RACE TO THE TOP

New York Report

Year 3: School Year 2012–2013

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

March 19, 2014

Executive Summary

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.

[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.

[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

State's education reform agenda

New York developed an ambitious Race to the Top reform agenda that integrates into other statewide goals, such as the New York State Board of Regents Reform Agenda. The State aims to better prepare all students for college and career success, help teachers use high-quality data to inform instruction, evaluate educators and preparation programs based on performance, and put low-achieving schools on the path to success. To these ends, the State adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), initiated major improvements to its data systems, and worked to develop a new educator evaluation system. In addition, it implemented interventions in low-achieving schools and provided professional development to support all of its initiatives. To advance this extensive agenda, the State aligned a variety of funding sources in addition to its $696,000,000 Race to the Top grant, including School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, State funds, other external sources, and funds from other federal grants.

State Years 1 and 2 summary

During Years 1 and 2, New York faced challenges building capacity and addressing issues related to the scale of projects and engaging stakeholders, which were critical to making progress on implementation. The number of LEAs compounded the complexity of New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) initial implementation, and review and approval of LEAs' scopes of work, budgets, and expenditures led to delays in the first portion of the grant period. New York addressed some of these challenges by creating a Performance Management Office (PMO) to oversee the implementation of Race to the Top and to support its LEAs. The PMO also worked with other offices in NYSED to develop and release Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to support various activities in its plan. The State had several amendments approved in Years 1 and 2 to adjust timelines and approaches to activities, requiring an accelerated pace of implementation in the second half of the grant period to complete key grant activities.

During Year 2, New York completed its first year of transition to the CCSS, called the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in New York. The State encouraged educators to implement at least one CCLS-aligned unit each semester and field-tested items aligned to the CCLS in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to be used in State assessments. To directly support its schools in the transition to the CCLS, as well as data-driven instruction and educator evaluation systems, New York established Network Teams of curricular, data, and instruction experts and held Network Team Institutes (NTIs) to provide support to local teams to redeliver professional development on these reforms in their regions. The State also developed and launched EngageNY.org to help support the State's vision of a college- and career-ready education for all students by providing teachers, school leaders, and parents, with tools and resources. As of the end of Year 2, EngageNY.org had more than eight million views and nearly one million unique visitors.

After procurement challenges contributed to a one-year delay, the State was able to start making progress on enhancing its P-12 data system at the end of Year 2. The State also developed a higher education data warehouse to collect data from the State University of New York (SUNY) and released a Teacher Roster Verification application to ensure accuracy in student growth calculations used in educator evaluations. The State did not release a planned RFP for grades six through eight (6-8) science and social studies assessments in Year 2, due to delays in revising the relevant standards.

During Year 1, the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) filed a lawsuit against the State pertaining to the teacher and principal evaluation system. The State noted that this lawsuit resulted in a lack of clarity in the field regarding the lawsuit's impact on implementation timelines, creating a communication challenge for the State. In Year 2, New York reached an agreement on educator evaluations with the NYSUT. The State also began reviewing LEAs' educator evaluation plans, called Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plans for implementation in SY 2012-2013. Until the lawsuit was resolved, LEAs were hindered in their ability to finalize collective bargaining agreements related to evaluation systems, since the lawsuit called into question how student growth was to be used in evaluations. These delays affected other programs that relied upon the new educator evaluation framework, including the competitive grant programs that NYSED linked to APPR plan approval.

By the end of Year 2, the State launched the Clinically Rich Graduate Teacher Preparation Pilot program and the School Innovation Fund (SIF), two of the competitive grant opportunities for LEAs and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to help the State meet its goals for improving the educator pipeline and turning around the lowest-performing schools. The State faced delays with launching other competitive grant opportunities for LEAs in Years 1 and 2 as the State required approval of APPR plans as a prerequisite for LEAs to receive awards. In Year 2, NYSED's Office of Accountability partnered with other agency offices to develop and begin rolling out the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) and the State's Office of School Innovation supported this work by awarding Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround (SSDST) grants, which allow LEAs to enter into partnerships for targeted assistance to promote school improvement.

Executive Summary

State Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, New York accelerated implementation progress in all areas of its Race to the Top plan. The State refined its oversight routines for sub-recipients and vendors and implemented additional feedback loops to gain deeper insight into the impact of professional development at the classroom level to inform continuous improvement efforts. SY 2012-2013 was New York's second year in a two-year transition to the CCLS. The State continued to hold NTIs and released additional grade-, subject-, and role-specific modules, videos, and other resources to support educators, parents, and other stakeholders in the transition to CCLS. In Year 3, New York implemented new State assessments and worked to communicate the importance of providing students, teachers, parents, and the public with a more accurate measure of students' college- and career-readiness. The State used a rigorous review process for LEAs' APPR plans, and nearly every LEA in the State had an approved plan to implement during SY 2012-2013. Approval of APPR plans also contributed to progress in awarding several LEAs competitive grants to support comprehensive and innovative approaches to turning around lowest-achieving schools and improving the effectiveness and equitable distribution of educators. In SY 2012-2013, State and LEA teams led or oversaw a total of more than 400 DTSDE reviews at Priority and Focus Schools. The State also made progress aligning expectations for its IHEs with the Regents Reform Agenda by field-testing and piloting new performance-based certification exams for teacher and leader candidates and providing professional development to IHE faculty. The State continued implementation of QUALITYstarsNY in SY 2012-2013, providing more than 300 early childhood programs with provisional ratings and quality improvement plans.

