RACE TO THE TOP

Florida Report

Year 3: School Year 2012–2013

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

March 19, 2014

Race to the Top overview

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. 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 Phase 1 and Phase 2 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, and improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers. Since the Race to the Top Phase 1 and 2 competitions, the Department has made additional grants under the Race to the Top Phase 3, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge,[2] and Race to the Top – District[3] competitions.

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

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

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

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

- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

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. Race to the Top builds on the local contexts of States and LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan (participating LEAs)[4] in the design and implementation of the most effective and innovative approaches that meet the needs of their educators, students, and families.

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[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 on the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html.

[3] More information on Race to the Top – District can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html.

[4] Participating local educational agencies (LEAs) are those 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 Memorandum of Understanding 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 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

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 also designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU works with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helps States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose is to support Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.[5]

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 grantees, 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 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).[6]

State-specific summary report

The Department uses the information gathered during the review process (*e.g.*, through monthly calls, onsite reviews, and Annual Performance Reports (APRs)) to draft State-specific summary reports. The State-specific summary report serves as an assessment of a State's annual Race to the Top implementation. The Year 3 report for Phase 1 and 2 grantees highlights successes and accomplishments, identifies challenges, and provides lessons learned from implementation from approximately September 2012 through September 2013; the Year 2 report for Phase 3 grantees provides similar information from approximately December 2012 through December 2013.

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[5] More information can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/index.html.

[6] More information about the Implementation and Support Unit's (ISU's) program review process, State Annual Performance Report (APR) data, and State Scopes of Work can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html.

Executive Summary

The State's education reform agenda

As part of its education reform agenda, Florida set ambitious goals for students and educators in its Race to the Top application, including doubling the percentage of incoming high school freshmen who graduate from high school, go on to college, and achieve at least a year's worth of college credit; cutting the achievement gap in half by 2015; and, increasing the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2015 to or beyond the performance levels of the highest-performing States. The State is supported in these efforts not only by the projects funded through its $700,000,000 Race to the Top grant, but also through the Florida State Board of Education's 2010 strategic plan.

The State is using its 2010 strategic plan, its Race to the Top plan, and State legislation to further its education reform agenda. The State believes that the ambitious goals set for students and educators within these reform efforts will increase the academic achievement of its students.

State Years 1 and 2 summary

In Year 1, the State made progress in implementing some of its Race to the Top projects. These projects include helping LEAs begin the transition to new Common Core State Standards (CCSS); launching the Local Systems Exchange that allows LEAs to share information on their Local Instructional Improvement Systems (LIIS); assisting LEAs in redesigning teacher and principal evaluation systems to incorporate multiple measures, including instructional practices and student growth; developing more rigorous teacher certification examinations; and, engaging stakeholders through the creation and engagement of eight implementation committees.

Despite some progress in these areas, Florida also faced difficulty and delays, including executing many of the contracts associated with its plan, leadership turnover, legal challenges to the State educator evaluation system, disparate vendor quality, and difficulties in hiring qualified individuals. In Year 2, the State made progress executing many delayed contracts. As a result, by the end of Year 2 almost all projects were on track with the State's amended timelines, although these delays continue to have an impact on the work. For example, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) could not execute a vendor contract for the development of an interim assessment item bank and test platform until spring 2012. This work was originally slated to start in Year 1 and the Department approved an amendment in November 2011 to shift the work to Year 2. The State planned for the interim assessment item bank and test platform to be used in school year (SY) 2012-2013. The delay pushed many projects dependent on roll-out of the interim assessment item bank and test platform off their amended timeline. Due to these delays, Florida and its vendor continued to face an aggressive timeline in order to accomplish the work on time.

The execution and management of contracts in a high quality manner is particularly important to FDOE, as 98 percent of the State's portion of Race to the Top funds is budgeted for contracts. FDOE has stated that it has controls in place to ensure that it is receiving quality products, and in some cases, the State has rejected the contractor deliverables and insisted on additional work prior to deliverable approval.

In Year 2, Florida faced legal challenges related to their teacher and principal evaluation system. A State court determined that the administrative rule associated with the approval process for LEA evaluation systems was invalid. Following the court ruling, the State continued to implement evaluation systems as approved under State statute and consistent with Florida's Race to the Top plan, and chose to proceed with the rule development process again. As of December 2013, the rule has not been resubmitted to the State Board of Education for approval.

In Year 2, Florida implemented the CCSS in kindergarten. Training also began for teachers across all grade levels with approximately 7,500 educators receiving training on implementation of the CCSS in SY 2011-2012. FDOE began work on updating the Teacher Standards Instructional Tool (TSIT) and the Common Core Student Tutorial to include CCSS-aligned materials. The State also worked to develop formative assessments in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) that align to the CCSS.

FDOE also started designing a single sign-on (SSO) portal to allow education stakeholders access to a variety of statewide educational resources in a centralized location. To help with the development of the new portal and local data systems, the State continued its work with its stakeholder advisory groups, the LIIS Implementation Committee and the SSO Portal Implementation Committee.

In Year 2, FDOE approved all 65 participating LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems, which were then used by LEAs to provide feedback to teachers and leaders in SY 2011-2012. FDOE supported LEA and institutions of higher education (IHE) partners in launching job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs, UTeach replication, and a recruitment program for minority teachers. The State continued developing more rigorous teacher certification exams, culminating with State Board of Education approval of new competencies and skills, as well as a new format, for the Prekindergarten/Primary PK–3 teacher certification examination; awarded a grant to an IHE to develop the Florida Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Teacher Induction and Professional Support (TIPS) Center; and started enhancing its electronic Institutional Program Evaluation Plan (eIPEP).

The State continued its efforts to support its lowest-achieving schools by awarding grants to Miami-Dade and Duval counties to hire approximately 800 new teachers through the Teacher for America

program to work in struggling schools. The State also provided the following targeted supports for teachers and leaders: training for aspiring turnaround principals; support to 10 rural LEAs in strategic planning; hiring STEM and reading coordinators to support low-achieving schools; and supporting persistently lowest-achieving high schools in the development of STEM focused career and technology programs.

Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, the State continued to execute contracts and implement activities consistent with the State's amended timelines. In Year 3, Florida implemented the CCSS in first grade and trained approximately 13,000 educators on implementing the CCSS during summer institutes. FDOE continued to add CCSS-aligned resources to the TSIT. The State also continued the Math Formative Assessment System (MFAS) providing Florida educators access to approximately 374 tasks and rubrics aligned to CCSS for kindergarten through third grade (K-3).

FDOE launched the SSO portal by integrating three of the six applications into the portal, which allowed education stakeholders access to select statewide educational resources in a centralized location. The other three applications remain hosted outside the system, although FDOE plans to add them to the SSO portal in Year 4. The State analyzed the Year 2 survey results of LEA LIIS implementation and used this information to tailor training and support for struggling LEAs during Year 3.

In Year 3, all participating LEAs implemented approved teacher and principal evaluation systems. The job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs, led by IHE partners, graduated their first cohorts of residents. The State also graduated the first cohort of the Commissioner's Leadership Academy, a leadership development program for school administrators. Based on recommendations from the Teacher and Leader Preparation Implementation Committee (TLPIC), the State passed Senate Bill 1664 requiring outcome-based measures of teacher preparation programs. FDOE has submitted the rule to establish outcome-based metrics of teacher preparation programs to the Board of Education and expects Board approval in late spring 2014. Once approved, it will become effective immediately. The State also completed, and the State Board of Education approved, revisions of the competencies and skills for four teacher certification examinations: Elementary Education Kindergarten through Sixth Grade (K–6), English 6–12, Middle Grades English 5–9, and the General Knowledge examination. In approving new competencies and skills for the Elementary Education K–6 examination, the State

Board of Education also approved a new four subtest format for the examination, mirroring the new format of the Prekindergarten/Primary PK–3 examination.

The State continued to support its lowest-achieving schools by progressing on a project to recruit and train assistant principals and principals to serve in the lowest-achieving schools in Miami-Dade, Alachua, Pinellas, Orange and Duval Counties. The project complements LEA-led efforts to recruit and train new teachers to work in struggling schools. The State provided access to extensive STEM opportunities to over 1,000 gifted and talented students in rural LEAs through the FloridaLearns STEM Scholars program.

Challenges

In Year 1 and early in Year 2, FDOE struggled with executing contracts across a variety of projects. While the State is generally on track with its Year 3 amended timelines, ensuring contractors produce high-quality deliverables remains a challenge. In some cases, during Years 2 and 3, the State rejected contractor deliverables and insisted that additional work be done before the product was accepted; in some cases further pushing back previously delayed timelines.

FDOE was challenged in maintaining fidelity and quality of implementation of initiatives at the local, LEA-level. Key work, such as instructional information systems and teacher and leader evaluations, were developed by individual LEAs, with guidance from the State. Due to varying capacity across LEAs, the State struggled to meet the technical assistance needs of all LEAs to ensure the development and implementation of high-quality systems. Additionally, the State continued to face legal challenges to implementing revised teacher and principal evaluation systems. The most recent challenge highlighted the variation in the number of effective teachers across LEAs as a result of LEAs setting their own proficiency cut scores on State assessments. Because LEAs establish their own proficiency cut scores, the State is unable to compare teacher performance levels across the State. Consequently, in Year 4, FDOE plans to propose Statewide proficiency cut scores to the State Board of Education.

In Year 3, as a result of cost savings from contracts being executed under budget, approximately four percent of Florida's Race to the Top award remained unallocated as of September 2013. FDOE also announced that it would no longer serve as the fiscal agent for the Partnership of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment consortium. While this decision did not impact Florida's membership in PARCC, the State elected not to participate in the spring 2014 pilot test. State leaders plan to make a decision on spring 2015 administration in spring 2014.

Looking ahead to Year 4

Florida made some progress in its Race to the Top work in Year 3. The majority of FDOE's Race to the Top contracts have been executed and work is underway. The State faces the challenge of ensuring that it can complete its projects in a timely manner while ensuring high-quality products from its vendors. At the end of Year 3, Florida had spent approximately 31 percent of its grant and had $32,000,000 in unallocated funds.[7] Additionally, FDOE will shift its focus from implementation to developing sustainability plans for Race to the Top initiatives to endure beyond the term of the grant.

In SY 2013-2014, the State will implement the CCSS for all grades as well as implement mathematics and reading formative assessments. Work is expected to continue on assessments for hard-to-measure subject areas and the CCSS Student Tutorials. The State's Data Systems work will focus on driving users to the SSO portal and adding the remaining applications to the SSO portal.

Implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems will continue in Year 4 and LEAs will use the evaluation results to inform decisions related to professional development and retention. Florida will complete development of and recommend new passing scores for more rigorous teacher certification exams, pilot outcome-based continued approval standards for teacher preparation programs, and recommend statewide performance levels and rule revisions. The State will continue to provide support to educators in low-achieving schools through reading and STEM coordinators, opening additional charter schools, and continuing to focus on growing STEM career and technology education (CTE) programs.

