RACE
TO THE
TOP

Rhode Island Report
Year 1: School Year 2010 – 2011

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

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Race to the Top overview

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided $4.35 billion for the Race to the Top Fund, of which approximately $4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.[1] In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) awarded Race to the Top grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia. The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement; closing achievement gaps; improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers.

Since education is a complex system, sustained and lasting instructional improvement in classrooms, schools, local educational agencies (LEAs), and States will not be achieved through piecemeal change. Instead, the Race to the Top program requires that States and LEAs take into account their local context to design and implement a comprehensive approach to innovation and reform that meets the needs of their educators, students, and families.

The Race to the Top program is built on the framework of comprehensive reform in four core education reform areas:

- Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;

- Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals;

- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices; and

- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU is to provide assistance to States as they implement unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that not only addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, but is designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU will work with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and help States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes.

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top States, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that adjustments are required to an approved plan, the grantee must submit a formal amendment request to the Department for consideration. States may submit for Department approval amendment requests to a plan and budget provided that such changes do not significantly affect the scope or objectives of the approved plans. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR section 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).[2]

State-specific summary report

The Department uses the information gathered during the review process (e.g., through monthly calls, on-site reviews, and Annual Performance Reports (APRs)) to draft State-specific Race to the Top reports.[3] The State-specific summary report serves as an assessment of a State's Year 1 Race to the Top implementation, highlighting successes and accomplishments, identifying challenges, and providing lessons learned from implementation to date.

[1] The remaining funds were awarded under the Race to the Top Assessment program. More information about the Race to the Top Assessment program is available at www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment.

[2] More information about the ISU's program review process, State APR data, and State Scopes of Work can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html.

[3] Additional State-specific data on progress against annual performance measures and goals reported in the Year 1 APRs can be found on the Race to the Top Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.
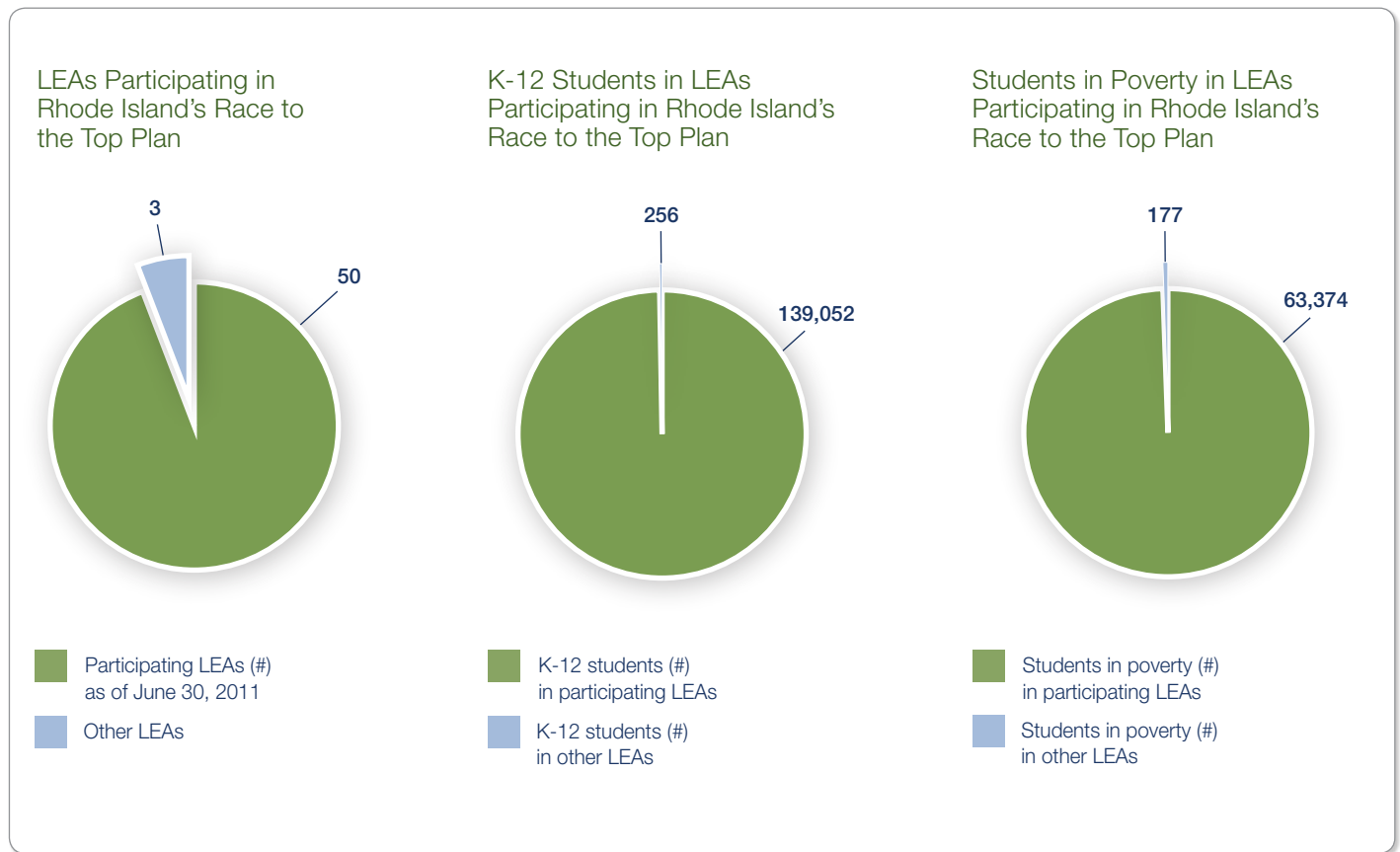
Rhode Island's education reform agenda

In January 2010, the Rhode Island Board of Regents approved the *Transforming Education in Rhode Island* strategic plan, which established five priorities to guide broad-based education reforms in the State: (1) ensure educator excellence, (2) accelerate all schools toward greatness, (3) establish world-class standards and assessments, (4) develop user-friendly data systems, and (5) invest resources wisely. The new strategic plan has statewide stakeholder support and forms the basis for the State's Race to the Top initiatives. Rhode Island received a $75 million Race to the Top grant. Under the terms of the Race to the Top grant, the State must distribute at least half of the award amount to participating LEAs.

Local educational agency participation

As depicted in the graphs below, Rhode Island reported 50 participating LEAs in its June 30, 2011 Year 1 APR. At the time of its Race to the Top application in June 2010, 48 LEAs were participating in the State's plan, and two LEAs were added during the 90-day Scope of Work planning period. Three charter schools opened in school year (SY) 2010-2011 but did not participate in the LEA Scope of Work process in Year 1. Two of those LEAs are expected to join in the State's Race to the Top projects in Year 2. The graphs below indicate that the LEAs participating in the State's plan serve 99.8 percent of the State's K-12 students and 99.7 percent of students in poverty.