Challenges

The State continued to experience delays launching its P-12 Education Data Portal, a tool that will provide support for data-driven instruction and implementation of the CCLS, including tools for monitoring academic progress, curricular and instructional resources, and local school and LEA data. The State reported that additional development time is necessary to coordinate across systems and to ensure that data quality, privacy, and security standards are met. While New York made progress with linkages to support its pre-kindergarten to postsecondary (P-20) system, the State decided to take more time to review content with key stakeholders prior to dissemination of its public data site. Similarly, the State decided additional time was necessary to review "Where are they now?" reports that, once published, will enable personnel in LEAs to track students' progress after high school graduation. The State also continued to encounter challenges with APPR implementation in New York City. Per State regulations, the Commissioner of Education approved a plan on June 1, 2013, with full implementation of the plan in New York City during SY 2013- 2014. The State continued to experience delays developing assessments and modules for grades 6-8 science, social studies, and the arts due to delays in State and national decisions on content standards. The State also did not develop a formative assessment application or a repository to aggregate and organize content developed by Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) grantees, which would have provided access to content for other LEAs across the State.

The State overcame previous procurement delays by executing most of its planned contracts and MOUs, and made significant progress in expenditures as compared to Years 1 and 2. However, the extent of previous timeline delays continues to present a risk to the State completing activities during the grant period. The State has already made several no-cost extension amendment requests that have been approved for several projects, and the Department expects to receive additional requests for review in early 2014.

Looking ahead to Year 4

Based on significant progress executing contracts in Year 3, the State expects to accelerate project implementation and oversight and technical assistance routines for vendors and LEAs. In Year 4, the State is expected to fully implement CCLS in all grades and subjects and administer high school Regents exams for Algebra I and English that reflect the new standards. NYSED also plans to continue to support educators, parents, and other stakeholders in the transition through videos, curricular modules, and other instructional resources as well as face-to-face and online NTI professional development sessions and meetings. In Year 4, the State is expected to launch the EngageNY Portal, which will include EngageNY.org 2.0 – an updated version of the content currently available on the EngageNY.org website – and additional features, including data dashboards that will enable teachers, principals, parents, and other stakeholders to access data and tools to improve instruction. In SY 2013-2014 New York City will begin its first year of APPR implementation, and other LEAs will implement systems for the second year. LEAs awarded competitive grants for comprehensive human capital systems, innovative approaches to supporting new teachers, and Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot programs will continue implementation. NYSED plans to provide technical assistance and gather lessons learned from implementation to support grantees, and to inform future policy development and sustainability. The State will also continue to work with public and independent IHEs in the State to build understanding among faculty about the Regents Reform Agenda and to publish reports that include effectiveness data on public higher education program graduates. The State plans to analyze data to identify areas of APPR implementation that require further training and provide differentiated support. New performance-based assessments for new teachers and leaders, including the edTPA™ and Content Specialty Tests, are expected to become operational in Year 4. In Year 4, the LEAs and schools will also continue implementation of several competitive grants and use of the DTSDE to support low-achieving schools and LEAs.

Building capacity to support LEAs

Performance management

In Year 3, NYSED refined its performance management structure to reflect a shift from the Years 1 and 2 priorities of developing and planning to focus on supporting and refining Race to the Top implementation. Led by NYSED's Chief Financial Officer, in Year 3 the PMO continued to support RFP development, as well as monitoring, management, and amendments to the State's Race to the Top State Scope of Work. The PMO also coordinated with NYSED program office staff overseeing projects in each of the four education reform areas. The PMO and NYSED program staff enhanced routines for vendor performance management and sub-recipient monitoring for the Race to the Top program through the Monitoring and Vendor Performance System (MVPS). The MVPS builds off existing efforts to track contract status and includes questions based upon short- and long-term deliverables and outcomes specific to each grant, contract, or MOU. The State piloted the MVPS in Year 3, and LEAs and vendors began submitting quarterly responses and evidence at the beginning of Year 4. The State expects the MVPS to enable it to better track quarterly progress of vendors and LEA-recipients of competitive grants and gather more targeted information on quality of implementation and best practices.

Support and accountability for LEAs

The PMO and NYSED staff overseeing Race to the Top projects in each of the four education reform areas collaborated in Year 3 to provide content-based oversight and technical assistance to the field. For example, the NYSED Great Teachers and Leaders team provided extensive support to LEAs prior to the submission of APPR plans and continued to refine guidance and offer additional resources as implementation began in most LEAs during SY 2012-2013. In Year 4, the State plans to utilize data from Year 3 APPR implementation to differentiate support to LEAs (see "Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance"). Additionally, all Race to the Top participating LEAs continued to receive professional development and support on targeted content to support the Regents Reform Agenda through NTIs (see "Stakeholder engagement").

To supplement NYSED's Office of Audit Services quarterly and annual review processes and regular monitoring of the alignment of expenditures to LEAs' Race to the Top Scopes of Work, the NYSED Administrative Services Group established a protocol for more in-depth reviews. After completing two reviews, the State refined its risk analysis process and prioritized onsite visits for approximately 30 LEAs. As of October 2013, the State reported completing eight visits.