State Success Factors

Building capacity to support LEAs

As part of its strategy to implement the grant, Florida attempted to integrate Race to the Top projects with existing FDOE initiatives. Leaders of Race to the Top project areas, such as Standards and Assessments, are the same individuals who lead FDOE's standards and assessments efforts. The State believes that it is best able to align its work through this structure to support its LEAs in the best manner possible. In 2010, FDOE established the Race to the Top Assurance Area Leads Team (the Team) to oversee work across its offices. The Team, consisting of FDOE Commissioner and senior leadership, meets monthly to discuss issues and risks associated with the Race to the Top plan. The Team initially identified 12 strategic risks including, among others, LEA capacity, development and integration of technology, and bid protests. The Team is actively engaged in identifying both technical and programmatic sustainability requirements across the grant for SY 2014-2015 and is determining whether a State legislative budget request or Federal no-cost extension amendment request is the appropriate path forward for selected projects.

In addition to establishing the Team, FDOE is enhancing its financial systems and grants and contracts databases. In October 2012, Florida began using a centralized online Scope of Work and budget database for LEAs to upload quarterly deliverables. In summer 2013, FDOE selected a contract management software vendor responsible for producing an operational system for managing external contracts beginning in Year 4. Additionally, the State was approved for a no-cost extension amendment request to allow LEAs to request extensions to LEA Scope of Work projects and to contract for full-time FDOE support staff to support LEAs in Year 5.

LEA participation

In Year 3, Florida reported 65 participating LEAs. Participating LEAs represent more than 90 percent of the State's K-12 students and more than 87 percent of its students in poverty.

To receive Race to the Top funds, LEAs agreed to implement projects across Race to the Top's four education reform areas. Discussions with the State and with a few LEAs during the Department's onsite program review indicated that LEAs are making progress on these projects but that they find the work to be challenging. In particular, while they recognized that the State is assisting with the development of some assessments, some LEAs indicated concerns about their ability and capacity to develop assessments for non-tested grades and subjects. These LEAs also expressed that it was difficult to meet the required minimum standards for the LIIS as part of the Use Data to Improve Instruction project. The LEAs reported that they are using Race to the Top funds to support this work, but that their allotment was not always sufficient to develop a system that includes all elements of the State required LIIS. However, the LEAs visited generally agreed that, if implemented properly, the LIIS has the ability to provide valuable information to educators.

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[7] Due to contracts coming in under budget, by the end of Year 3, Florida had an unallocated amount of $32,000,000. Florida will submit an amendment once it has determined the best use for unallocated funds. Until an amendment is approved, these funds remain unassigned to a specific project budget.

State Success Factors

Similar to what the Department heard in Year 2, many of the school-based educators that the Department spoke with during the onsite program review continued to speak very highly of the State's efforts to expand lesson study[8] and said it has made a difference in their instruction. LEAs are also actively engaged in projects that are funded by the State's 50 percent of Race to the Top funds such as the development of assessments in hard-to-measure subject areas and the implementation of job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs.

In an effort to support LEA implementation of local IIS and facilitate collaboration among LEAs, FDOE maintains a local systems exchange (LSE). The State posts resource materials to the LSE and LEAs use the site to share resources and collaborate across the State. FDOE also provided additional needs-based grants to small and rural LEAs for IIS development as well as supporting teachers from ten LEAs on developing LEA-level strategic plans for supporting their low-performing schools.

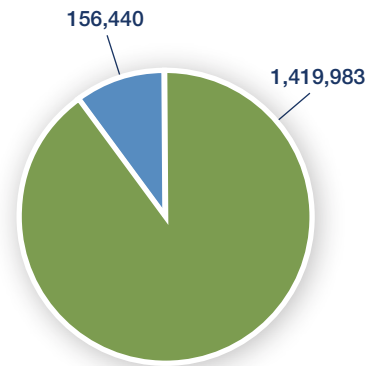### LEAs participating in Florida's Race to the Top plan

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65
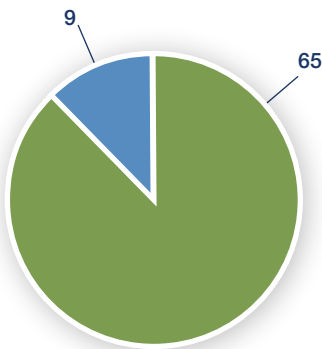
- Participating LEAs (#)
- Other LEAs

K-12 students in LEAs participating in Florida's Race to the Top plan

241,771

2,395,267
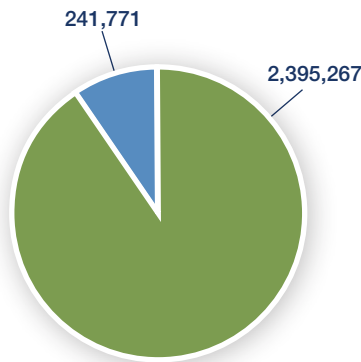
- K-12 students (#) in participating LEAs
- K-12 students (#) in other LEAs

Students in poverty in LEAs participating in Florida's Race to the Top plan

156,440

1,419,983

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

The number of K-12 students and number of students in poverty statewide are calculated using pre-release data from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD). Students in poverty statewide comes from the CCD measure of the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch subsidy (commonly used as a proxy for the number of students who are economically disadvantaged in a school) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program. The students in poverty statewide count is an aggregation of school-level counts summed to one State-level count. Statistical procedures were applied systematically by CCD to these data to prevent potential disclosure of information about individual students as well as for data quality assurance; consequently State-level counts may differ from those originally reported by the State. Please note that these data are considered to be preliminary as of August 21, 2013.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

[8] Lesson study is a collaborative form of professional development that engages small teams of teachers in planning, teaching, observing and critiquing lessons.

Stakeholder engagement

Florida is actively engaging stakeholders in its Race to the Top efforts, in particular through the establishment of eight stakeholder committees. These committees include the TSIT Implementation Committee; the Formative and Interim Assessment Design Implementation Committee; the District-developed Student Assessments for Instructional Effectiveness Implementation Committee; the Portal, Dashboard, and Reports Implementation Committee; the SSO Portal Implementation Committee; the Local Systems Implementation Committee; the Student Growth Implementation Committee; and the Teacher and Leader Preparation Implementation Committee. The composition of these committees varies, but in general, teachers, school-based and LEA administrators, higher education representatives, parents, union members, and other interested parties participate. In addition to the stakeholder committees, FDOE established a Race to the Top website and listserv to keep interested parties informed about the State's Race to the Top projects.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Since the Race to the Top grant was awarded, the State elected a new Governor, under whom five different State Commissioners of Education have now served. Consistent senior leadership at FDOE mitigated issues associated with these frequent leadership changes by taking ownership of their Race to the Top projects and aligning their work with other FDOE priorities. However, constantly shifting leadership has required FDOE staff to frequently update new leadership on Race to the Top priorities, at times slowing the work.

Florida experienced significant delays in starting work in Year 1, but made progress in overcoming many of these delays in Years 2 and 3. Most projects are now on schedule with the State's amended timelines. In Year 4 the State will be at a critical point in the implementation and sustainability of its Race to the Top plan. Given the percent of work being executed by external providers, the State must manage these relationships closely, ensure that the projects stay on track, and most importantly, that they are implemented with high quality.

Overall, Florida has experienced mixed success regarding student outcome gains over the grant period. The State is on track to meet graduation rate, college enrollment, and college course completion performance measure targets. In addition, when compared to 2011, the results from the 2013 NAEP assessments showed a small increase in the average score for Florida's eighth grade students in mathematics (278 to 281), eighth grade students in reading (262 to 266), and fourth grade students in reading (225 to 228). But, the average score for fourth grade Florida students in mathematics was not significantly different from their average score in 2011 (240 to 242). Finally, Florida's overall graduation rate remains in the bottom quintile when compared to other States and gains in overall NAEP average scores have been accompanied by stagnant achievement gaps by student sub-group. Similarly, Florida's ELA and mathematics achievement gaps have persisted year to year.
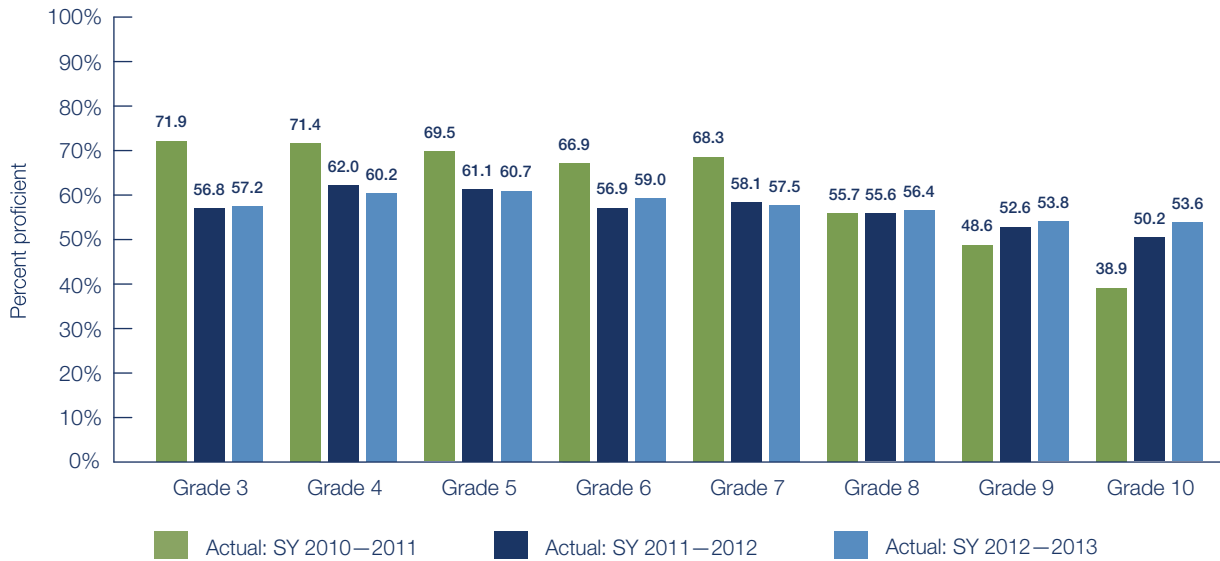
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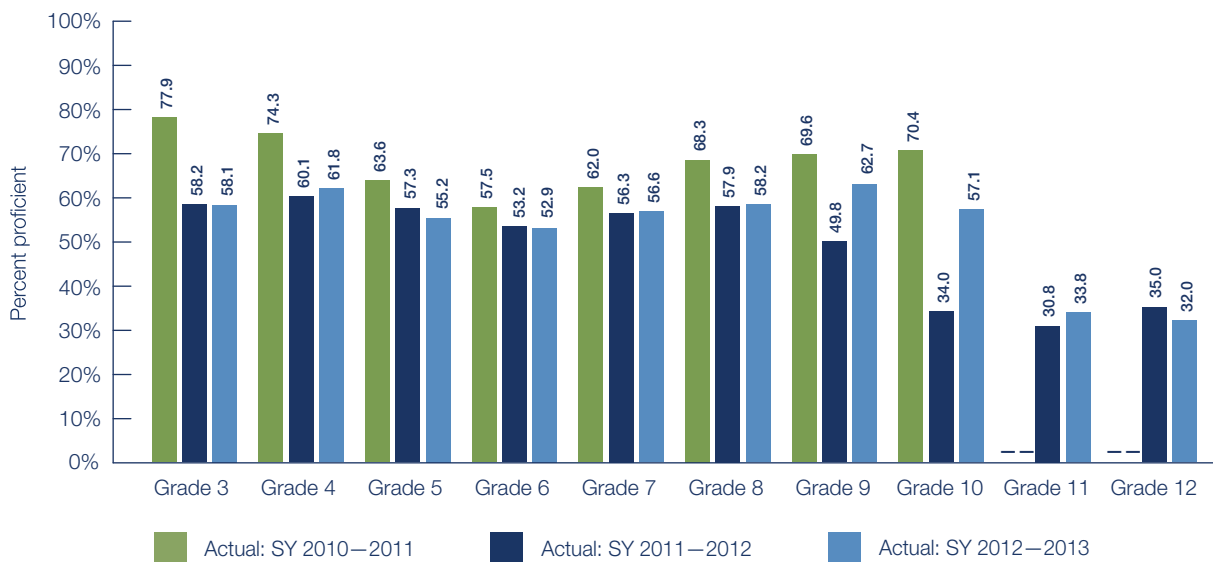
Student outcomes data