LEAs Participating in Rhode Island's Race to the Top Plan

3

50

- Participating LEAs (#) as of June 30, 2011
- Other LEAs

K-12 Students in LEAs Participating in Rhode Island's Race to the Top Plan

256

139,052

- K-12 students (#) in participating LEAs
- K-12 students (#) in other LEAs

Students in Poverty in LEAs Participating in Rhode Island's Race to the Top Plan

177

63,374

- Students in poverty (#) in participating LEAs
- Students in poverty (#) in other LEAs

Rhode Island Year 1 summary

Accomplishments

According to the State, in Year 1, Rhode Island greatly increased statewide capacity to begin implementation of the State's Race to the Top plan and engaged in the foundational work necessary to bring each project to scale in the upcoming grant years.

To prepare educators across the State to transition to the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Rhode Island held Study of the Standards training sessions, reaching 2,380 educators in 19 LEAs as of mid-September 2011. In these sessions, trained and certified Intermediate Service Providers (ISPs) facilitate sessions on the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards, with the aim of providing educators with the tools needed to effectively implement the CCSS in the classroom.

In the area of Great Teachers and Leaders, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education (Board of Regents) approved standards that require annual evaluations for all educators, based primarily on evidence of student growth and achievement. In Year 1, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) approved three evaluation systems as meeting the State standards. The majority of LEAs will implement the Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System (Rhode Island model), six LEAs will implement the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFTHP) educator evaluation system, and one LEA will use a locally developed evaluation system.

Rhode Island created a new induction and mentoring program for first- and second-year teachers that emphasizes instructionally focused, data-driven coaching. In Year 1, the State engaged in a rigorous interview process to identify and hire induction coaches. Every new teacher has been matched with a coach to provide one-on-one job-embedded support for SY 2011–2012.

To ensure all projects in the State's Race to the Top plan are executed with fidelity, the State developed performance management systems at the State and LEA level. RIDE uses the EdStat process to engage State leadership in data-driven conversations about project progress and quality of implementation. In the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) process, LEA representatives engage in similar conversations with peers from other LEAs. Through the CLO process, LEAs share best practices and engage in problem-solving, promoting high-quality implementation of reforms.

Challenges

Rhode Island faced challenges in its effort to implement projects to support its persistently lowest-achieving (PLA) schools. In particular, leadership changes at the LEA level, labor-management issues, and efforts to refine the approach to supporting PLA schools led to delays in implementing the State's School Improvement Grant (SIG) program and providing additional support to these schools.

In addition, the State's High-Performing Charter Schools project faced delays due to a need to provide additional time for Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) to formulate plans. Through an approved amendment request, the State adjusted the timeline and approach in this project to allow CMOs more time to create plans and submit grant applications and to make more awards available. The State believes this change will increase the number of seats in high-performing charter schools.

Strategies for moving forward

RIDE will build on Year 1 implementation work, particularly in the project areas related to transitioning to CCSS, implementation of educator evaluations, and bringing LEAs together to share best practices. The State recognizes the need to expedite its efforts to turn around the lowest-achieving schools. To that end, the State will continue its efforts to identify and hire candidates with the skills and experience necessary to lead RIDE's efforts in turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

Building capacity to support LEAs

Statewide alignment

RIDE did not create new divisions or structures to oversee the work of Race to the Top, but rather examined its 134 staff positions and re-aligned them to support its Strategic Plan, which in turn is aligned with the State's Race to the Top plan. RIDE's Adaptive Leadership Team oversees Race to the Top plan implementation. The Adaptive Leadership Team is composed of the Commissioner of Education, the Chief of Staff, the Race to the Top Coordinator, and leaders from each RIDE division. RIDE also established an internal Race to the Top Oversight Team, project teams and team leads for each system of support. Additionally RIDE recruited 18 additional professionals to support RIDE's capacity to implement Race to the Top reforms with LEAs. RIDE continues to seek candidates for four positions still open as of September 2011.

LEA implementation and accountability

Rhode Island received and approved Scopes of Work from its 50 participating LEAs by November 22, 2010. LEAs submitted more detailed budgets in March 2011. The State approved an LEA's Scope of Work if it met the requirements set forth in RIDE's October 1, 2010 LEA Scope of Work and Partnership Agreement, namely that an LEA's Scope of Work include district goals and performance measures, a readiness assessment, and an engagement strategy. The agreement also requires that the plans for each of the Systems of Support (Standards and Curriculum, Instructional Improvement Systems, Educator Effectiveness, Human Capital Development, and, as relevant, School Transformation and Innovation) include key personnel, timelines for technical tasks, and identification of key challenges to implementation.

Performance management at the State level

In June 2011, Rhode Island launched a performance management process called EdStat. Led by the Race to the Top Performance Management Executive, the process helps to create a culture of data-driven accountability and places a system-wide emphasis on results for students. In Year 1, RIDE solidified detailed work plans and set measures of successful project implementation. According to the State, this process allows the State to determine progress toward goals and performance measures and track the quality of implementation of activities across all Race to the Top Systems of Support.

For each of the weekly EdStat sessions, the Performance Management Executive prepares data, including graphs and tables, which indicate the fidelity and quality of implementation. An EdStat Panel, composed of executive-level State leadership, reviews the data and then questions project managers and team members about it. Through this process the group teases out implementation progress and challenges, identifies barriers to successful implementation, and, overall, sends a clear message of accountability for results. The sessions focus on developing immediate action steps to move implementation forward. In addition, EdStat helps RIDE identify opportunities for collaboration across project areas to improve performance.

Performance management at the LEA level

Facilitated and coordinated by RIDE, the CLO process consists of quarterly meetings of small cohorts of LEAs. During these meetings, the LEAs' Race to the Top leadership teams engage in data-driven, problem-solving conversations with their peers and share best practices. Each of the State's 50 participating LEAs have been placed in one of nine CLO groups based on LEA type, region or current collaborative association, size, and preference (based on a survey). The ultimate objective of CLOs is to provide a forum for collaboration in which LEAs will gain clarity and receive support from each other on strategies and tactics for effective implementation of Race to the Top projects.

The CLO process began in summer 2011 with gap analysis meetings conducted with each participating LEA and facilitated by a small team from RIDE. The initial meetings identified the Race to the Top projects that LEAs will engage in during SY 2011–2012. In collaboration with the LEAs, RIDE established a clear and shared vision of what successful implementation will look like for particular projects.

RIDE held the first CLO meetings with groups of LEAs in fall 2011. Prior to each of the meetings, LEA leadership team members document all of the major implementation activities and challenges related to each System of Support and complete a self-assessment on their progress in implementing each System of Support using a standard Quarterly Progress Report with a rating dashboard that clearly defines the components that are the basis of the self-evaluation. The LEA team members also list questions they have for RIDE and other LEA teams. Each LEA team examines the self-evaluation data that it has collected on implementation, and shares practices adopted and challenges faced. In addition to the CLO process, the State has established the Race to the Top Steering Committee, an external advisory committee of engaged stakeholders that supports Race to the Top implementation and reviews progress on a quarterly basis.

State Success Factors

Stakeholder engagement

Key activities and stakeholders

Rhode Island is implementing a communication plan designed to engage stakeholders throughout the four years of Race to the Top. The State's plan details specific approaches to targeted outreach to multiple audiences and establishes concrete communication goals. The plan includes communication strategies such as webinars, field memos, news releases, conferences and events, and social media. RIDE continuously tracks its communication efforts against a set of indicators, such as attendance at Race to the Top meetings and the percentage of meeting participants who found the meeting helpful. This analysis informs improvements to State communication strategies. In addition to the communication plan, Rhode Island developed a communication tracking tool that enables the State to produce reports connecting the frequency and mode of the communication effort with the stakeholder, allowing the State to examine its approach and pursue continuous improvement.