Stakeholder engagement

NYSED's methods to communicate directly with educators and LEA staff included conferences, training sessions, field visits, webinars, email updates, field memos on key initiatives, a Race to the Top website, and the EngageNY.org website. In Year 3, the State continued to conduct outreach to Network Teams and Network Team Equivalents through two- to four-day NTIs.[7] The State uses NTIs to train groups of between 100 and 840 educators who then redeliver training in their regions to build local capacity for implementation. The State provided professional development at NTIs for Network Teams, as well as teacher and principal evaluators and evaluation system trainers in September and October 2012 and March 2013 on several aspects of APPR implementation needing further refinement, including student learning objectives (SLOs) and inter-rater reliability. The State also held NTIs in November 2012 and February, May, and July 2013 for Network Teams and educator ambassadors on the CCLS ELA and mathematics transitions (see "Supporting the transition to new standards and assessments"). The State used NTIs to share modules differentiated by grade and subject level and to provide opportunities for teams to develop action plans for local redelivery. Based on feedback loops from the first two years of implementation, the State found variability in the effectiveness of Network Teams redelivering training content in their regions. In Year 3, New York worked to address this challenge by establishing additional opportunities to engage with and provide resources to local leaders and offering specific sessions to build the capacity of local leaders during NTIs. Throughout the NTI sessions, the State also worked to reinforce connections across elements of the Regents Reform Agenda. The State created a comprehensive workbook aligned to deliverables and metrics to guide Network Teams in meeting the major milestones and expectations for CCLS, data-driven instruction, and APPR implementation in SY 2012-2013. Based on positive feedback from the field and lessons learned, the State released an updated version of the workbook in July 2013 for use in SY 2013-2014.[8]

The State also responded to a need for greater consistency in the support reaching educators beyond initial NTI attendees by developing and releasing "turnkey kits." The kits mirror NTI sessions and include handouts, videos, presentations and other resources, including facilitation guides to equip NTI leaders, teachers, and principals to more readily conduct training in their geographic regions. NYSED leadership also issued field memos and held statewide roadshows to connect with leaders in LEAs and Boards of Cooperative Educational Service (BOCES) and offer additional opportunities to answer questions, solicit feedback, and support them in their roles carrying out reforms.

[7] New York State Education Department (NYSED) granted a number of LEAs permission to certify a Network Team Equivalent if they could provide evidence that they had existing local or regional infrastructure with the capacity for delivering the functions of the Network Teams.

[8] See http://www.engageny.org/resource/ccss-appr-and-ddi-workbook-for-network-teams-implementation.

NYSED continued to utilize surveys during and after NTI events to evaluate its professional development. Administering daily feedback surveys provided immediate feedback and allowed NYSED to make adjustments aligned with participants' expressed needs. The State also sent post-event surveys to determine whether the NTI met its objectives and to inform future trainings.

To improve stakeholder engagement, during Year 3, the State also worked with the RSN to analyze its current use of and to consider how to more effectively leverage social media to increase awareness about NYSED's reform efforts. NYSED worked with the RSN to plan for and execute a social media strategy during the State's July 2013 NTI resulting in unprecedented growth in social media use and followers of EngageNY Twitter and blog accounts. Since the NTI, the State has also considered how to incorporate EngageNY-branded social media platforms to effectively engage with stakeholders more broadly about reform initiatives. The State contributed information on progress implementing social media strategies to the publication, "Measurable Success, Growing Adoption, Vast Potential: Social Media Use Among State and Local Education Agencies," which highlights findings from social media use in 23 SEAs and 11 LEAs.[9]

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State continued to utilize multiple channels, such as EngageNY.org, field memos, webinars, and training sessions, to support Network Teams, LEAs, principals, and teachers in managing the reforms in CCLS, as well as data-driven instruction and educator evaluation. The State also applied feedback from Years 1 and 2 to refine its face-to-face Network Team sessions and to continuously update resources. Additional curricular tools including videos and modules, and facilitation tools including turnkey kits, were made available in Year 3 to support building local capacity through redelivery of NTI training resources.

Due to the scale of the State's plan, NYSED has employed multiple strategies to provide technical assistance and oversight to more than 600 participating LEAs. In addition to professional development through NTIs, the State also leveraged the subject-area expertise of NYSED staff to support LEAs, particularly in the development and initial implementation of APPRs. The State utilized the information gathered from these sources, as well as from other NYSED quarterly and annual reporting tools, to assess progress of implementation and consider how to differentiate support. The State expects to further enhance its sub-recipient monitoring routines in SY 2013-2014 by conducting onsite visits to approximately 30 LEAs and providing targeted support based on additional analysis of SY 2012-2013 APPR results. The State also piloted a new system, the MVPS, to gather more specific information on vendor and LEA competitive grant recipients' progress toward deliverables and outcomes. The State expects to fully implement and continuously refine the questions used through the MVPS in Year 4 to gather information on project impact and to inform potential sustainability plans.

In Year 3, the State continued to have a low level of expenditures against its approved Race to the Top budget, reporting expenditures of approximately 35 percent of the total grant by September 2013. In early Year 3, the State appeared to be continually increasing its rates of expenditure, as most anticipated contracts were executed and regularly invoicing upon deliverable completion. Additionally, the Department approved New York's no-cost extension amendment requests for implementation of several projects in its plan.[10] New York will need to continue to accelerate project implementation and corresponding spending to stay on track to meet the commitments in its plan.

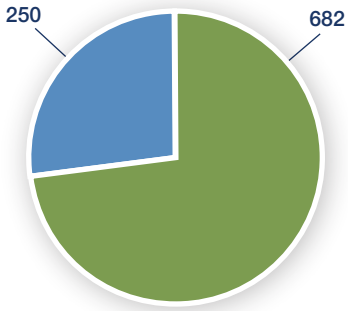
[9] Available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/stakeholder-communications-engagement-webinars.html.

[10] See http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html.