Florida scores remained approximately the same in SY 2012-2013 in ELA across grades when compared to SY 2011-2012. Additionally, mathematics scores remained about the same across most grades, except for grades 9 and 10, where student proficiency showed a significant increase from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013.

Florida transitioned to revised statewide assessments in SY 2011-2012 and did not establish performance targets until Year 2 of the grant.

Student proficiency on Florida's ELA assessment

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Actual: SY 2010—2011	71.9	71.4	69.5	66.9	68.3	55.7	48.6	38.9
Actual: SY 2011—2012	56.8	62.0	61.1	56.9	58.1	55.6	52.6	50.2
Actual: SY 2012—2013	57.2	60.2	60.7	59.0	57.5	56.4	53.8	53.6

Student proficiency on Florida's mathematics assessment

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Actual: SY 2010—2011	77.9	74.3	63.6	57.5	62.0	68.3	69.6	70.4	—	—
Actual: SY 2011—2012	58.2	60.1	57.3	53.2	56.3	57.9	49.8	34.0	30.8	35.0
Actual: SY 2012—2013	58.1	61.8	55.2	52.9	56.6	58.2	62.7	57.1	33.8	32.0

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: September 20, 2013.

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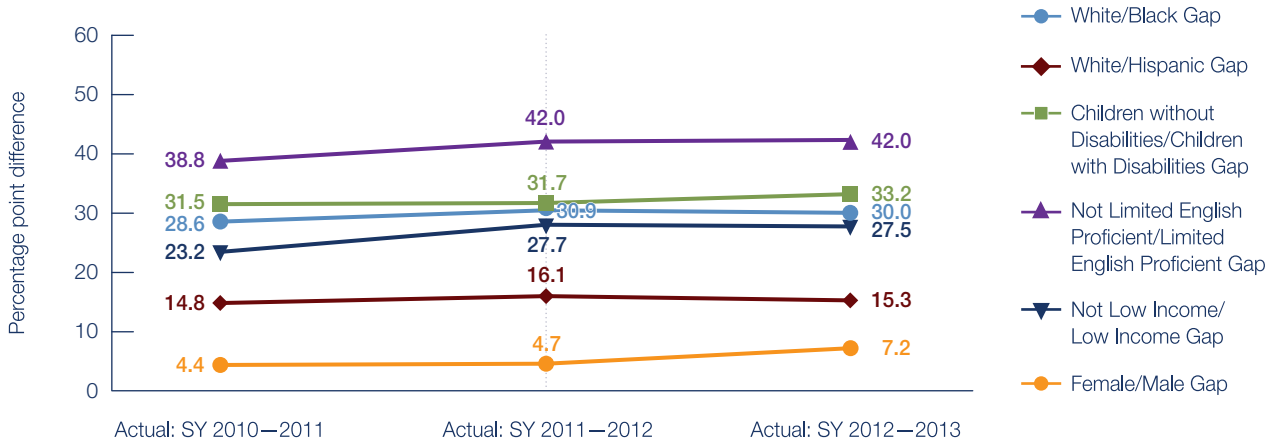
For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.
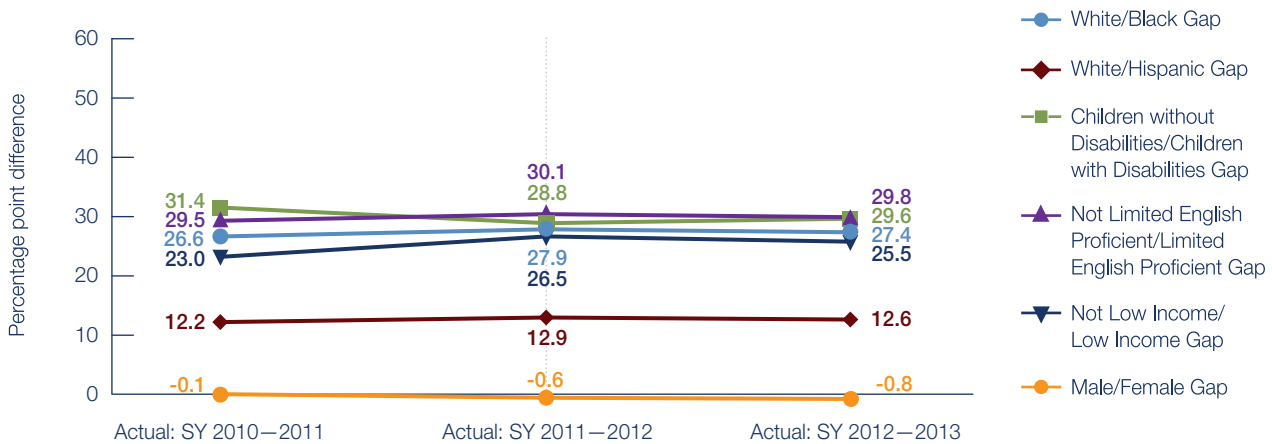
State Success Factors

The SY 2012-2013 achievement gap results illustrate Florida's ELA and mathematics achievement gaps across each comparison group remained relatively flat when compared to SY 2011-2012.

Achievement gap on Florida's ELA assessment

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

Y-axis: Percentage point difference (0–60)

X-axis: Actual: SY 2010—2011, Actual: SY 2011—2012, Actual: SY 2012—2013

Data values:
- 38.8 → 42.0 → 42.0
- 31.5 → 31.7 → 33.2
- 28.6 → 30.9 → 30.0
- 23.2 → 27.7 → 27.5
- 14.8 → 16.1 → 15.3
- 4.4 → 4.7 → 7.2

Achievement gap on Florida's mathematics assessment

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
- Male/Female Gap

Y-axis: Percentage point difference (0–60)

X-axis: Actual: SY 2010—2011, Actual: SY 2011—2012, Actual: SY 2012—2013

Data values:
- 31.4 → 30.1 → 29.8
- 29.5 → 28.8 → 29.6
- 26.6 → 27.9 → 27.4
- 23.0 → 26.5 → 25.5
- 12.2 → 12.9 → 12.6
- -0.1 → -0.6 → -0.8

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: September 20, 2013.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap over three school years between two sub-groups on the State's ELA and mathematics assessments.

Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

If the achievement gap narrowed between two sub-groups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two sub-groups, the line will slope upward.
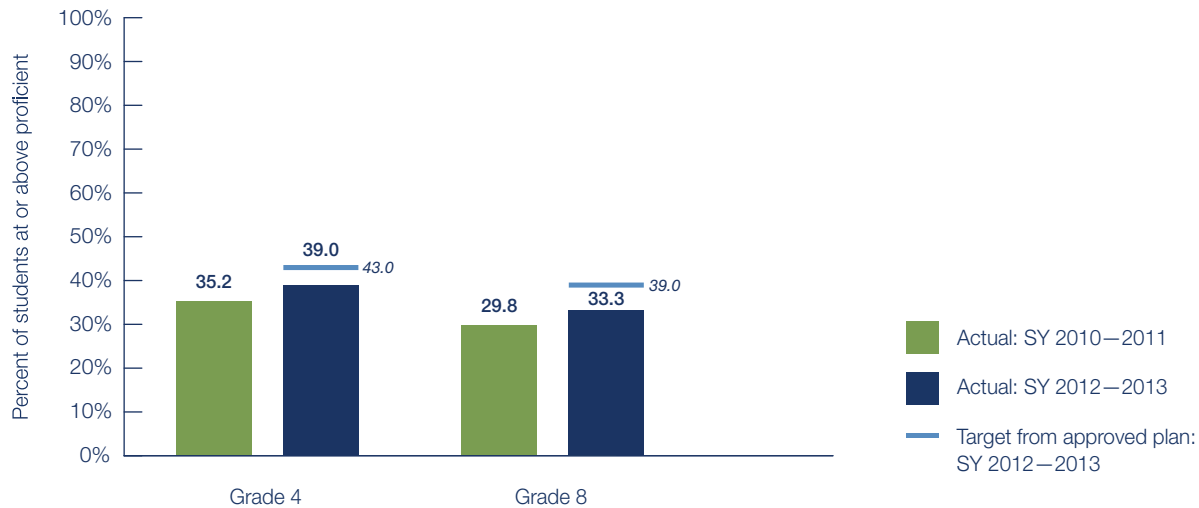
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