Rhode Island works with its LEAs and the Race to the Top Steering Committee to engage educators, families, communities, and constituencies in the State's Race to the Top plan. As part of its communication effort, RIDE co-hosted, along with the superintendents association, school committees association, and two teachers unions, a June 2011 meeting focused on Race to the Top implementation for all superintendents, school committee chairs, and local teachers union leaders. The State held a similar meeting with charter schools in fall 2011. In addition, the State held four quarterly meetings of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has three main functions: (1) engage a variety of stakeholders in reviewing the implementation of the Race to the Top plan during the four years of the grant and make recommendations for improvement, (2) identify strategies for sustaining momentum and engagement statewide, and (3) issue a yearly progress report on the status of Race to the Top implementation in a manner that can be easily understood by all Rhode Islanders. At the August 30 quarterly meeting, the Year 1 progress update was presented. It can be found on Rhode Island's Race to the Top website at http://www.ride.ri.gov/commissioner/RaceToTheTop/docs/RTTT%20Year%20One%20Progress%20Update.pdf.

Lessons learned

Building statewide capacity

In Year 1, RIDE recognized that successful implementation of the Race to the Top plan would require a high level of progress monitoring, communication, and collaboration between RIDE and LEAs. To achieve this, the State has engaged LEAs in the design of the LEA performance management process and created opportunities for feedback on challenges and implementation concerns. Having reflected on the effectiveness of communication strategies in Year 1, the State is moving toward more coordinated communications around Race to the Top projects in Year 2. RIDE discussed a communications coordination framework/plan with its project teams at its Race to the Top Year 2 planning meeting.
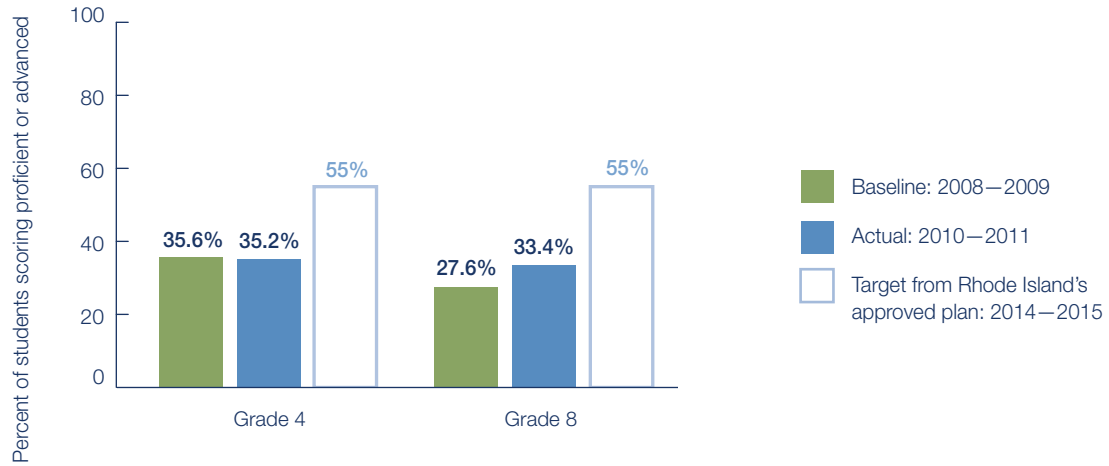
Looking ahead to Year 2

In Year 2, RIDE will continue performance management through the Internal Oversight Team, the EdStat process, and quarterly reviews with the Race to the Top Steering Committee. RIDE will focus on evaluating and supporting LEAs' implementation of Race to the Top activities through the CLO process. During the next round of CLO meetings, each LEA leadership team will examine self-evaluation data related to a specific Race to the Top project. The State will also continue to collaborate with stakeholders to develop engagement and communication strategies.
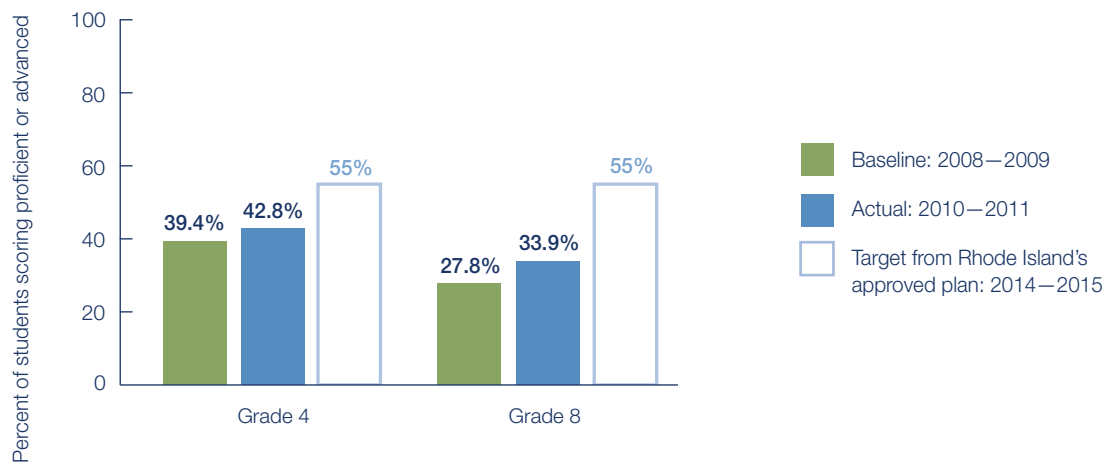
Student outcomes data

Student Proficiency, NAEP Reading 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Baseline: 2008—2009	35.6%	27.6%
Actual: 2010—2011	35.2%	33.4%
Target from Rhode Island's approved plan: 2014—2015	55%	55%

Baseline: 2008—2009
Actual: 2010—2011
Target from Rhode Island's approved plan: 2014—2015

The percentage of Rhode Island's grade 4 students who were at or above Proficient in reading in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.

The percentage of Rhode Island's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in reading in 2011 was significantly higher (p <.05) than in 2009.

Student Proficiency, NAEP Mathematics 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Baseline: 2008—2009	39.4%	27.8%
Actual: 2010—2011	42.8%	33.9%
Target from Rhode Island's approved plan: 2014—2015	55%	55%

Baseline: 2008—2009
Actual: 2010—2011
Target from Rhode Island's approved plan: 2014—2015

The percentage of Rhode Island's grade 4 students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.