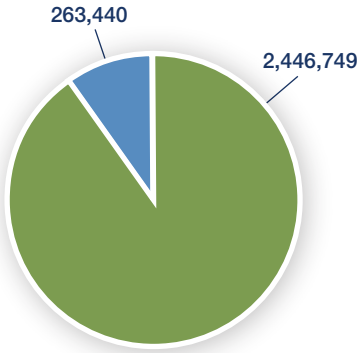
LEA participation

As depicted in the graphs below, New York reported 682 participating LEAs as of June 30, 2013.[11] This represents more than 90 percent of the State's kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) students and more than 95 percent of its students in poverty.

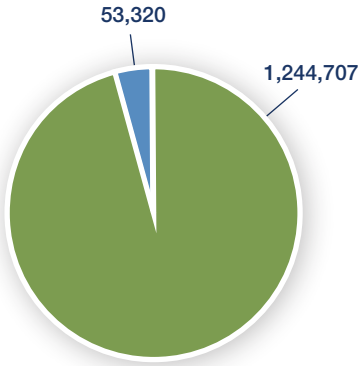
LEAs participating in New York's Race to the Top plan



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



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



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 December 10, 2013.

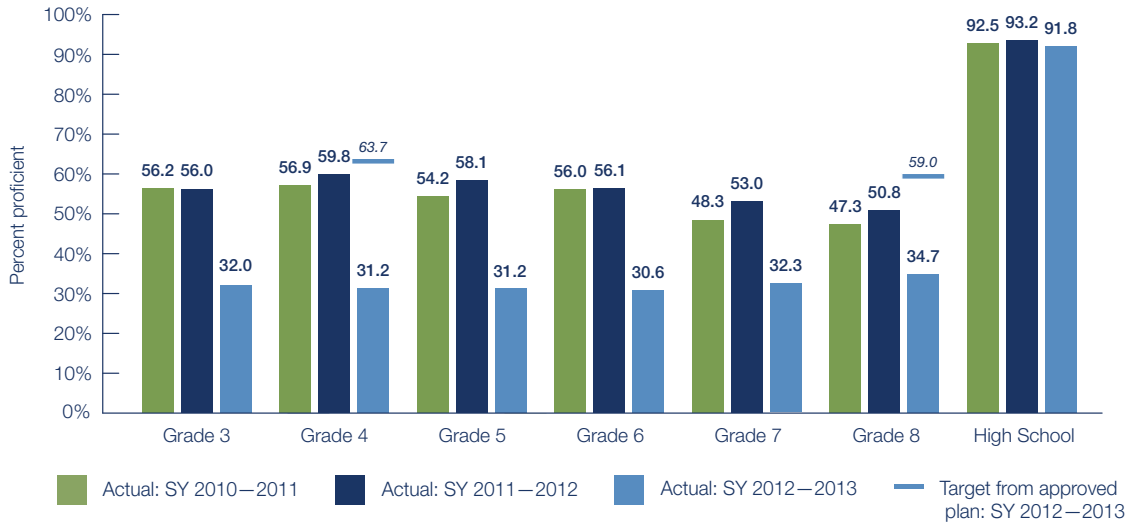
For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

[11] Since June 30, 2013, the Department has been notified of changes to New York's list of participating LEAs due to several factors, including LEA consolidation and LEAs ending their Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) of participation with the State. As of February 7, 2014, the State reported 639 participating LEAs. The State reported this represents approximately 86 percent of the State's K-12 students and more than 93 percent of its students in poverty.

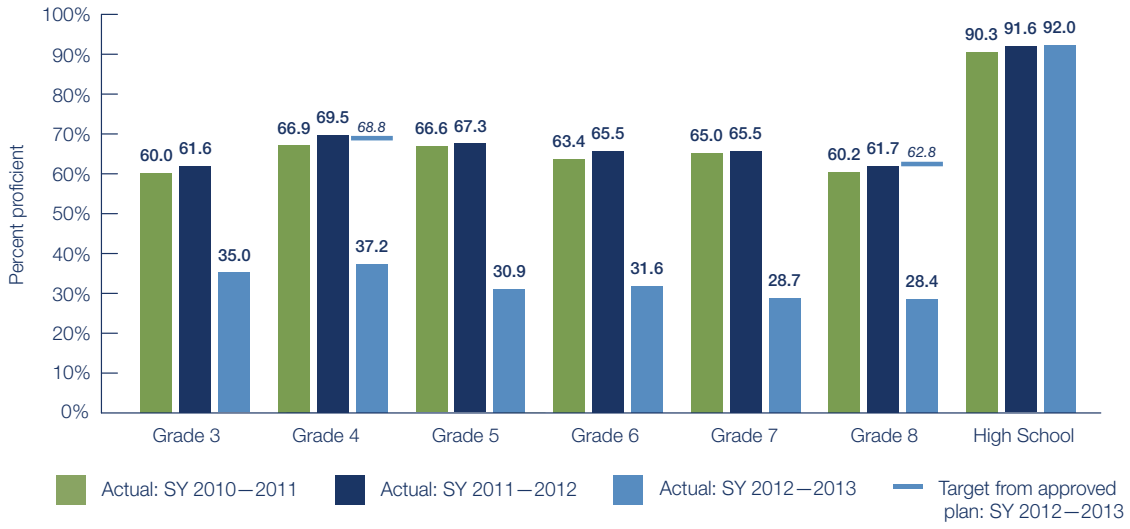
Student outcomes data

New York maintained its commitment to increase the rigor of its standards and fully implemented new State assessments in grades three to eight in spring 2013. New York's State assessment results from SY 2012-2013 show a decline in proficiency in grades three through eight for ELA and mathematics as compared to SY 2011-2012, whereas high school results remained relatively the same (see "Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments").

Student proficiency on New York's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on New York's mathematics assessment



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: November 22, 2013.