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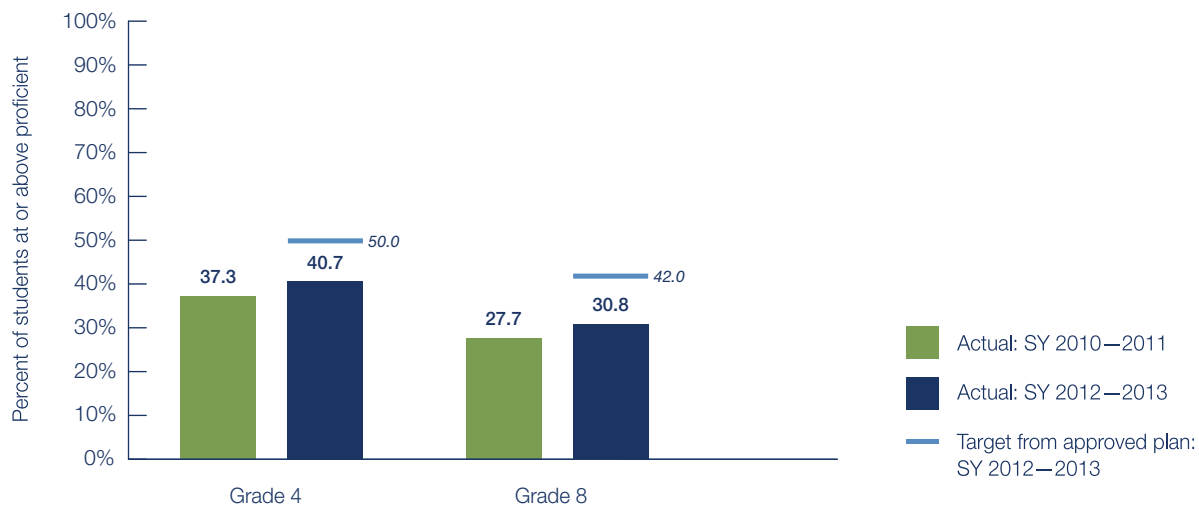
The percentage of Florida's fourth and eighth grade students who were at or above Proficient in NAEP reading in 2013 were not significantly different than in 2011. The percentage of Florida's grade four students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2013 was also not significantly different than in 2011, however, the percentage of grade eight students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2013 was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than in 2011.

Student proficiency, NAEP reading

Percent of students at or above proficient

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Actual: SY 2010—2011	35.2	29.8
Actual: SY 2012—2013	39.0	33.3
Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013	43.0	39.0

- Actual: SY 2010—2011
- Actual: SY 2012—2013
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013

Student proficiency, NAEP mathematics

Percent of students at or above proficient

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Actual: SY 2010—2011	37.3	27.7
Actual: SY 2012—2013	40.7	30.8
Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013	50.0	42.0

- Actual: SY 2010—2011
- Actual: SY 2012—2013
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013

NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.
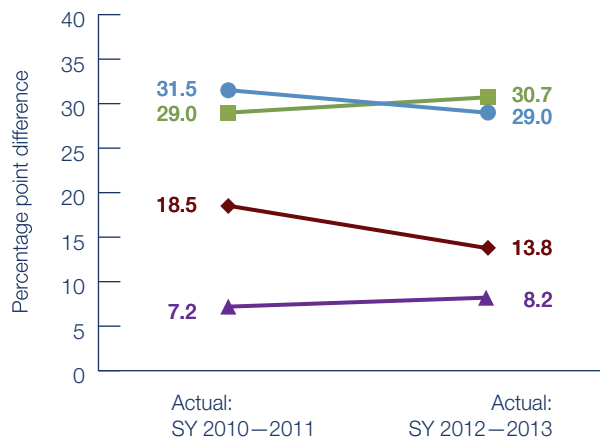
Florida's approved Race to the Top plan included targets for NAEP results based on percentages, not based on students' average scale scores.
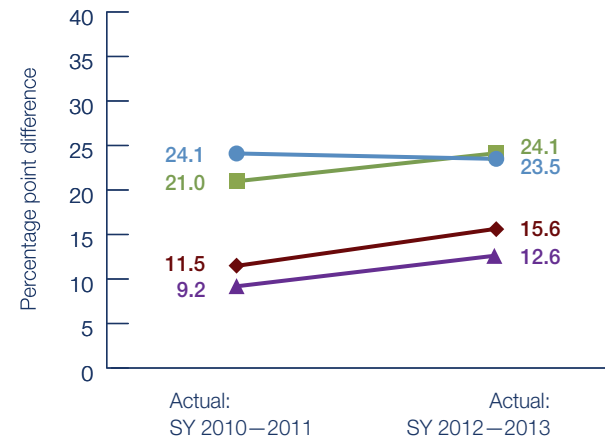
State Success Factors

The grade four achievement gap on NAEP reading remained relatively flat with small increases in the English learner and National School Lunch Program Eligible achievement gaps and a large decrease in the gap between white and Hispanic students. For grade eight, the achievement gap between white and black students and students without disabilities and with disabilities on NAEP reading decreased slightly, yet achievement gaps increased for other sub-groups in 2013.

In fourth grade NAEP mathematics, the white and Hispanic achievement gaps significantly decreased, while the others remained flat or increased when compared to 2011. The eighth grade NAEP mathematics achievement gaps illustrate that three comparison groups remained relatively flat, while there were increases in the white and Hispanic and students without disabilities and with disabilities groups. The achievement gap for National School Lunch Program Eligible students decreased in 2013.
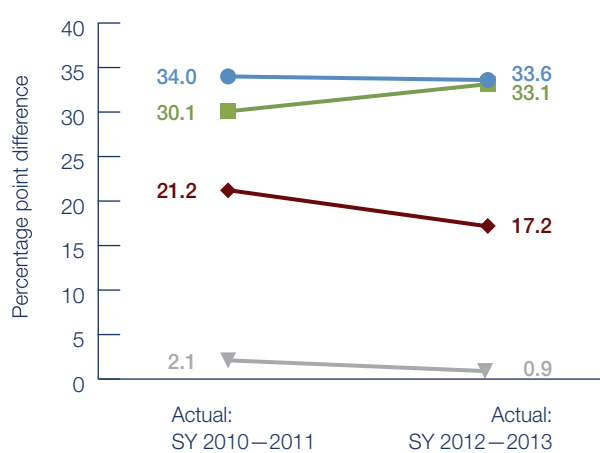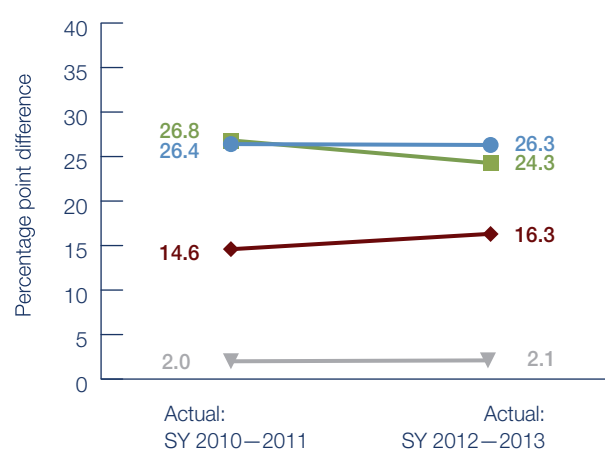
Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2012—2013
White/Black Gap	31.5	29.0
Not NSLP	29.0	30.7
White/Hispanic Gap	18.5	13.8
Female/Male Gap	7.2	8.2

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2012—2013
White/Black Gap	24.1	24.1
Not NSLP	21.0	23.5
White/Hispanic Gap	11.5	15.6
Female/Male Gap	9.2	12.6

Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2012—2013
White/Black Gap	34.0	33.6
Not NSLP	30.1	33.1
White/Hispanic Gap	21.2	17.2
Male/Female Gap	2.1	0.9

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2012—2013
White/Black Gap	26.8	26.3
Not NSLP	26.4	24.3
White/Hispanic Gap	14.6	16.3
Male/Female Gap	2.0	2.1

Legend:
- ● White/Black Gap
- ◆ White/Hispanic Gap
- ▲ Female/Male Gap
- ▼ Male/Female Gap
- ■ Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/ National School Lunch Program Eligible

NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. Florida's NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two sub-groups on the NAEP reading and NAEP mathematics.

Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

If the achievement gap narrowed between two sub-groups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two sub-groups, the line will slope upward.

State Success Factors

Florida's high school graduation rate increased slightly from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2011-2012. The State's college enrollment rate showed a large increase from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013.

High school graduation rate

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011
- Actual: SY 2011—2012
- Target from approved plan: SY 2011—2012
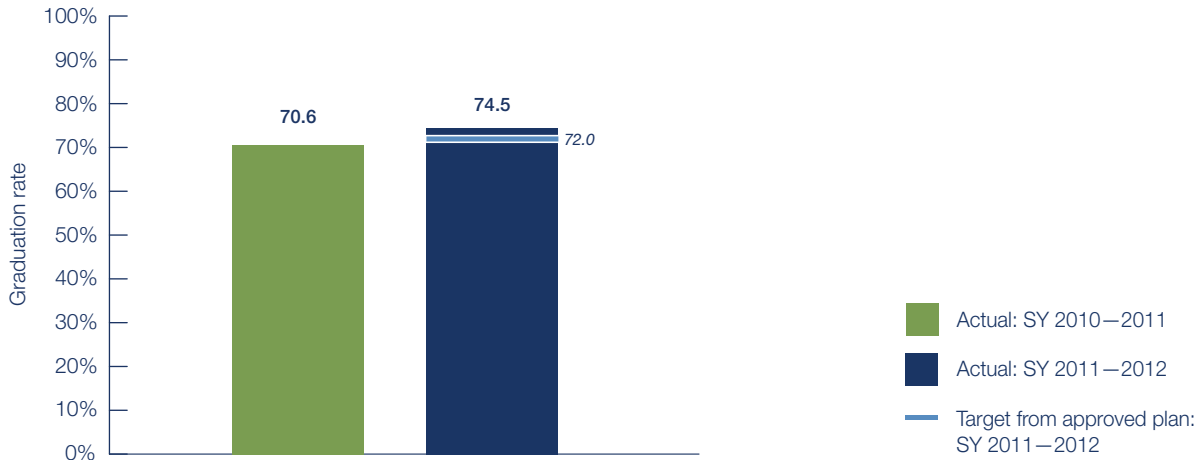
Preliminary SY 2011-2012 data reported as of: August 13, 2013.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

College enrollment rate

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2011—2012
- Actual: SY 2012—2013
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013
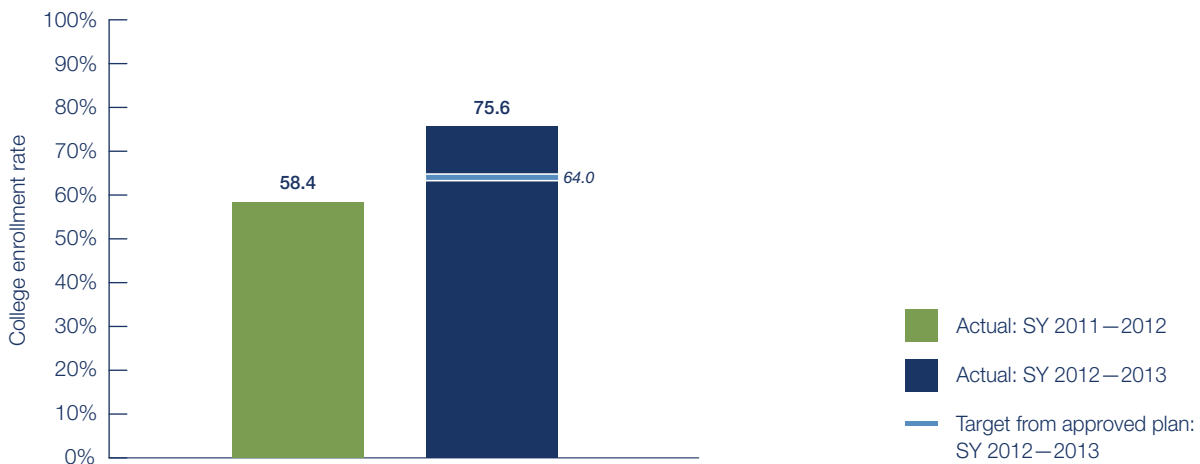
Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: November 12, 2013.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

The Department provided guidance to States regarding the reporting period for college enrollment. For SY 2012-2013 data, States report on the students who graduated from high school in SY 2010-2011 and enrolled in an institution of higher education (IHE).