The percentage of Rhode Island's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2011 was significantly higher (p <.05) than in 2009.
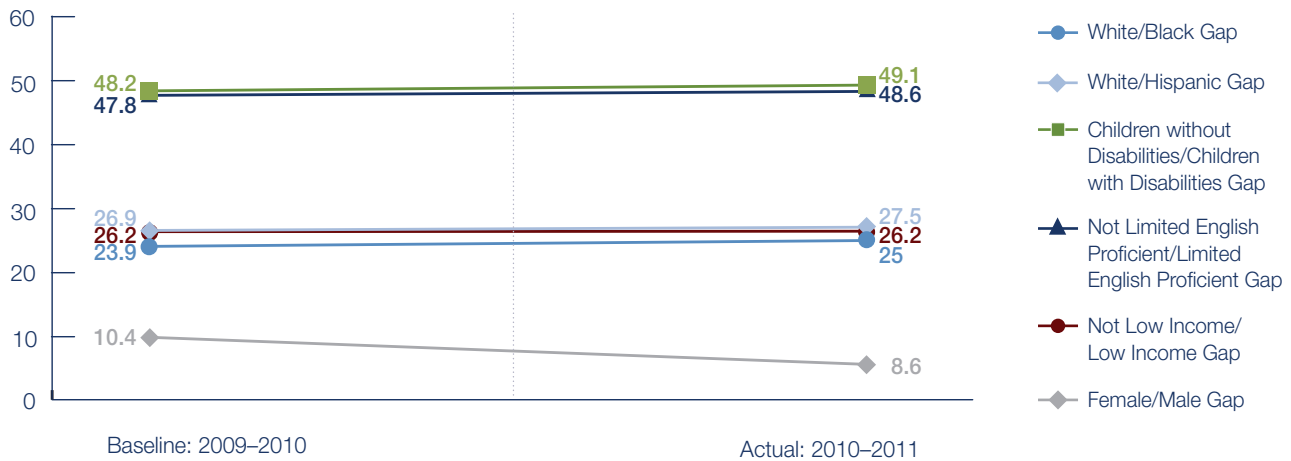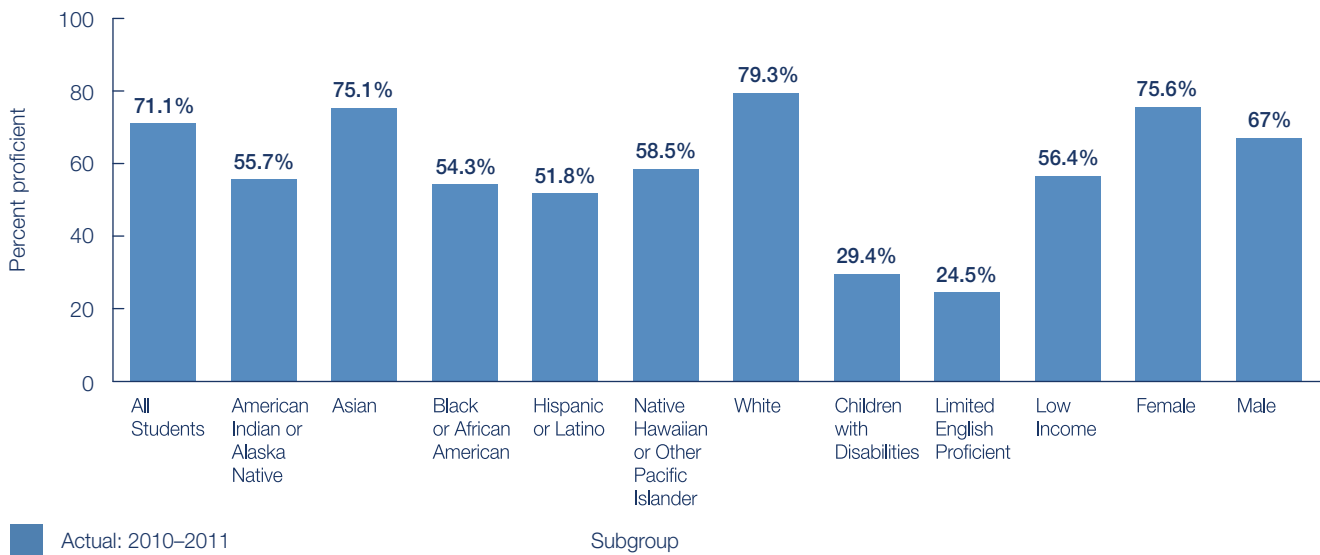
State Success Factors

Achievement Gap on Rhode Island's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap
- Female/Male Gap

Baseline: 2009–2010 values: 48.2, 47.8, 26.9, 26.2, 23.9, 10.4

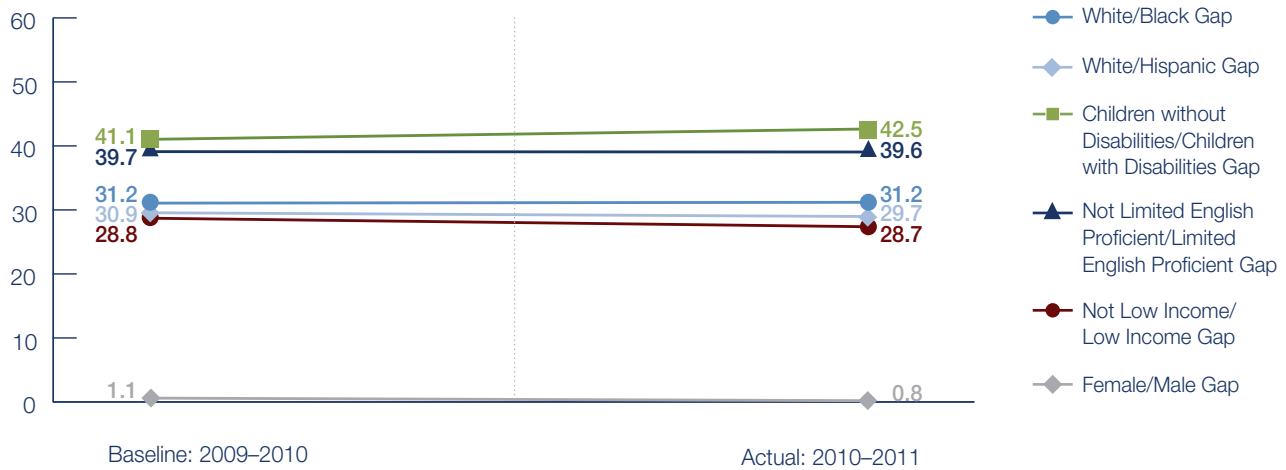Actual: 2010–2011 values: 49.1, 48.6, 27.5, 26.2, 25, 8.6

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 14, 2011

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores. For State-reported context, please refer to the APR Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.

Overall Proficiency on Rhode Island's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient by Subgroup (Actual: 2010–2011):
- All Students: 71.1%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 55.7%
- Asian: 75.1%
- Black or African American: 54.3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 51.8%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 58.5%
- White: 79.3%
- Children with Disabilities: 29.4%
- Limited English Proficient: 24.5%
- Low Income: 56.4%
- Female: 75.6%
- Male: 67%

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 14, 2011

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores. For State-reported context, please refer to the APR Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.

