\$9,625,595	\$3,834,425	\$13,460,020
Beginning Teacher Induction	\$6,764,096	\$508,101	\$7,272,197
Alternative Certification (for hard-to-staff subjects)	\$2,143,963	\$1,449,143	\$3,593,106
School Transformation	\$1,329,022	\$1,561,203	\$2,890,225
Local Spending Only			
Reimbursement to Districts for Work on Various Projects	\$8,758,921	\$12,254,578	\$21,013,499
Total Investments	\$44,418,414	\$30,581,586	\$75,000,000

What's ahead

Rhode Island is on track to use the full \$75 million over the four years of the grant.

Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor

Deborah A. Gist, Education Commissioner

August 2013

Many thanks to Rhode Island districts, schools, and educators for their dedication to students and their willingness to work together to raise student achievement in our state.

Special thanks to the Race to the Top Steering Committee for its support and continued engagement in this important work.

For more information, please contact
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The contents of this report were developed under a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