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.

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

Florida's State Board of Education adopted the CCSS in July 2010 and will implement the new standards in all grades by SY 2013-2014.[9] The CCSS were rolled out in kindergarten during SY 2011-2012, the State added first grade in SY 2012-2013, and all other grades will implement in SY 2013-2014. Feedback from educators has shown that the quality of CCSS implementation in kindergarten and first grade varied across LEAs. While successful in some areas, other LEAs required additional training to ensure that teachers are implementing the CCSS with fidelity.

In September 2013, Florida announced that it would no longer serve as the fiscal agent of the PARCC assessment consortium, which is developing new assessments aligned to the CCSS. The State remains a member of the consortium; however, Florida sought competitive bids for development of a new CCSS aligned assessment in fall 2013 and no longer plans to conduct the spring 2014 PARCC pilot test. The Florida Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education have indicated they will determine a path forward by spring 2014.

After delays in Year 1 and early Year 2, FDOE was finally able to execute a contract with a vendor to complete the development of an interim assessment item bank and test platform. Since the contract execution, approximately 300 Florida educators and others from across the country have begun developing and reviewing assessment items for mathematics, ELA, science, social studies, and Spanish. During Year 3, Florida received multiple item sets from the contractor, but sent back the majority of items because they required additional work. These items were revised and FDOE approved six item sets, leaving three sets as well as access point items remaining for revisions, review and approval. Florida conducted two pilot tests of the item bank during August and September 2013. The eight participating LEAs were able to submit student data and take and score a pilot test in classrooms with volunteer educators and students. The State plans to launch the interim assessment item bank and test platform in summer 2014; however, this reflects a nearly two year delay from FDOE's original plan to launch the item bank and test platform in SY 2012-2013

Florida is also developing ELA and mathematics formative assessments for LEA use. MFAS users can access approximately 374 tasks and rubrics that cover each CCSS standard for grades K-3, representing at least four formative assessments for each standard. In February 2013, the Department also approved an amendment to expand this project to include grades 4-8, Algebra I and Geometry.[10] FDOE also progressed with the development and implementation of the ELA formative assessment tasks and lesson study toolkits. The State released four lesson study toolkits and piloted formative assessment tasks with approximately 100 teachers in grades K-5 in January 2013.

In addition to the interim assessment item bank and formative assessment projects, the State continued working with LEAs that were awarded grants to develop assessments in seven hard-to-measure subject areas. In Year 3, these LEAs developed approximately 12,000 items, currently under review by the State, for a variety of subjects such as health/physical education, orchestra, band, digital arts, world languages, and a subset of CTE courses. While the State waited for the interim assessment item bank and test platform to be finalized, these hard-to-measure items were temporarily stored by another vendor. The State experienced issues transferring the items from one vendor system to another. As a result, LEAs were asked to re-upload their items into the new system, slowing FDOE's review of items. Despite these challenges, FDOE still plans to conduct item tryouts in November 2013 and is preparing for statewide roll-out in SY 2014-2015.

To continue to support educators in the implementation of the CCSS, Florida reports holding seven trainings on the CCSS in summer 2013, attended by approximately 13,000 educators. One goal of the training institutes was to build LEA capacity to replicate the workshops on their own. Participants were provided basic tool kits and, using a train-the-trainer approach, these educators will train other educators in their schools and LEAs on CCSS implementation. Exit surveys were conducted at the summer training institutes. All participants were asked to rate the presentation and presenter on an A-D scale (A being excellent and D being poor) in six categories. Looking at aggregated totals, 76 percent of respondents gave the presentation and presenter a grade of A, and 21 percent gave a grade of B. Ninety-seven percent of respondents said they would recommend the training to others. The State plans to provide additional CCSS training in 2014.

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[9] In December 2013, proposed revisions to both ELA and Mathematics Florida Standards. The proposed changes include: modifying the name from Common Core State Standards to Florida Standards, and clarifying requirements, for example requiring elementary school students to master cursive writing and requiring ninth-grade students to use theorems about triangles and parallelograms to solve problems. The State Board of Education will vote on the proposed changes on February 18, 2014.

[10] See http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/florida-7.pdf

Standards and Assessments

Dissemination of resources and professional development

Florida has made a significant commitment to support the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments. Over 40 percent of the State's portion of the Race to the Top funds is being used to support this transition and to develop resources and professional development. This includes enhancements to the TSIT and Common Core Student Tutorial to assist educators and students in implementing the CCSS. Once updates are complete in SY 2013-2014, the TSIT will include a database with the CCSS, skill-level information, course descriptions aligned to the CCSS, skill-level resources including formative assessment tasks, model lesson plans, and lesson study toolkits. The system allows users to contribute resources, which means educators will be able to share high-quality resources with educators from across the State and a user-rating system will suppress ineffective resources. FDOE also aligned course descriptions to the CCSS for kindergarten through first grade science, social studies, and technical subjects, such as art and music, and added them to the TSIT.

In Year 3, FDOE continued its enhancements to the TSIT. These enhancements include rating the CCSS for level of cognitive complexity, developing course descriptions for Florida's currently approved courses, adding a functionality that allows users to rate resources within the system, as well as including a feature that allows users throughout the State to collaborate on instructional resources such as lesson planning, curriculum mapping, standards progression mapping, and lesson study teamwork. As of September 2013, the TSIT contained over 11,000 resources aligned to Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and the CCSS. This tool has over 68,000 Florida teachers as registered users and Florida reports that there were ten million visits, not all from Florida's registered users, between July-September 2013. The State plans to update the online, content-based Common Core Student Tutorials to align with the CCSS, but the project is currently delayed.

Other work in this area included a postsecondary textbook demand study, initiated to compare high school texts in English, mathematics, and science courses with textbooks used in Florida entry-level postsecondary institutions. The texts were analyzed to determine text complexity alignment and to identify any gaps between the high school and postsecondary texts that could affect students' success in postsecondary courses. The contractor completed this study in Year 2 and made recommendations for improvements to high school texts in order to better prepare students for the rigor of college work. In Year 3, Florida completed a related Teacher Instructional Material Survey to determine which tests are used by highly effective teachers. The texts identified during this survey were incorporated into the FDOE's instructional materials adoption specifications for grades 6-12.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State is on track to fully implement the CCSS in SY 2013-2014, but as it learned with the implementation of the CCSS in kindergarten and first grade, additional supports are needed to ensure educators are supported and that the standards are implemented with fidelity. Based on this lesson, in summer 2013 the State provided training to over 13,000 educators on the CCSS, including representatives from all LEAs. Using a train-the-trainer approach, FDOE expects those trained to train the remaining educators in their LEA.

One of the biggest challenges the State faced in Year 3 was executing a contract for the development and delivery of professional development resources to support CCSS implementation. Due to delays, the State will develop training materials and tutorials and conduct a pilot of CCSS school-level training materials and tutorials with current and future teachers from September 2013 to December 2014. Through an approved no-cost extension amendment request, the State will complete resource delivery by March 2015. Additionally, the Common Core Student Tutorial project remains a challenge. Florida missed its goal of providing student support tools to implement CCSS by SY 2012-2013 and, as of September 2013, had decided on a new strategy, but had not yet begun developing tutorials. Consequently, Florida educators implementing the CCSS have fewer state level resources than FDOE anticipated.

At this time, Florida remains a member of the PARCC consortium, but the State has not indicated if it will use the assessment once it becomes available in SY 2014-2015.

As FDOE moves forward with the projects in this area, it must work to ensure useful tools are available to educators as they implement the CCSS. The State is committing significant funds and human capital to these projects, but the tools will only be worthwhile if they are of high quality and used by teachers in the classroom.

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

In 2003, Florida deployed the Education Data Warehouse (EDW), which tracks students from pre-kindergarten, or whenever they enter the Florida school system, through high school and tracks the transition to postsecondary institutions and the workforce. Student-level data in the EDW includes demographics, enrollment, course and grade information, assessment scores, financial aid, completion information, and employment information. Building on this robust data system, Florida is using Race to the Top funds to develop a SSO portal that will allow users centralized access to multiple applications. In addition, the State is working with all LEAs as they develop an LIIS that will provide users with timely access to actionable information that can be used to inform instruction.

Accessing and using State data

In Year 2, Florida launched its efforts to design and develop the SSO portal, outlining the conceptual, logical, and physical design for the portal. Once completed, the portal will provide users centralized and SSO portal access to the TSIT; the K-12 interim assessment system for reading; the interim assessment item bank and test platform; FloridaSchoolLeaders.org; the State's eIPEP;[11] and, the ELA formative assessment system.[12] With the exception of the interim assessment item bank and test platform, these applications are already in use by educators through multiple access points. During Year 3, Florida engaged a vendor to oversee the final delivery stage and to complete testing on the SSO portal. As of September 2013, FDOE had integrated three of the six applications into the SSO portal: FloridaSchoolLeaders.org, eIPEP, and the TSIT. The remaining applications will be integrated later in Year 4. In addition, 74 LEAs and 64 IHEs were fully integrated into the SSO portal. Throughout Year 3, the State was supported in its efforts by the Data Implementation Committees. For example, with guidance from the Portal, Dashboard, and Reports Implementation Committee, FDOE is developing an initial set of data dashboards, downloads, and reports from the SSO portal.