State Success Factors

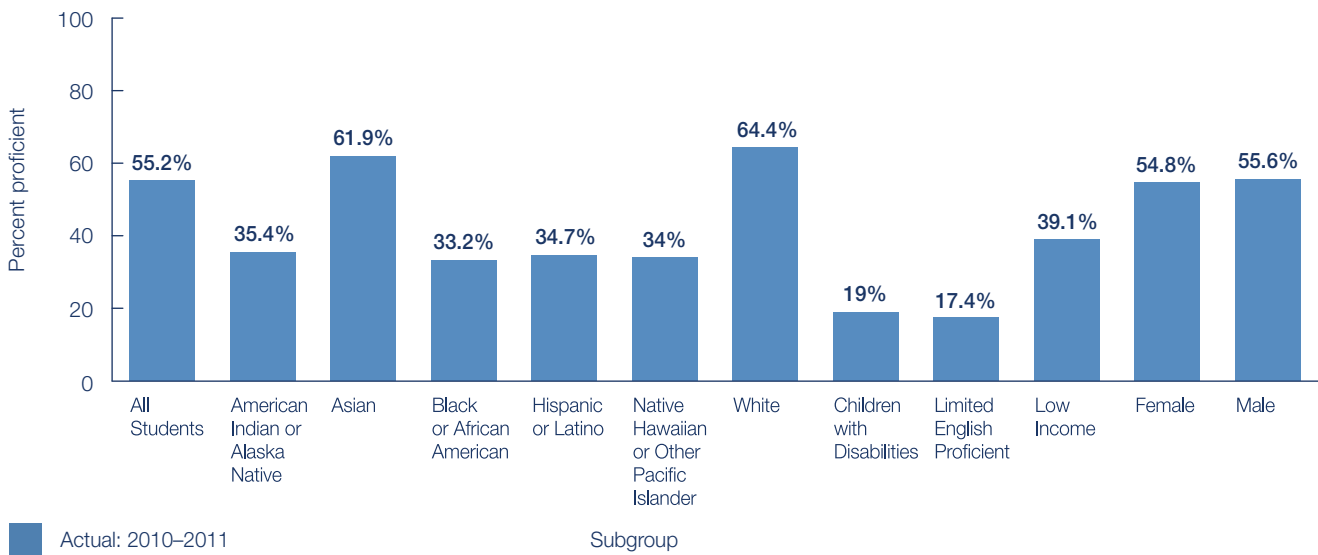## Achievement Gap on Rhode Island's Mathematics Assessment SY 2010–2011

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap
- Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap
- Not Low Income/Low Income Gap
- Female/Male Gap

Baseline: 2009–2010 values: 41.1, 39.7, 31.2, 30.9, 28.8, 1.1
Actual: 2010–2011 values: 42.5, 39.6, 31.2, 29.7, 28.7, 0.8

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 14, 2011

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.
For State-reported context, please refer to the APR Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.

Overall Proficiency on Rhode Island's Mathematics Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient by Subgroup:
- All Students: 55.2%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 35.4%
- Asian: 61.9%
- Black or African American: 33.2%
- Hispanic or Latino: 34.7%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 34%
- White: 64.4%
- Children with Disabilities: 19%
- Limited English Proficient: 17.4%
- Low Income: 39.1%
- Female: 54.8%
- Male: 55.6%

Actual: 2010–2011

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 14, 2011

NOTE: Over the last two years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.
For State-reported context, please refer to the APR Data Display at www.rtt-apr.us.

Standards and Assessments

Implementing rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career is an integral aspect of education reform in all Race to the Top States.

Adoption of college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments

In July 2010, the Rhode Island Board of Regents adopted the CCSS. In addition, the State joined the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) as a governing member. The State established a PARCC team consisting of State and local educators to support effective implementation of the CCSS and PARCC-created assessments.

Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments

Having adopted the CCSS prior to the grant period, Rhode Island spent Year 1 laying the groundwork for LEAs to engage with the CCSS and develop aligned model curricula. RIDE also worked with vendors to begin work on formative and interim assessments.

Rhode Island's plan to transition to enhanced standards and assessments has three main elements: (1) supporting educators' understanding of the standards through facilitated Study of the Standards trainings, (2) providing intensive support for curriculum alignment, resource development, and model curricula in all LEAs, and (3) building a comprehensive assessment system. The State plans to implement curriculum that is fully aligned to the new standards by SY 2013–2014.

Study of the standards

Rhode Island is using Study of the Standards training sessions to help teachers integrate the CCSS into their daily practice. In these sessions, Intermediary Service Providers (ISPs), recruited and trained by RIDE, facilitate teacher engagement and understanding of the standards. The State has planned to ensure that at least 85 percent of core teachers in 11 urban and urban-ring LEAs and four core teachers from each of the remaining LEAs participate in a session. As of September 2011, the State had held 11 ELA Study of the Standards sessions and 14 mathematics Study of the Standards sessions, training 2,380 educators from 19 LEAs.

Curriculum alignment and resource development

In coordination with the LEA curriculum directors, Rhode Island established a comprehensive plan to develop model curriculum over the next several years. To help facilitate the process, RIDE provided support to each LEA to evaluate the status of its current curricula in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. The State used the results of the analysis to determine the magnitude of support each LEA would need to ensure that its curriculum aligned to the CCSS. RIDE has begun intensive curriculum development work with nine LEAs in mathematics and two in ELA. The State intends for the curriculum development effort to build capacity within the LEAs while also helping to develop high-quality curriculum resources for the entire State. According to the State, this LEA-driven approach ensures educator buy-in by incorporating educators' perspectives into the curriculum development process.

Rhode Island brought members of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) community together to conduct a review of the Rhode Island K-12 Grade Span Expectations in Engineering and Technology (E&T GSEs). The purpose of this review was to identify the mathematics and science concepts and skills students taking engineering and technology coursework should be expected to master. Grounded in engineering and technology standards, the E&T GSEs specify the skills that should be embedded in local curricula. RIDE adopted the E&T GSEs in May 2011, and will begin to integrate the curriculum in Year 3 to better align with the rollout of the CCSS.

Building a comprehensive assessment system

Rhode Island's three goals in the area of developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments are to: (1) build a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the CCSS, (2) develop a high-quality set of interim assessments in partnership with the PARCC consortium, and (3) provide training to LEAs on the use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data. The State has finalized a contract with its selected vendor to develop the formative assessment training modules. The vendor is working with a subject-matter expert to develop an outline and a detailed project plan for the formative assessment modules. The State also finalized a contract for interim assessments, built from a cross-office team project plan.