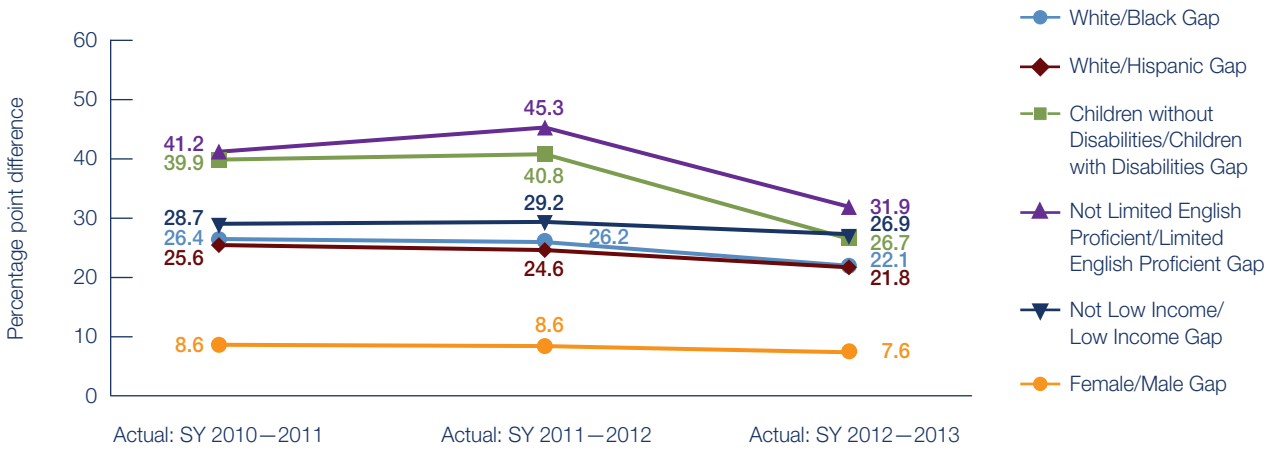
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

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

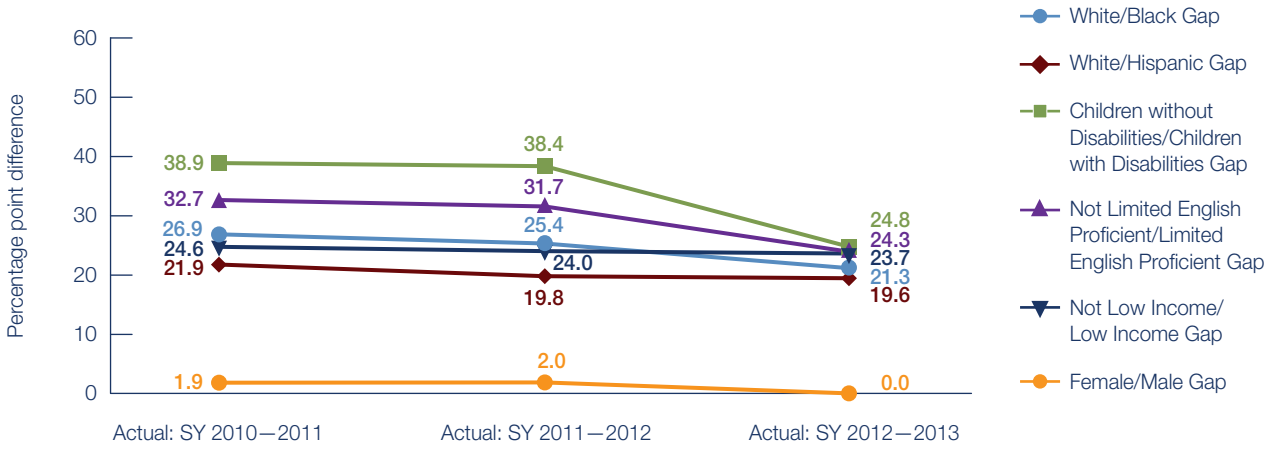
State Success Factors

Achievement gaps on New York's State assessment for ELA and mathematics declined from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013 with the largest decreases illustrated in the achievement gaps between children without disabilities and children with disabilities and not limited English proficient and limited English proficient.

Achievement gap on New York's ELA assessment



Achievement gap on New York's mathematics assessment



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: November 22, 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.

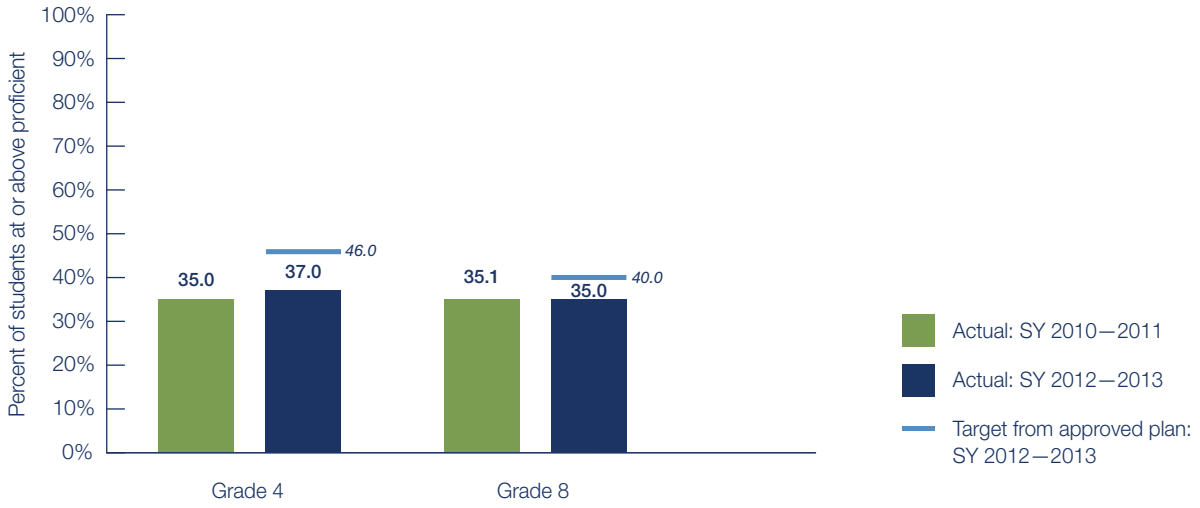
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