Designed to increase access to statewide educational resources and promote the use of data to inform instruction, Florida law requires all LEAs to implement an LIIS by June 30, 2014. The State, in conjunction with the Local Systems Implementation Committee, established a set of minimum standards to ensure that stakeholders have access to data, and use it to inform instruction in the classroom, complete school and LEA-level planning activities, and conduct research. The LIIS will provide educators access to the following data sets: interim and summative assessments; student performance; efforts to accelerate learning, such as Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses; college readiness indicators; postsecondary enrollment and persistence; and, teacher certifications. To support LIIS development, the State awarded 50 small or rural LEAs with need-based grants. In fall 2011 and 2012, FDOE conducted surveys to track LEA progress. The results of the 2012 survey of LEAs showed that on average, 56 percent of the standards were met and 21 percent of the standards were being implemented. The 2012 survey also showed that LEAs had formal plans to meet 15 percent of the remaining standards and no plan for the remaining 8 percent. The results also indicated that LEAs vary greatly in their implementation progress, with some LEAs lacking a detailed LIIS implementation plan. For example, according to the survey, while 34 LEAs met 60 percent or more of the standards, 15 LEAs met less than 40 percent. In an effort to provide additional support to those LEAs that continue to lag in their implementation efforts, FDOE identified three LEAs that have successfully integrated standards and launched an LIIS. FDOE then conducted a series of webinars and conference calls in summer 2013 during which the LEAs presented their successes and challenges related to integrating the standards into an LIIS. The State held four sessions with a total of approximately 180 individuals participating. FDOE conducted another survey at the start of Year 4 to continue to measure LEA progress. Data collected from this survey will be available to the LEAs in winter 2014.[13]

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[11] Florida originally intended to integrate FACTS.org into the single sign-on (SSO) portal. This system currently serves as an online college- and career-advising tool for students and parents. Due to legislative changes, the purpose, ownership, and funding for FACTS.org has changed and the Florida Department of Education no longer plans to include this system as a part of the portal. The State received approval in September 2013 to replace FACTS.org with the English language arts (ELA) formative assessment system as one of the six applications to be integrated into the SSO portal.

[12] The Mathematics formative assessment system is accessed through the TSIT.

[13] As of the publication of this report, the data collection survey is available online at http://www.fldoe.org/arra/LIISMS.asp.

Using data to improve instruction

The SSO portal and LIIS are being developed to provide educators with data to inform and improve instruction. As these projects move forward, there is a need to provide training to ensure that educators know how to access and use the data available to them. In Year 3, the State's data coaches and multi-media professionals developed new training modules focused on early warning systems and test design and analysis. Modules on data mining and data-driven instruction were made available via webinar in Year 2 while the additional two modules were presented during 12 Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies where 1,562 educators received training on accessing and using data. The topics for the modules are chosen based on the identified needs of the LEAs. Additional trainings will be developed and provided in Year 4 to support educators' ability to utilize student data.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

After initial delays in developing the SSO portal, FDOE launched and integrated three applications, and began to create LEA access points to the SSO portal. To date, the portal has received 36,958 visits and 111,548 logins by authorized users.[14] The State has exceeded its SY 2012-2013 goals of providing access to 100 percent of its participating LEAs and 71,716 logins by authorized users; however it is far behind its goal of 107,600 centralized portal visits. Looking forward, the State will use the knowledge it has gained about application integration requirements to inform the development and integration of future applications. Though time and funding may not allow for every future application to be integrated, the State plans to grow the portal when and where it is able.

FDOE and the LEAs are working to develop LIIS, but it is evident from LIIS survey data and the Department's onsite visits to LEAs that there is more work to be done. For instance, the LEAs visited expressed concern with the quality and frequency of State communication related to LIIS minimum standards implementation. To address this concern the State has offered assistance to low capacity LEAs through grants and has reached out to low capacity grantees lagging behind. The State also offered four webinars highlighting LEAs' efforts to meet the LIIS minimum standards. While the State reports that feedback from these webinars has been positive, the Year 3 survey results will indicate if the webinars provided the support LEAs need. Additionally, while the remaining applications are available through separate websites, providing access to all six applications through a SSO portal is a key part of the FDOE's implementation plan.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by supporting high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing effective supports to all educators. As part of these efforts, Race to the Top States are 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.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Florida's education reform agenda also includes the passage of the Student Success Act (the Act) in March 2011, which mirrored many of the goals in the State's strategic plan and Race to the Top application. The Act made the following changes: (1) established a comprehensive evaluation system for teachers and principals based on multiple measures of effectiveness, which include primary emphases on student growth and observations of educator practice; (2) tied compensation to evaluation results beginning in SY 2014-2015; and, (3) eliminated tenure except for those instructional personnel who already had a professional service or continuing contract. The Act puts into law many of the elements of the teacher and principal

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[14] Total logins are based on visits to the authentication service; this number is higher than the total number of portal visits because users can also log in directly to applications outside of the portal.

evaluations proposed in the State's Race to the Top application. Since passage, the State developed student growth models, revised its existing guidance on teacher and principal evaluation systems, and conducted professional development focused on the requirements of the new evaluation systems.

In Year 3, the State, with the assistance of the Student Growth Implementation Committee, approved a value-added model (VAM) for calculating student growth on the Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exam. The model will join the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT 2.0) as the currently approved VAMs in the State. Since the adoption of the new VAM occurred just prior to SY 2013-2014, LEAs will not be required to use the Algebra I EOC VAM until SY 2014-2015. The Committee expects models for Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)-10, Biology I, Geometry EOCs, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and Florida's Alternate Assessment for students with disabilities to be approved by spring 2014, with implementation scheduled for SY 2014-2015.

In Year 3, all 65 participating LEAs implemented new evaluations systems that weight student growth data to account for at least 50 percent of the summative evaluation, with the remaining portion of the summative evaluation based on a review of educator instructional practices Although instructional practice data are collected during the school year, LEAs depend on FDOE for the student growth results necessary to finalize an educator's summative evaluation (*e.g.*, FDOE provided LEAs' Year 3 student growth data in late summer 2013, but will not release statewide data until December 2013). As a result, while LEAs can use ratings on instructional practice components to inform professional development throughout the year, it is difficult for LEAs to use the summative performance results to inform educator professional development and retention decisions until the following school year.

Additionally in Year 3, participating LEAs continued to implement principal evaluation systems that incorporate student growth as at least 50 percent of the evaluation. Throughout the beginning of the year, LEAs submitted revisions to their evaluation systems that updated the professional practices portion of the evaluation system to align with Florida Principal Leadership Standards and all LEAs received approval from FDOE to begin using their revised principal evaluation systems.

During Year 2, Florida faced a legal challenge to the State rule implementing the approval process for teacher and principal evaluation systems. In summer 2012, a court ruled that the State rule was invalid based on the State's failure to follow applicable rulemaking procedures, but did not address the substance of the rule. FDOE determined that because the evaluation requirements are outlined in State statute and the statute does not require final rules prior to implementation, roll-out of the evaluation systems could proceed while the rule was being re-developed. As a result, participating LEAs were encouraged, but not required, to begin making improvements and updates to their evaluation systems based on the previous year's implementation and the court ruling and to determine how their systems would inform salary compensation, promotion, retention, professional contracts, and removal decisions. As of September 2013,

53 of the 65 participating LEAs have sought and received approval for modifications to their teacher and principal evaluation systems.

FDOE previously selected a vendor to conduct a review of LEA practices and State-level initiatives related to training and supporting teachers and leaders. The contractor's work in Year 3 focused on reviewing LEAs' implementation of teacher and leader evaluations. In particular, the vendor conducted an analysis of the Year 1 teacher and principal evaluation results, comparing the student growth portion of the evaluation to the observation portion to see if the results were aligned. This report was finalized in December 2013. The State plans to conduct a similar analysis of the SY 2011-2012 teacher and principal evaluation results using surveys, interviews, and comparison data, however, FDOE does not expect to complete the Year 2 report until December 2014. The information gathered from these reviews will be used to inform State and LEA practices in future years.

Based on Year 2 implementation, FDOE participated in the RSN's "Promoting Evaluation Rating Accuracy: A Convening of States" in April 2013. At this convening, the State team analyzed their available educator evaluation rating results, drawing informed conclusions from the data sets. These findings led to the creation of an action plan to improve evaluation rating accuracy in Florida, aided by feedback from peer States and the Quality Evaluation Rollout (QER) Workgroup.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

Florida is implementing many projects to support the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, including job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs and minority teacher recruitment programs.

During Year 3, the State continued to monitor the job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs at the University of Central Florida (UCF), and Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and the University of South Florida (USF). UCF committed to recruiting 140 participants with degrees in STEM subject areas who will be trained to teach mathematics and science in grades 6-12. The first cohort of 55 resident teachers began coursework in May 2012 and 40 participants completed their residency and coursework by summer 2013, including externships at various locations such as NASA and Lockheed Martin, and at least one lesson study cycle. UCF conducted extensive recruitment to fill the second cohort, receiving over 120 applications. Eighty-one were admitted, with 78 beginning coursework in May 2013.

FAU's and USF's programs recruit and train high-performing teachers and assistant principals for assistant principalships and principalships. The goal is to prepare 160 new principals and assistant principals for employment in partner LEAs as effective principals and assistant principals. FAU launched Principal Rapid Orientation and Preparation in Educational Leadership (PROPEL) in January 2012 with 30 candidates. Of this cohort, during Year 3, 19 candidates completed the coursework, residency in a high-need school, passed the Florida Education Leadership Examination (FELE), and were promoted

to the apprenticeship phase (Phase Two) of the program, where they spent 25 days out of their home school under the supervision of a principal in another school. Cohort Two began in May 2012 and completed their coursework, internship, and passed the FELE in August 2013. Participants in Cohort Two will be eligible for a principalship after June 2014. PROPEL launched a third cohort in June 2013; however the program is only committed to completing the assistant principalship preparation phase for this cohort by the end of the grant period. As of summer 2013, PROPEL has prepared nine potential principals and 25 potential assistant principals to lead in Florida's schools.

The USF program is broken into three cohorts. Cohorts A and C consist of teacher leaders and Cohort B consists of assistant principals. Cohort A began coursework in April 2012 and Cohort B in September 2012. As part of this program, all candidates in Cohort A completed a year-long, job-embedded internship, university coursework, and passed the FELE prior to advancing to the residency phase of the program in fall 2013. Cohort C began coursework in March 2013. In addition to a job-embedded residency experience in Year 3, the assistant principals in Cohort B completed training on topics ranging from interpersonal communication to data-based decision making.

Florida also awarded a subgrant to Polk County School District, in partnership with Florida Polytechnic University, to recruit 45 minority candidates to become teachers and place at least 42 in LEAs by the end of the grant period. This program launched in February 2012 with seven candidates. Out of 143 applications, an additional 36 candidates were selected to participate in the second and third cohorts. The second cohort of 15 students graduated in May 2013 and the third cohort is expected to graduate in May 2014.