Lessons learned

During the first year of implementation, Rhode Island recognized the need for increased capacity at the local level and strategized with LEAs to maximize the number of teachers trained in the Study of the Standards Sessions through methods such as examining the use of professional development days. One of the goals of the Study of the Standards sessions is for core teachers and teacher leaders to understand the instructional implications of the CCSS and apply the content to their instructional practice. RIDE is using the EdStat process described in the *State Success Factors* section to monitor LEA participation in the sessions to ensure that all LEAs are gaining the capacity needed to implement CCSS.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Going forward, the State will continue to support the transition to CCSS through Study of the Standards sessions and model curriculum development. The State plans to have more than 4,000 educators trained on the CCSS by June 2012. According to the State, Year 2 will involve greater LEA engagement with resources and information on comprehensive assessment, which will be generated from RIDE's work with PARCC.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in practice

Under the Rhode Island model, SLOs will be used to determine educators' success in helping students make progress toward rigorous academic standards. SLOs are long-term academic goals based on student learning data that are aligned to State standards. School leaders establish four to six SLOs that focus on student results in high-priority areas for the LEA and the school. Teachers are responsible for setting two to four individual SLOs that align with the schoolwide SLOs. Teachers may set their targets individually but are encouraged to discuss goals with other teachers of the same courses or grades to ensure rigor and comparability across different classrooms. Rhode Island has taken a leadership role among Race to the Top States in establishing procedures for setting SLOs. SLOs for teachers in all grades and subjects may take into account district-wide standardized assessments and other measures of student performance. In grades and subjects with State standardized assessments, teacher evaluations will be based, in part, on students' growth on those assessments.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) and instructional improvement systems (IIS) enhance the ability of States to effectively manage, use, and analyze education data to support instruction. Race to the Top States are working to ensure that their data systems are accessible to key stakeholders and that the data support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system

As reported in the State's Race to the Top application, Rhode Island's SLDS meets all the America COMPETES Act elements. The SLDS tracks students from the time they first enter school until they reach the workforce, provided that they stay in the State throughout their academic career. The SLDS served as the foundation for the State's Race to the Top goals and objectives. The State's goals for this core education reform area are to: (1) provide teachers, principals, administrators, and parents with access to easy-to-navigate data dashboards, (2) expand the data collection and reporting capabilities of the teacher certification database, (3) monitor the integrity of State data, (4) complete a comprehensive Statewide educator performance system to support educators and help them improve their practice, and (5) develop an early warning indicator tool.

Accessing and using State data

Rhode Island strives to provide stakeholders with access to user-friendly, meaningful data. To this end, RIDE created InfoWorks LIVE, a public portal to the data dashboard. This site provides one-stop access to key data with the aim of providing a holistic view of public education in Rhode Island. As of September 2011, more than 12,700 unique users have accessed the data dashboard, greatly exceeding Rhode Island's initial target of 1,000 unique users.

Lessons learned

While developing project plans in preparation for the EdStat process, the State found that there was a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities that hindered the State in moving forward with its data systems development. Through an approved amendment request, the State amended the timeframes for the data systems work, including for training on the use of data dashboards and delivery of data-driven professional development.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Rhode Island plans to develop a Statewide Instructional Management System that will provide educators access to an array of data analysis, assessment, and instructional tools. This system will include access to local assessment and student-specific data, model lesson plans and units of study, and annotated student work aligned with standards. It will also provide the tools to generate and print student assessments. Rhode Island has made progress toward this goal by developing a contract, detailed project plan, and schedule of deliverables. Once this system is developed, RIDE will produce a series of web-based toolkits and implement a train-the-trainer model to support educators in using this system.

Rhode Island has contracted with a vendor to build an Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS). This system will help the State link evaluation results to educator preparation, assignment, compensation, advancement, and tenure data. To complement the EPSS, the State is reviewing its existing educator certification data system in an effort to make targeted upgrades and improvements. In the future, the system will link educator effectiveness data to educator preparation programs and professional development.

As a part of its overall IIS, Rhode Island plans to implement an Early Warning System that allows the State to identify at-risk students earlier in their academic careers and provide supports for college and career readiness. Rhode Island has formed an Early Warning System work group and will post an RFP in fall 2011.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by adopting clear approaches to measuring student growth; designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals; conducting annual evaluations that include timely and constructive feedback; and using evaluation information to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, and tenure decisions.

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers

Building on the 2008 adoption of Alternative Program Standards, Rhode Island's Office of Educator Quality and Certification developed and presented proposed revised regulations for educator certification to the Board of Regents in July 2011, and public hearings were held in September 2011. These proposed regulations outline a tiered structure. Initial certification would be based upon attainment of competencies and grounded in appropriate standards; certification renewal would be based on performance. The regulations also propose to expand alternative pathways to certification by offering new certifications targeted to career changers and other content experts, who would receive Preliminary Certificates. Upon completion of all State requirements, these individuals would be eligible for full certification.

The State continues to support programs offered by private providers and institutions of higher education (IHEs) that provide alternative routes to certification. Race to the Top funds have allowed the State to increase the cohort sizes of such programs.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Rhode Island's Board of Regents adopted Educator Evaluation System Standards in December 2009 that outline the requirements for new evaluation systems in the State. Each evaluation system must:

- Establish a common understanding of expectations for educator quality within the district;
- Emphasize the professional growth and continuous improvement of individual educators;
- Create an organizational approach to the collective professional growth and continuous improvement of groups of educators to support district goals;
- Provide quality assurance for the performance of all district educators;
- Ensure fair, accurate, and consistent evaluations; and
- Provide district educators a role in guiding the ongoing system development in response to systematic feedback and changing district needs.

Educators from more than 23 LEAs and various educational organizations collaborated to create the Rhode Island model, a new evaluation system for Rhode Island educators and school-based administrators that, according to RIDE, focuses on student achievement growth and supports educators' professional development by providing actionable and continuous feedback on educators' performance. The State field-tested the model in five public schools during spring 2011 and made improvements based on that pilot experience. RIDE also conducted small-group sessions, both in person and via webinars, to solicit teacher and administrator feedback. According to the State, the Rhode Island model offers educators regular feedback on their practice, and links that feedback to professional development opportunities. The system assesses three components of educator performance: student learning outcomes, professional practice, and professional responsibilities. Individual ratings for each of the three components combine to produce a final summative rating of highly effective, effective, developing, or ineffective. In Year 1, the State trained nearly 600 educators on the first module of teacher evaluations and 85 educators on the first module of building administrator evaluations in preparation for LEA implementation in SY 2011–2012. Rhode Island developed rubrics, observation templates, self-assessment templates, scoring methodologies, and student learning objective samples and templates for both teachers and principals to guide implementation.

Six of the State's LEAs have collaborated to develop the RIFTHP model, through an American Federation of Teachers Innovation Fund Grant. Those LEAs are: Central Falls, Cranston, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, and Woonsocket. RIDE and RIFTHP worked together in an attempt to merge the models, and while an agreement to merge has not yet been reached, the discussions prompted some adjustments to both models.

LEAs may implement the Rhode Island model or another evaluation system that RIDE approves. An LEA that plans to use an evaluation system other than the Rhode Island model must submit supporting documentation to RIDE. To approve the model, RIDE reviews documentation for compliance with the Rhode Island Educator Evaluation System Standards. LEAs that are unable to independently meet the standards must adopt the Rhode Island model. In Year 1, three models met the State standards: (1) the Rhode Island model, (2) the RIFTHP model, and (3) the Coventry Public School educator evaluation system. All LEAs are implementing new evaluation systems in SY 2011–2012.

Measuring student learning

All approved evaluation system models will incorporate evidence of student learning. In order to fully implement the Rhode Island model in SY 2012–2013, the State designed and piloted student growth measures and provided opportunities for educators to view school-level growth data as an introduction to the measure. To help ensure accurate student growth calculations, the State completed two roster verifications, which confirmed that the State was accurately identifying the teacher of record for each student. This identification allows for a determination of the teacher's impact on student performance. Rhode Island requires two years of data in order to measure one year of student growth. The first year student growth measures will be used in evaluations is SY 2012–2013. The full phase-in of the student growth measure will take place in SY 2013–2014.