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

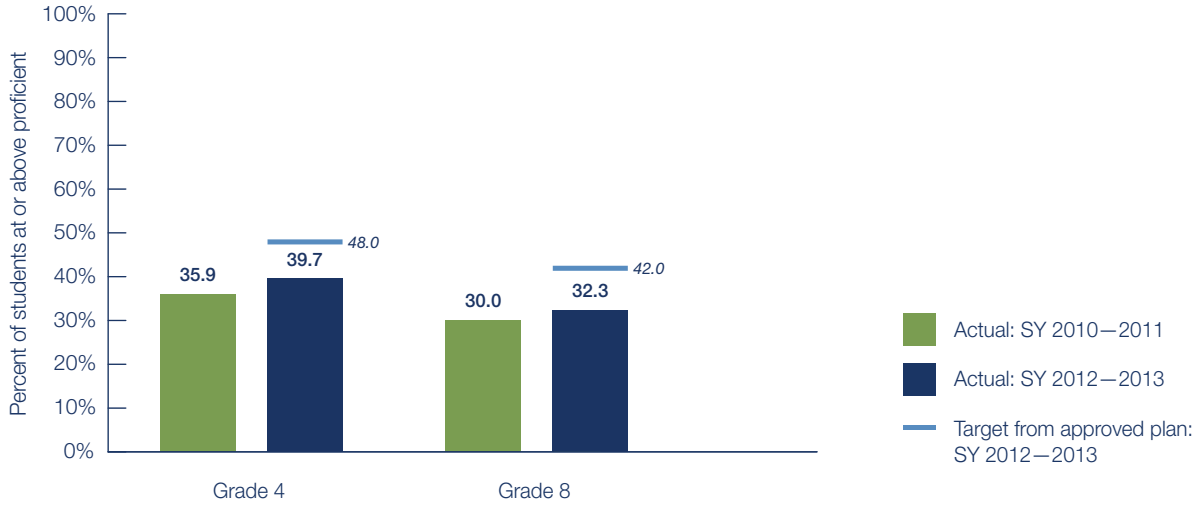
State Success Factors

Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments illustrate that the percentage of New York's grade four students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics was significantly higher than in 2011, whereas results in grade eight mathematics as well as grades four and eight reading remained relatively the same in 2013 as in 2011.

Student proficiency, NAEP reading



Student proficiency, NAEP mathematics



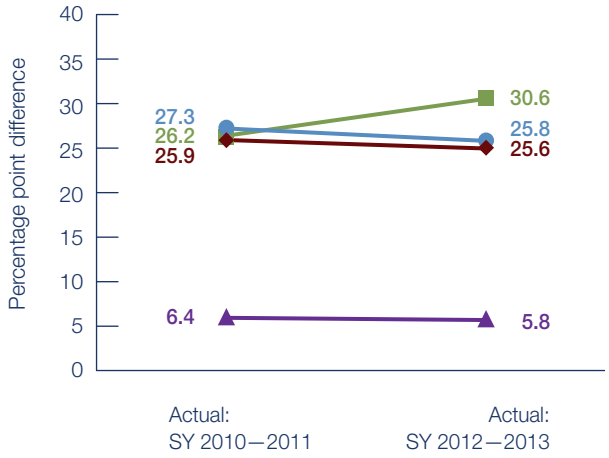
NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

New York's approved Race to the Top plan included targets for NAEP results based on percentages, not based on students' average scale scores.

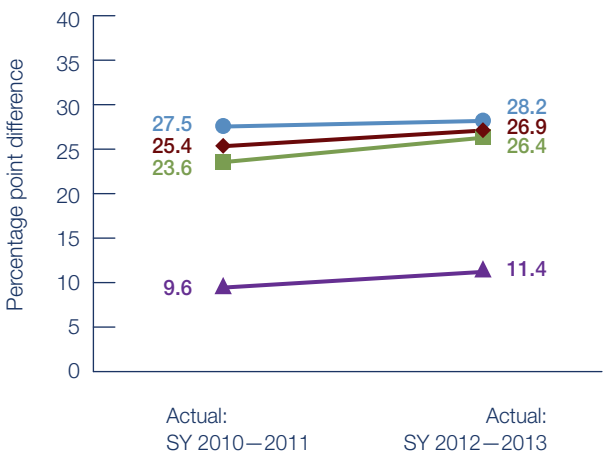
State Success Factors

Achievement gaps on New York's grade four NAEP reading assessment decreased slightly from 2011 to 2013 except for an increase in the gap between students who were "not national school lunch program eligible" and "national school lunch program eligible." Achievement gaps on New York's grade eight NAEP reading assessment increased for all sub-groups from 2011 to 2013. Achievement gaps on New York's grade four and grade eight NAEP mathematics assessments increased for all sub-groups except gender from 2011 to 2013.