Additionally in Year 3, the University of Florida launched the STEM Teacher Induction and Professional Support Center (STEM-TIPS). The purpose of this initiative is to support STEM teachers across the State by working with teacher preparation programs as well as LEA induction programs to ensure that they are providing proper support and training. The Florida STEM-TIPS Center also supports an online STEM mentoring and professional development program.

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

In November 2012, IHEs with state-approved Initial Teacher Preparation Programs successfully used the enhanced eIPEP site for submission of Institutional Program Evaluation Plans. Through this system, teacher and principal preparation programs will be able to track and monitor candidate and completer performance data, which will enable more meaningful analysis and reporting of program performance by the State. In Year 3, the State updated eIPEP to include electronic submission and the capability to review Educational Leadership program and Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) data. In spring 2013, IHEs with state-approved EPI programs and Educational Leadership programs utilized these new functionalities

to submit their Annual Program Evaluation Plans (APEPs) and IPEPs, respectively. FDOE also completed the integration of the eIPEP system into the SSO portal.

In Year 3, the Teacher TLPIC finalized its recommendations for outcome-based continued approval standards for teacher preparation programs. These recommendations were incorporated into the State Board of Education's 2013 legislative agenda and were subsequently passed in Senate Bill 1664 and signed into law on July 1, 2013. The State awarded a contract to elicit feedback from all teacher preparation programs and to recommend revisions to the approval standards guidelines for state-approved teacher preparation programs. The State plans to pilot the new continued approval standards in fall 2013 and recommend performance levels and rule revisions in Year 4.

In addition to the work on eIPEP, the State is committed to developing more rigorous teacher certification exams. In Years 1 and 2, the FDOE Postsecondary Assessment (PS) Bureau, with guidance from subject matter experts, revised competencies and skills and implemented more rigorous passing scores on select certification examinations. In Year 3, the PS Bureau revised both the Elementary Education K-6 and the General Knowledge teacher certification examinations by updating necessary competencies and skills. The PS Bureau also field tested and validated new items, constructed new generation test forms and conducted subject matter experts meetings to recommend new passing scores for the Mathematics 6-12, Middle Grades (MG) Mathematics 5–9 and Prekindergarten/Primary PK–3 examinations. The State Board of Education approved revised teacher competencies and skills for English 6–12 and MG English 5–9 certification examinations, as well as all four subtests of both the General Knowledge (English Language Skills, Reading, Mathematics, and Essay) and the Elementary Education K–6 (Language Arts and Reading, Social Science, Science, and Mathematics) examinations. Newly written items for these examinations were field tested beginning in Year 3 and new generation test forms will be administered in Year 4. Work is also underway to revise exams for Computer Science and Technology Education.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

In Year 3, the State continued to implement its Great Teachers and Leaders Community of Practice (CoP). The March 2013 CoP meeting covered issues related to CCSS implementation and over 200 educators attended, representing almost all of the participating LEAs. FDOE also held a virtual CoP in June 2013 focusing on student assessments and teacher evaluation, with approximately 100 LEA personnel and Race to the Top coordinators attending. The State reports that STEM and lesson study are popular topics. FDOE plans to use the Year 4 CoPs to showcase participating LEA best practices, in particular the sessions will feature student presentations and examples of best practices from LEA's Scopes of Work.

Great Teachers and Leaders

After a nomination process, the State selected 25 participants for Cohort One of the Commissioner's Leadership Academy. The Academy focuses on training school and LEA-level administrators who are likely to take additional leadership roles in their LEAs or at the SEA. Participants learn about education best practices and are tasked with training other educators in their LEAs on the material covered. Throughout Year 3, the cohort participated in a professional development series on topics such as leadership development and CCSS. In addition to the academies, each participant partnered with a mentor. As of September 2013, the State reports that an independent evaluation of cohort one revealed high participant satisfaction with the program. Furthermore, approximately 30 percent of the cohort one participants were promoted to new positions. The second cohort of 25 participants was selected in summer 2013 and will attend academies in Year 4.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

After the passage of the Student Success Act, Florida quickly laid the groundwork for implementation of revised teacher and principal evaluation systems statewide. As a result, all of Florida's LEAs implemented revised evaluation systems in SY 2011-2012 that included student growth weighted to account for at least 50 percent of the evaluation for school administrators and teachers with three or more years of student performance data.[15] Evaluations continued in SY 2012-2013, and LEAs were encouraged to update their evaluation systems based on lessons learned during the first year of implementation and to determine how evaluation results will be used to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, professional contracts, and removal decisions.

After experiencing procurement delays with the job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs and the recruitment programs for minority teachers in Year 1, the State successfully mitigated these challenges in Years 2 and 3. As of September 2013, teacher and principal evaluation data were not yet available on the first cohort of participants, although the State expects to have data available in Year 4 and will use this information to assess the quality of the candidates and the program. In addition, the program subgrantees are working with their partners to secure additional funding to maintain the programs beyond the grant period, while also creating a system for sharing training content, resources, and best practices so that LEAs can expand on this work in the absence of Race to the Top funding.

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.[16]

Support for the lowest-achieving schools

In Year 3, the State continued to implement several initiatives intended to support LEAs in their effort to turn around their lowest-achieving schools. Throughout summer 2013, the State conducted 12 Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies that provided professional development to teams of educators in low-achieving schools on instruction in reading, mathematics, science, CTE, leadership, and accessing and using data. The Summer Academies served 1,562 educators in 264 low-achieving schools.

The State placed 40 reading coordinators and 20 STEM coordinators in regional offices over the course of Years 1, 2, and 3. These coordinators work closely with school administrators, particularly those in low-achieving schools, to identify effective supports for teachers and to facilitate the sharing of best practices. They also work to align professional development and encourage lesson study adoption, with a goal of sustaining these practices.

The State also launched its Community Compact initiative. Through this program, the State joined with community partners to work

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[15] For school administrators or teachers with less than three years of student performance data, local educational agencies (LEAs) can reduce the weight given to student growth to 40 percent of the final evaluation. Non-classroom instructional personnel may combine growth data with other measurable student outcomes specific to their job responsibilities; however, the performance of students must account for 50 percent of the final evaluation, or 40 percent if fewer than three years of data are available.

[16] 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.

with one or more persistently lowest-achieving school on initiatives intended to increase family literacy and grow community partnerships. The State hoped to introduce these programs in Year 1, but struggled to secure quality partners, a problem rectified between December 2011 and March 2012. All Community Compact programs now provide mentors for students at persistently low-achieving high schools and activities for families, such as family literacy programs. While the State continues to experience some difficulties with the program, primarily because community partners are unfamiliar with State processes, all vendors are providing services to students and local communities while working to enhance their supports.

In addition to the work discussed above, the State plans to establish 30-40 new charter schools in the feeder patterns of low-achieving schools by SY 2014-2015. As of the end of Year 3, 9 schools opened with 9 additional schools scheduled to open in SY 2014-2015. The State is working with dozens of charter school operators that could open schools in SY 2014-2015, but acknowledges that it will be challenging to meet the State's Race to the Top charter school goals even with a no-cost extension amendment request.

FDOE is currently one of six member States participating in the RSN's Performance Management for School Turnaround Workgroup. Florida's team completed a performance management self-assessment during summer 2013 and identified key priorities for improving their performance management practices with LEAs. The State attended a September 2013 meeting on Performance Management for School Turnaround Programs and is now participating in an ongoing workgroup. FDOE was featured in the March 2013 "Race to the Top Highlights: Third-Party Providers and School Turnaround publication."[17]

Building teacher and leader capacity in the lowest-achieving schools

In Year 3, Florida built on the work it started in Years 1 and 2 to increase teacher and leader capacity in the State's lowest-achieving schools. To support schools in Miami-Dade and Duval Counties (each of which have 9 or more schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving), the State awarded funds to these LEAs to hire approximately 800 new teachers through Teach for America (TFA) by SY 2014-2015. In Year 2, 270 teachers were recruited, trained, and placed in Miami-Dade and Duval Counties. In Year 3, 284 additional teachers were recruited, trained and placed in the same counties. Both LEAs experienced some attrition between Years 2 and 3, resulting in the retention of a total of 316 teachers in Miami-Dade and 189 teachers in Duval County after their first year of teaching. Additionally, Duval County was selected by TFA to implement a Merged Program Pilot, which allowed Duval to pilot pre-service training in its own region instead of sending corps members to a centralized institute. As a result, Duval County TFA corps members received six weeks

of pre-service teaching experience instead of the traditional four, and the teaching occurred in Duval County schools.

Recognizing the importance of developing a principal and assistant principal pipeline for persistently lowest-achieving high schools and their feeder schools, the State launched a project to recruit and train 80-100 new assistant principals and principals for these schools by SY 2013-2014. FDOE recruited and began training 91 candidates in the traditional strand and 17 candidates in the charter school strand, based on an applicant's potential for success in turnaround leadership. The program experienced some attrition due to scheduling conflicts and time commitments. Currently there are 89 participants in the traditional strand and 11 in the charter school strand. The candidates have each been assigned a mentor to support them throughout their training. During Year 3, the candidates completed six of the 10 planned seminars focused on the best practices for turning around low-achieving schools and participated in a year-long practicum that included multiple visits to a low-achieving school to observe the work of the turnaround leaders. In SY 2013-2014, participants will complete a full-time, semester-long internship in a different low-achieving school.

Finally, the State implemented a program to build LEA leaders' capacity to support low-achieving schools in 10 rural LEAs. Teams from these LEAs, comprised of teachers, principals, and LEA leadership, attended monthly seminars to learn how to lead low-achieving schools and developed a strategic plan to support these efforts. Separate trainings were held for superintendents and board members that provided similar content. FDOE received approval to extend this project through SY 2013-2014, but later decided not to proceed with this extension. The project completed according to its original timeline and scope.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, the State built upon work started in Years 1 and 2 by launching a number of initiatives aimed at supporting its low-achieving schools. Reading and STEM coordinators continued their support of these schools, and LEAs continued to expand STEM CTE programs in the State's 22 persistently lowest-achieving high schools. Training was provided to educators in low-achieving schools through the Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies and funds were awarded to two LEAs to hire over 505 teachers in their schools. The State also extended its program to train aspiring principals to work in low-achieving schools and continued work with 10 rural LEAs to provide training on strategic planning to increase student achievement. As these initiatives are in the early stages, it is not yet evident what effect, if any, these supports will have on student performance in low-achieving schools.

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[17] RSN publications can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/index.html

Florida is committed to supporting charter schools through its Race to the Top efforts. As such, the State has provided funding to encourage charter management organizations and charter operators to open 30 to 40 new charter schools across the State and provided additional funding to support a program for the development of turnaround principals in charter schools, educator evaluations in charter schools, and CCSS and LIIS implementation in charter schools.