Evaluator training

The State began evaluator training in summer 2011, and trainings will continue throughout SY 2011–2012. Rhode Island hired eight evaluation ISPs to provide on-site assistance to LEAs. ISPs are helping to calibrate principal observation ratings of educators to ensure consistency and fairness. Rhode Island made detailed evaluation system guides accessible to educators in order to clearly communicate the details of the evaluation. The State also posted the guides on its website. By the beginning of September 2011, more than 600 evaluators had attended module-one training for teacher evaluation, and about 60 had attended training for administrator evaluation.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

New regulations in Rhode Island make serving high-need students a top priority in educator hiring and placement. The State's Basic Education Program regulations, implemented as of July 1, 2010, mandate that teacher and principal placements be based primarily on student need. LEAs are required to develop and implement criterion-based hiring and assignment upon expiration of their current collective bargaining agreements.

In addition to prioritizing high-need students in teacher placement, the State is launching several efforts aimed at bolstering teacher effectiveness in hard-to-staff schools and subjects. Rhode Island plans to establish a statewide recruitment website, monitor hard-to-staff subject areas, and work with high-quality preparatory programs to address hard-to-staff subject areas. RIDE has selected a vendor for the Recruitment Web Portal, where LEAs will post open positions. Through this site, the State seeks to streamline the hiring process and provide high-need LEAs with access to a larger applicant pool. As part of this initiative, RIDE has developed specific recruitment efforts to attract effective teachers to Rhode Island schools.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

New Teacher Induction program

Rhode Island is implementing a systematic approach to providing first- and second-year teachers with instructionally focused, data-driven coaching led by the New Teacher Center. The New Teacher Induction program aims to improve the quality of teaching, increase retention of new teachers, and ultimately boost student achievement and growth. Beginning in SY 2011–2012, every new teacher in the State is matched with an induction coach who provides intensive, one-on-one, job-embedded support. Induction coaches observe each new teacher, offer assistance in implementing effective learning strategies, and provide coaching on how to review student assessment data. New teachers also receive ongoing targeted professional development.

Before implementing the New Teacher Induction program, RIDE collaborated with a variety of stakeholders to ensure that the program would best serve new teachers. It held face-to-face sessions, webinars, and statewide outreach sessions to bring together teachers, superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of curriculum and instruction, principals, candidates for induction coach positions, and representatives from IHEs.

Induction coaches were hired after a rigorous selection process. Ninety-seven superintendent-endorsed candidates submitted applications. After intensive interviews conducted by a team of representatives from The New Teacher Project, RIDE, and school administration, 13 induction coaches were selected. Coaches were assigned to beginning teachers at the start of Year 2 and are scheduled to meet with them regularly. Coaches met with principals to discuss school and instructional goals and were trained on the new evaluation system. In addition, coaches meet with one another biweekly to continue training and discuss data collected during the previous week.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Lessons learned

The State found that close collaboration with educators and LEA leadership is an important element in developing and implementing new educator evaluation systems. The State recognizes the need to clearly communicate the standards for evaluation and help educators engage with the different elements of the new evaluation systems. In addition, increased local capacity is needed to ensure that LEAs have the ability to submit the data required for calculating the State's student achievement growth measure for teachers and principals. Rhode Island continues to work with vendors to ensure that each LEA's student information system can comply with the technical requirements of submitting the teacher-course-student rosters that are essential to the growth calculation. The State is also working with its LEAs to understand the capacity limitations they have so that the State may plan ways to effectively build capacity in future years of implementation.

Looking ahead to Year 2

As indicated above, all LEAs are implementing new evaluation systems starting in Year 2. For the Rhode Island model, LEAs staggered the introduction of each component while teachers and administrators underwent further training. Fewer evaluations of both teachers and administrators are being conducted in Year 1 than will be conducted in Years 2 through 4. RIDE will not calculate a growth model rating in SY 2011–2012 and will aggregate final effectiveness ratings for development purposes only. Two LEAs —Jamestown and Warwick— are piloting full implementation in Year 2, with additional specialized support from RIDE. Feedback and data from those two LEAs will inform improvements to the system as it is implemented in SY 2012–2013.

Beginning in SY 2013–2014, participating LEAs will use the new evaluation systems to guide decisions on promotion, retention, tenure, full certification, and removal, and to inform professional development and educator supports. Additionally, Rhode Island will establish a competitive grant program for LEAs to study the impact of compensation systems on teacher effectiveness and to develop a compensation system based on whole school rewards.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Race to the Top States are supporting LEAs' implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of four school intervention models.[4]

RIDE's Office of Transformation provides guidance, services, support, and direction to leaders and decision-makers within LEAs. In September 2010, the Board of Regents approved revisions to the Protocol for Intervention regulations for Rhode Island's PLA schools. These regulations provide LEAs with guidance regarding schools identified as PLA and include requirements for fundamental reforms. RIDE identified Cohort I PLAs by using an analysis of data on student proficiency and growth in ELA and mathematics and high school graduation rates. RIDE selected five schools as Cohort I PLAs in SY 2010–2011. For the second cohort of schools, RIDE revised the timeframe and process for PLA identification.

Rhode Island has faced challenges in its effort to support PLA schools in improving student performance. The State faced delays in selecting and implementing school intervention models for the PLA schools, due in part to labor-management issues and leadership changes in its largest LEA. The State did not award four of the five SIG subgrants to its LEAs for SY 2010–2011 until spring 2011. Rhode Island is currently considering reconfiguring its supports to ensure that its efforts meet the needs of LEAs. For example, the State is currently considering whether school achievement specialists should be contracted by the State or contracted individually by LEAs.

One element of the planned approach is the Academy for Transformative Leadership. The Academy is intended to promote partnerships and best practices to prepare and develop better principals and leadership teams for the State's schools. However, Rhode Island has faced delays in selecting the vendor for this work due to a lack of capacity at the State level to lead the effort. The Turnaround Principals Program is the Academy's flagship program. It is planned to be a year-long, intensive training program that will develop cohorts of new and existing principals each year for PLA schools. The State will recruit program participants from across the State and nation based on their demonstrated effectiveness as teachers and leaders at turning around low-performing schools.

Rhode Island is also revising its approach to the supports initially envisioned to be provided through the Summer Leadership Institute. The Institute was intended to build capacity to implement effective instructional approaches and the elements of each school's School Reform Plan. However, LEAs were unable to take advantage of the Institute in summer 2011 due to fiscal and scheduling issues. RIDE has worked collaboratively with the vendor to create a revised program that will provide services to LEAs throughout SY 2011–2012. A new cohort of leaders is expected to participate in a Summer Leadership Institute in summer 2012.

Challenges

RIDE experienced difficulties in identifying qualified individuals to staff the Office of Transformation, creating challenges for implementing projects in this area. Leadership changes also occurred within the Providence Public Schools District, where four of five PLA schools identified for SY 2010–2011 are located. Given the transition to new leadership in Providence for the roles of superintendent and chief academic officer, and for the school board, the State found it difficult to make progress on work related to PLA schools. In addition, delays have been caused by efforts to refine the approach to better tailor support to the LEAs. In the longer term, however, these adjustments may help Rhode Island ensure that its PLA schools can be successful in improving student achievement.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Rhode Island's implementation team is examining the critical short-term needs of PLA schools and determining if RIDE's actions are having the intended consequences on an interim basis. The State is in the process of analyzing its School Reform Plan to determine strategies to provide better support to its PLA schools.