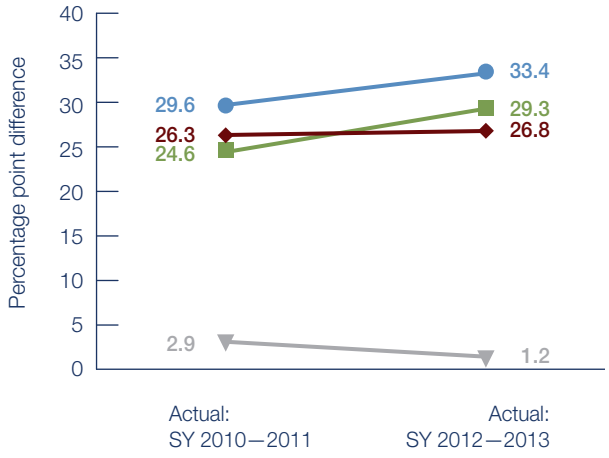
Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP reading



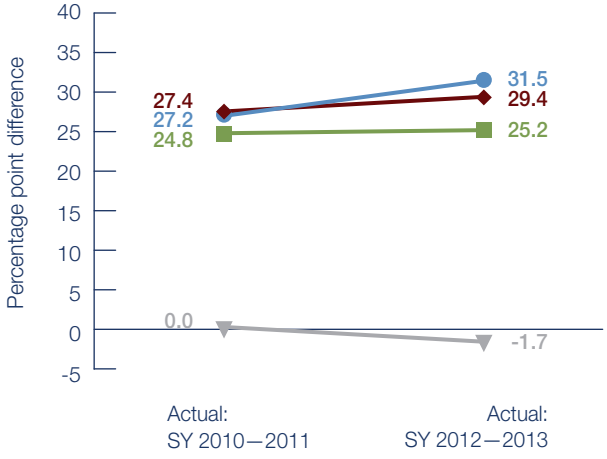
Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP reading



Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics



Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics



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. New York'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.

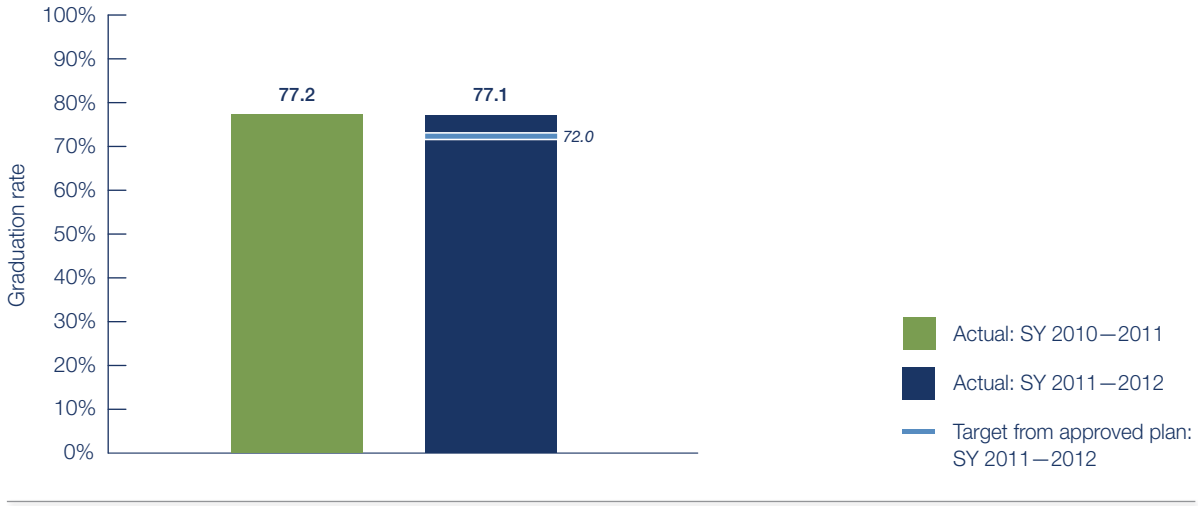
Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

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

New York's high school graduation rates remained the same from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2011-2012. In its SY 2012-2013 APR, New York did not report college enrollment data.

High school graduation rate



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.

Standards and Assessments

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

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

New York adopted the CCSS in July 2010 which are known as the CCLS in New York. In Year 2, the State encouraged educators to teach at least one CCLS-aligned unit each semester to prepare for providing instruction in Year 3 that was aligned to the CCLS in grades 3-8 and high school ELA and mathematics. The State's plan established SY 2012-2013 as the second of two transition years to work toward full implementation, including administering required high school Regents exams aligned to CCLS in SY 2013-2014.

The State facilitated the transition to the CCLS by providing curricular resources and professional development, particularly through NTIs, curriculum modules, and other resources available on EngageNY.org. The State continued to engage stakeholders in the development and dissemination of resources. The State indicated that approximately 80 educators, administrators, university staff, and curriculum and assessment experts continued to meet as part of Common Core Advisory Panels. During Year 3, the early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary and post-secondary panels provided feedback and advised the State regarding the CCLS transition, including thinking through new strategies such as online networks and social media to promote outreach and awareness of available materials. The State also continued to utilize Common Core Teacher Ambassadors as part of its strategy to build local capacity for implementation (see "Dissemination of resources and professional development").

The State worked over the last several years to align its State assessments with its instructional content transition. After field-testing CCLS-aligned items for grades 3-8 State assessments in Year 2, the State administered new State assessments in Year 3 in ELA and mathematics.