By SY 2014-2015 the State plans to establish 30 to 40 new charter schools in the feeder patterns of those schools identified under Race to the Top and the School Improvement Grant program as persistently lowest-achieving, priority schools identified as part of the State's approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request, and schools that are designated as "F" schools based on FCAT results.[18] The State partnered with a contractor to recruit charter operators to open schools in these areas. To date, 24 charter school applications have been submitted and approved by the applicable LEAs. The State and its contractor have experienced some difficulties in recruiting operators to open charter schools in the feeder patterns of these low-achieving schools. Additionally, Florida's statutory regulations provide for only one application window per year, which results in a once-a-year opportunity to approve new charter school applications. The partner is actively seeking out charter school operators to ensure that the State is on track with its goal of opening 30 to 40 new charter schools within the grant period.

Florida is working with 11 charter school participants to provide training to aspiring turnaround principals. This work is being done in conjunction with the turnaround principal work discussed in the *Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools* section of this report. The State reports that it has been particularly challenging for charter school participants to complete the program, because there is often no one to step into their role while they are away from their schools. FDOE contracted with vendors in November 2012 to provide training on CCSS and LIIS implementation and in December 2012 to provide training on educator evaluations in charter schools. In spring 2013, FDOE offered additional sessions both onsite and through webinars to assist struggling charter schools in creating successful teacher evaluation systems. Thirteen charter schools received individualized assistance beyond the revision sessions. Additionally, the vendor offered trainings to certify school leaders to lead professional development on the topics most essential to improving teaching, as it relates to the teacher evaluation system. Eleven trainings were held throughout the State during summer 2013, certifying over 200 individuals.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

FDOE made progress in Year 3 in recruiting charter management organizations to open schools in the feeder patterns of the State's low-achieving schools, but acknowledges that it will be a challenge to open 30 to 40 charter schools by SY 2014-2015. Florida seeks to provide differentiated support for its charter schools, but has also faced challenges in launching this work. After delays in Years 1 and 2 the State was only able to launch the charter school aspiring turnaround principal training in Year 2. Educator evaluation, CCSS and LIIS training did not begin until Year 3; however the State anticipates completing this work prior to the end of the original project period. Although delayed, the State has made slow, but steady progress.

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[18] In September 2013, FDOE requested to revise this number from 30-40 charter schools by school year (SY) 2014-2015 to 24 schools by SY 2014-2015 and an additional six in a no-cost extension amendment request in Year 5 by SY 2015-2016. The Department approved this request to shift the timeline on December 9, 2013; however the goal established by the State will remain the same.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

Race to the Top States are committed to providing a high-quality plan with a rigorous course of study in STEM. In doing so, each State must cooperate with STEM-capable community partners in order to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students. A focus on STEM furthers the goal of preparing more students for an advanced study in sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including among underrepresented groups such as female students.

State's STEM initiatives

Florida's support for STEM initiatives is evident throughout its Race to the Top plan. As part of its efforts to support the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments, FDOE awarded funds to a consortium of rural LEAs to develop a program to provide STEM programming to gifted and talented students in rural LEAs. Work began with students in January 2012 and will continue through Year 4.

To support the development of Great Teachers and Leaders, the State developed a job-embedded teacher preparation program to train recent STEM graduates to become teachers. Through this program, the State plans to train 140 STEM graduates to teach science and mathematics in grades 6-12. The first cohort of 55 participants began training in Year 2. After some attrition, 38 of these teachers received second-year contracts to teach during SY 2013-2014. During Year 3, as a result of Cohort 1 attrition, UCF conducted extensive recruitment efforts for Cohort 2 candidates. UCF also strengthened the interview process, resulting in 81 admitted candidates, with 78 beginning coursework in May 2013. Florida also awarded funds to the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) to partner with the UTeach Institute to provide teacher preparation training for students majoring in STEM subjects. Over 100 students enrolled in the program during the first year of program implementation.

The State is committed to providing STEM support to its lowest-achieving schools. Cumulatively, the State has placed 20 STEM coordinators in regional offices across the State. The State is also working with its 22 persistently lowest-achieving high schools to create and expand existing CTE programs with an emphasis on STEM. As of SY 2012-2013, each of the 22 high schools has at least one STEM Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Academy. Since Year 1, the number of CAPE Academies in the 22 high schools has increased from 61 to 87. Throughout SY 2012-2013, the FDOE and the STEM coordinators continued to work with these schools to ensure that they have the resources and personnel necessary to launch these new or expanded programs. The State reports that it also worked with LEAs to develop and launch a mentor program for new or struggling CTE teachers. Although it has not yet collected information on the effectiveness of the mentoring program, the State hopes that these

FloridaLearns STEM Scholars

Florida invested Race to the Top funds in supports for STEM students through a comprehensive program to provide extensive STEM-related opportunities to gifted and talented students in rural LEAs. To date, the FloridaLearns STEM Scholars program has served over 1,000 students. Students chosen to participate are paired with mentors and receive intensive hands-on experiences with STEM professionals, rigorous courses during the school year, leadership training and opportunities to collaborate with other advanced students. The program includes visits during the school year to Florida IHEs to participate in STEM-focused trainings. STEM Scholars also participate in a multi-day Summer Challenge that provides students opportunities to work with peers to solve problems in a variety of technical fields under the guidance of professional scientists and engineers. In Year 3, the summer programs focused on problems involving ecology, physics, inorganic chemistry, photonics, marine habitats, underwater robotics, alternative energy sources and nanotechnology.

efforts will decrease dropout rates, improve student achievement results, increase college enrollment rates, and boost industry certification attainment for students in these courses.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

As part of its Race to the Top plan, the State set a goal of increasing the percent of students enrolled in both STEM career academy courses and STEM-accelerated courses by no less than three percent annually. The State successfully met these goals in Years 1, 2, and 3. Based on early assessment and evaluation data, Florida's STEM initiatives appear to be accomplishing their related goals and the State anticipates its STEM work will continue to increase STEM course enrollment beyond the grant period.

Florida made meaningful progress in its Race to the Top work in Year 3. The majority of FDOE's Race to the Top contracts have been executed and work is underway. The State faces the challenge of ensuring that it can maintain the fidelity and quality of implementation of initiatives at the LEA-level. As a result, in Year 4 the State plans to strengthen its support of LEAs through CoPs, summer academies, continuing the work of regional coaches, coordinators, and specialists, and expanding its targeted support of small and rural LEAs as well as charter schools. At the end of Year 3, Florida had approximately $32,000,000 in unallocated Race to the Top State-level funds. Given the State's pace to date, in Year 4 Florida will face an aggressive timeline in order to complete its projects on time; implement State- and LEA-level initiatives with fidelity; and provide meaningful support to LEAs to ensure high-quality implementation. Additionally, FDOE will shift its focus from implementation to developing sustainability plans for Race to the Top initiatives to endure beyond the term of the grant.

The State plans to implement CCSS in all grades and provide additional CCSS training to educators throughout the State. FDOE expects to complete pilots of mathematics and reading formative assessments and roll out the optional assessments to all LEAs in spring 2014. LEAs with subgrants to develop assessments for hard-to-measure subject areas will continue with this work and the State will carry on with enhancements to the TSIT. The State expects to restart the Common Core Student Tutorial project led by FDOE project manager and contracted content experts.

FDOE plans to add the three remaining applications to the SSO portal. LEAs expect to continue work on the development of an LIIS. The State's data coaches and multi-media professionals plan to develop additional training to support educators in their efforts to access and use data.

LEAs anticipate continuing their implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems in Year 4. Participating LEAs expect to implement revised systems, based on lessons learned from the first and second years of implementation, and use evaluation results to inform decisions related to professional development and retention. Most LEAs expect to revise their compensation schedules during Year 4, with implementation based on Year 4 evaluation data in SY 2014-2015.

FDOE anticipates continuing its support of the job-embedded teacher and principal preparation programs as the next cohort candidates become eligible to be hired. The State expects to pilot outcome-based continued approval standards for teacher preparation programs and recommend statewide performance levels and rule revisions, allowing FDOE to make comparisons across LEAs. FDOE also expects more rigorous teacher certification exams to be field tested and administered.

In Year 4, FDOE anticipates reading and STEM coordinators will continue to provide support to educators in low-achieving schools. The State plans to continue recruiting additional charter school operators to open schools in the feeder patterns of low-achieving schools and working to develop and expand STEM focused CTE programs. Finally, FDOE expects principal and assistant principal candidates to complete semester-long internships in low-achieving schools and become eligible for placement in school and LEA leadership positions.

Budget

For the State's expenditures through June 30, 2013, please see the APR Data Display at http://www.rtt-apr.us.

For State budget information, see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html.

For the State's fiscal accountability and oversight report, see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance-fiscal-accountability.html.

Glossary

Alternative routes to certification: 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): (1) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education (IHEs) and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (2) are selective in accepting candidates; (3) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (4) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (5) 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: the 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 the revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve the 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: The twelve indicators specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act are: (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 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (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.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Report submitted by each grantee with outcomes to date, performance against the measures established in its application, and other relevant data. The Department uses data included in the APRs to provide Congress and the public with detailed information regarding each State's progress on meeting the goals outlined in its application. The annual State APRs are found at www.rtt-apr.us.

College- and career-ready standards: State-developed standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time students graduate from high school.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) English language arts and mathematics standards developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including governors, chief State school officers, content experts, teachers, school administrators, and parents. (For additional information, please see http://www.corestandards.org/).

The **education reform areas** for Race to the Top: (1) Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career; (2) Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement; (3) Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and (4) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Supporting local educational agencies' (LEAs') implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing school intervention models.

Effective teacher: 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.

High-minority school: A school designation defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

High-poverty school: Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

Highly effective teacher: 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): 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: 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: 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.

No-Cost Extension Amendment Request: A no-cost extension amendment request provides grantees with additional time to spend their grants (until September 2015) to accomplish the reform goals, deliverables and commitments in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work. A grantee may make a no-cost extension amendment request to extend work beyond the final project year, consistent with the Amendment Principles (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/grant-amendment-submission-process-oct-4-2011.pdf) as well as the additional elements outlined in the Department Review section of the Amendment Requests with No Cost Extension Guidance and Principles document (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/no-cost-extenstion-submission-process.pdf).

Participating LEAs: 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 at the time of the award, 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):** 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: As determined by the State, (1) 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 (2) 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 (1) 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 (2) 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.)

Glossary

Qualifying evaluation systems: Educator evaluation systems that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that: (1) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (2) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

Reform Support Network (RSN): In partnership with the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU), the RSN offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to grantees of the Race to the Top education reform initiative. The RSN's purpose is to support the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

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: 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 (Smarter Balanced):** 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:** A detailed document for the State's projects 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): Data systems that 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: For the purposes of this report, student achievement (1) for tested grades and subjects is (a) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in number (2) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (2) 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: 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): A specific type of growth model 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."