School Intervention Models Initiated in Rhode Island in SY 2010–2011

School Intervention Model	Schools (#) Initiating Model
Transformation model	5

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[4] Race to the Top States' plans include supporting their LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Charter Schools and Other Initiatives

Rhode Island is actively working on recruiting high-performing CMOs and expanding the work of existing charter schools. RIDE has developed a Race to the Top Charter School Grant application for creating and expanding charter schools, and an application review process is in place. In addition, the Rhode Island Board of Regents approved new charter school regulations in March 2011. The revised regulations require that charter schools establish targets for student achievement. In addition, among other things, the new regulations clearly define how to establish charter schools; amend charters and obtain variances, waivers and/or exemptions from compliance; and outline charter oversight.

The Multiple Pathways to Virtual Learning project supports college and career readiness by expanding the pathways available to students. In Year 1, RIDE posted an RFP for Multiple Pathway Innovations, a virtual learning project designed to create Virtual Learning Math Modules that students will be able to access from any location. A project team consisting of a higher education mathematics department chair, an LEA mathematics department chair, an LEA virtual learning director, a mathematics specialist, and RIDE project staff lead the work on this project. The team completed key tasks, including researching the student population for which Virtual Learning modules are designed, reviewing the results of LEA implementation of a current online mathematics module, and establishing project metrics to include pre- and post-tests to monitor the program's effectiveness.

Lessons learned

As indicated in the *Executive Summary,* the High-Performing Charter Schools project faced delays due to the need to provide additional time for CMOs to create their plans and submit grant applications. As a consequence, the Department accepted Rhode Island's request to award the grants in Years 2 through 4 rather than Years 1 and 2 of their Race to the Top grant. The State believes this change in timeline will ultimately have a positive influence on student achievement by ensuring that the proposals with the greatest likelihood for success are selected. In addition, the Department approved the State's request to slightly modify its approach to award four grants of $250,000 each, instead of two grants of $500,000 each. By providing more opportunities to foster high-performing charter schools in the State, Rhode Island believes more students will gain access to a high-quality education.

Looking ahead to Year 2

The State will develop and disseminate the charter school grants application and guidance. The State plans to award at least one grant by the end of SY 2011–2012. Rhode Island will implement the Virtual Learning Math Modules with secondary students in spring 2012.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Beginning in February 2011, members of the Rhode Island STEM community came together to review the Rhode Island K-12 Grade Span Expectations in Engineering and Technology (E&T GSEs). The document outlines the expected concepts and skills necessary to foster literacy in engineering and technology. The Board of Regents adopted the E&T GSEs in May 2011.

The State drafted an RFP for its pilot of Project-Based Learning, which is an effort to engage students with STEM content in an intensive, project-based manner. The State plans to implement the pilot in the Providence Public School District. Providence would share the units of study created through the pilot with other Rhode Island LEAs through the Instructional Management System. The State is approximately 6 months behind schedule in this project due to leadership changes in Providence, which impacted the State's ability to coordinate efforts in this project area.

Lessons learned

The State has encountered delays in the implementation of the Project-Based Learning project. As indicated above, leadership changes affected the State's progress in Year 1. Additionally, the State received feedback from Providence that, since the number of trainings planned for the first part of Year 2 was very high, the training would be more beneficial if it took place on a slightly later timeframe. The State has proposed to the Department that the trainings planned for the first part of Year 2 take place in summer 2012.

Looking ahead to Year 2

The State will continue work on Project-Based Learning in Year 2. Implementation of the pilot is proposed to take place in Year 3. Adoption of the E&T GSEs sets the stage for intensive curriculum alignment work in upcoming grant years.

Budget

For the State's expenditures through June 30, 2011, please see the APR data display at www.rtt-apr.us. For State budget information see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/awards.html.

Glossary

Alternative routes to certification means pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English learners and students with disabilities): (a) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (b) are selective in accepting candidates; (c) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (d) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (e) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

Amendment requests: In the event that adjustments are needed to a State's approved Race to the Top plan, the grantee must submit an amendment request to the Department for consideration. Such requests may be prompted by an updated assessment of needs in that area, revised cost estimates, lessons learned from prior implementation efforts, or other circumstances. Grantees may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided that the following conditions are met: such revisions do not result in the grantee's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions; the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal; and the Department and the grantee mutually agree in writing to such revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve such revisions or modifications. If approved by the Department, a letter with a description of the amendment and any relevant conditions will be sent notifying the grantee of approval. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html.)

America COMPETES Act elements are (as specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of that Act): (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA): On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the ARRA, historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The Department of Education received a $97.4 billion appropriation.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are K-12 English language arts and mathematics standards developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including States, governors, chief State school officers, content experts, States, teachers, school administrators, and parents. The standards establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare America's children for success in college and careers. As of December 2011, the Common Core State Standards were adopted by 45 States and the District of Columbia.

Effective teacher means a teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

The Core education reform areas for Race to the Top are as follows:

1. Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;

2. Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals;

3. Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices; and

4. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools.

Highly effective teacher means a teacher whose students achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple

observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

Instructional improvement systems (IIS) means technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), interim assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

Invitational priorities are areas of focus that the Department invited States to address in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants did not earn extra points for addressing these focus areas, but many grantees chose to create and fund activities to advance reforms in these areas.

Involved LEAs are LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State's plan that necessitate full or nearly-full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State's Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State's application.

P-20 data systems integrate student data from pre-kindergarten through higher education.

Participating LEAs are LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

The **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)** is one of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information please see http://www.parcconline.org/.)

Persistently lowest-achieving schools means, as determined by the State: (i) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (i) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html.)

Qualifying evaluation systems are those that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that: (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

The **School Improvement Grants (SIG)** program is authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. Funds are awarded to States to help them turn around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html.)

School intervention models: A State's Race to the Top plan describes how it will support its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.

- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.

- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Single sign-on is a user authentication process that permits a user to enter one name and password in order to access multiple applications.

The **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)** is one of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematic standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information please see http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/default.aspx.)

The **State Scope of Work** is a detailed document for the State project that reflects the grantee's approved Race to the Top application. The State Scope of Work includes items such as the State's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html.) Additionally, all participating LEAs are required to submit Scope of Work documents, consistent with State requirements, to the State for its review and approval.

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) enhance the ability of States to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The SLDS help States, districts, schools, educators, and other stakeholders to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. (For additional information please see http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about_SLDS.asp.)

Student achievement means—

a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

b) For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Student growth means the change in student achievement (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Value-added models (VAMs) are a specific type of growth model in the sense that they are based on changes in test scores over time. VAMs are complex statistical models that generally attempt to take into account student or school background characteristics in order to isolate the amount of learning attributable to a specific teacher or school. Teachers or schools that produce more than typical or expected growth are said to "add value."