

# Transforming Education in Rhode Island



## The Race to the Top Opportunity

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

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#### Year Four, Quarter Two: December 1, 2013 – February 28, 2014

##### ❑ Administration and Progress Monitoring:

- SEA Performance Monitoring: Rhode Island’s Year 3 Annual Performance Report has been validated; and the Year 3 State Specific Progress report will be released by the United States Department of Education (USED) on March 19, 2014. Ongoing performance management activities continue with a quarterly review of both SEA and LEA RTT spending. EdStat remains focused on the projects with the highest risk and priority to the agency, including the Instructional Management System rebuild, supports for the lowest-performing schools, and educator evaluation system and supports. At the end of January, Rhode Island submitted a RTT no-cost extension for USED review and approval.
- LEA Performance Monitoring: The second quarter of Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) meetings took place during January – February 2014. The third quarter is currently underway. The CLO meeting topical discussions are based on participants’ feedback, and each focused on one of these topics: tools to assess readiness of schools to transition to the Common Core State Standards; using evidence to determine differentiated professional development needs for teachers and administrators; fostering bold and creative leadership approaches to existing challenges; and using effective levers to engage school committees, parents, boards, or other stakeholders in inspiring change in practices and/or policies. Feedback from participants at the CLO meetings indicates that the opportunity to learn from one another on effective strategies remains a benefit.
- Budgeting and Spending: The RIDE finance team continues to monitor the SEA budget and LEA spend-down. The RIDE finance team continued to work with all LEAs to help them submit budget amendments for allocating funds for Year Four. Project leads reached out individually to LEAs to discuss plans for Year Four spending, and LEA spending has increased as a result of this increased engagement. In addition, at each CLO meeting an updated spending dashboard is provided so that participants are prompted to reach out to the RIDE team for clarifications. RIDE will continue to work with individual LEAs to ensure that funds will be expended by the end of the grant. SEA spending is on track.

- Engagement: The Race to the Top Steering Committee’s second meeting for Year Four will be held on March 25, 2014. Steering members will engage in a presentation with RIDE staff on “Preparing for the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers)”. Further updates will be provided on progress being made in the implementation of the major project initiatives. Additionally, the Professional Learning Community (PLC) mini-grant recipients continued to complete the activities designed to strengthen transition to the Common Core State Standards, Building Parent-Teacher Partnerships, and/or Closing Achievement Gaps. Final reports on all PLC mini-grants will be due in June 2014.

## □ Year Four Projects

- Standards and Curriculum: In this quarter, more than 75 teachers completed Units of Study in ELA, science, and social studies writing sessions. Additionally, one leadership session took place, and included discussing structures for change management for a total of 45 principals, central office administrators and other district/building leaders. Common Core State Standards Professional Development sessions were offered to two unique groups of educators: teachers of students with severe to profound disabilities, and teachers of students who are incarcerated at the juvenile detention facility.
- Data Systems and Online Tools for Educators:
  - The plan to rebuild the *Instructional Management System (IMS)* has been submitted to the USED for approval. It has three phases; Phase I is to be completed by June 2014, Phase II by September 2014, and Phase III by the end of 2014. The rebuild solution will be presented to Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in early March. RIDE is optimistic that the rebuild platform will allow the state to meet our commitments and goals under RTT, and will provide LEAs with valuable tools to guide instruction and to facilitate the use of data. A combination of team-developer, division, and agency performance monitoring activities are in place to ensure that the work continues to move forward, and is resourced appropriately.
  - As of February 2014, 49 of 52 LEAs (includes over 1,100 teachers) have accessed the *formative assessment online professional development modules* to some extent. All five modules are now posted and available via RIDEmap, and the state is working with the vendor to finalize a Closed Captioned version of the course for the hearing-impaired. Additionally, RIDE provided technical assistance and personalized the program for LEAs that expressed difficulty in meeting the commitments in the current school year.
  - The winter fixed form *interim assessment* testing cycle took place through the end of February. RIDE created manual reports for the Fall Interim Assessments. Rhode Island submitted a no-cost extension request to address the rebuild of the IMS as it relates to the scoring and reporting functionality in Interim Assessments. We expect that LEAs will have access to full reporting tools in the 2014-2015 school year.
  - The *Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS)* continued to be used by LEAs to support evaluator and teacher communication regarding components of the evaluations, as well as for scheduling and entering notes on classroom observations. RIDE assisted LEAs in set-up for year two of the EPSS, including the gradual implementation of the Support Professionals Evaluation and Support System.

- All LEAs participating in *data use professional development* in the current school year have completed day six of training, and the second round of on-site visits is underway. All training content, including PowerPoints, Turnkey Exercises, and additional materials have been revised and will be posted to the RIDE website.
- Educator Evaluation: Nearly 4,000 teachers, 1,400 support professionals, 300 building administrators, and 125 central office administrators completed the statewide mid-year evaluation survey. An analysis of the statewide results has been completed and shared publicly. Additionally, LEA leaders were provided with an analysis of their own results. Statewide results indicate increased satisfaction with the process/supports:
  - 72% of teachers and building administrators felt that the feedback they received was useful or very useful, compared to 53% last year;
  - 68% of teachers indicated an increased understanding of how to set Student Learning Objectives (SLOs); and,
  - 70% of central office administrators felt that building administrators better understood how to set their own SLOs, and that the process for approving SLOs was more rigorous than last year.
- Beginning Teacher Induction: Two regional presentations to school committees, administrators, and other stakeholders were held, and provided an overview of possible sustainability models with a focus on a regional model to promote fidelity.
- School Transformation: RIDE, New York City Leadership Academy, and school leaders from Persistently Low-Achieving (PLA) schools conducted assessments of the Aspiring Turnaround Leaders; seven of the nine participants passed the comprehensive oral exams without reservation, and can now be recommended for leadership positions.
- Virtual Learning Math Modules: RIDE is researching the extent of development necessary to bring the modules in-house, to the RIDE website, allowing the modules to continue to be used as a no-cost option for schools beyond the Race to the Top timeline, eliminating management costs.
- High-Performing Charter Schools: RIDE continues to monitor the four charter grant sub-recipients to ensure that grantees meet all targets, and are able to spend fiscal resources appropriately. All grantees are on track for completing their grant activities.