Standards and Assessments

New York is a governing member and active participant in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which is developing CCLS-aligned assessments in ELA and mathematics for SY 2014-2015. The State contributed staff time and expertise to PARCC for the development of content frameworks, and advised PARCC on the design of assessments to ensure that they meet rigorous psychometric and validity criteria. The State utilized the PARCC content frameworks to develop resources and encouraged LEAs and educators to use them in locally developed curriculum and instructional practices to support the transition to college- and career-ready instruction. At the end of Year 3, the State also prepared to participate in the PARCC field test in spring 2014. Additionally, the State continued to engage New York IHEs in the design of high school assessments and the PARCC assessments. Postsecondary faculty at New York IHEs provided feedback on college- and career-readiness determinations, performance level descriptors, and test design.

Supporting educators in the transition to CCLS

NYSED made significant progress in the transition to college- and career-ready standards and assessments during Year 3. The State supported educators, principals, Network Teams, and other stakeholders to provide instruction aligned to CCLS in grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics. The State built a comprehensive workbook to help LEAs build plans that describe the responsibilities of each role (*e.g.,* LEA superintendents, Network Teams/Network Team Equivalents) in implementing the CCLS for both curriculum and instruction and metrics for assessing progress. Additionally, the State provided training at Network Team Institutes and materials on EngageNY.org to support each role for better-informed and stronger-skilled implementation.

See http://www.engageny.org/resource/ccss-appr-and-ddi-workbook-for-network-teams-implementation for more information.

While the State's outreach accelerated and available resources expanded during Year 3, several activities in the State's plan continued to experience delays. The State planned to develop curriculum modules in grades 6-8 science, social studies, and the arts and to start to make content available by the end of Year 3. However, the dependency of these deliverables on decisions around the State's social studies frameworks, as well as final release of Next Generation Science Standards and National Arts Standards impacted the State's timeline for these activities. The State also has not released RFPs for new assessments in science and social studies for grades 6-8 to be used in SLOs to ensure the developed materials align with State and national expectations for these content areas. Additionally, the State planned to identify a vendor in Year 3 to begin developing a tool to enable educators to create, save, and print formative assessments. During Year 3, the State focused on accelerating development of the EngageNY Portal and did not release an RFP to make this additional formative assessment application available through the Portal (see "Fully implementing an SLDS"). The State made PARCC curriculum frameworks, as well as sample and annotated items from the State assessment, available to educators during Year 3.

Starting in February 2013, NYSED received RSN support through the Transitions Workgroup to develop solutions to the implementation challenges related to the transition to new college- and career-ready standards and assessments and new evaluation systems. At the Workgroup's initial meeting, New York shared how it used a survey strategy as a feedback loop to collect information from various levels in the field (*e.g.*, BOCES, principals, teachers) on the status of reforms making it to the classroom level (see "Stakeholder engagement"). Through the Workgroup, New York also shared how it is developing communications messages that highlight its reform work as one integrated approach to improving education and participated in a series of learning modules on building principal capacity and engagement to lead reforms.

Dissemination of resources and professional development

In Year 3, New York expanded the resources and professional development opportunities available to support educators' implementation of CCLS in their classrooms, as well as other stakeholders understanding of the transition to instruction and assessments that reflect college- and career-ready expectations.

The State continued to utilize NTIs as a primary vehicle to deliver professional development and to build LEAs' capacity to redeliver training in their regions. The State held NTIs throughout SY 2012- 2013 to provide guidance and resources on the instructional shifts in the CCLS by grade, subject area, and role. Based on feedback from the field, the State worked to differentiate training experiences by educator role in Year 3. For example, the State's July 2013 NTI hosted more than 470 administrators from across the State in specific sessions focused on building their capacity to manage the CCLS transition in their schools, including providing meaningful feedback to teachers on their instruction as part of an integrated approach to implementation of CCLS, data-driven instruction, and APPR.

To inform and support the implementation of CCLS at the classroom and school levels, the State also further expanded the Common Core Teacher Ambassador (Ambassador) program in Year 3. BOCES, Network Teams, District Network Team Equivalents, and relevant professional organizations nominated teachers and principals to serve as Ambassadors while they implement the CCLS instructional shifts and build motivation and capacity among their colleagues. Ambassadors are expected to attend NTIs and then, in coordination

with their BOCES or District Network Team, extend and deepen the value of sessions through ongoing coaching, mentoring and training with their peers. Additionally, Ambassadors provided feedback to the State on curriculum materials. As of January 2013, the State indicated that approximately 200 LEAs had Ambassadors who are creating a stronger connection between CCSS policy and changes to instructional practice in the field.

The State utilized NTIs and regional sessions to share the resources it has developed to support educators with CCLS implementation. In Year 3, the State continued to work with several vendors and content experts to develop ELA and mathematics modules for each grade level and utilized a multi-level review process to ensure the resources posted on EngageNY.org were of high-quality. The State continued to release content as it became available, and prioritized development for grades and subjects with new State assessments aligned to CCSS in spring 2013. As of September 2013, the State reported that ELA modules were available for pre-kindergarten, ELA and mathematics modules were available for grades 1-9, and initial modules were available for high school ELA and mathematics content with continued development and release expected in Year 4.[12] The State gathered feedback from educators using the modules in Year 3 and State leaders – including the Commissioner – conducted regional tours to discuss the CCLS and to answer questions and gather feedback about the implementation in LEAs across the State.

Regional tours and survey feedback also reinforced the challenge of outreach reaching individual classroom teachers and identified a need to further refine how the resources on EngageNY.org are organized to ensure users can easily navigate to relevant tools. The State worked to address the challenge of penetrating to each level of the system by enhancing its social media presence during and beyond NTIs and continuously reinforcing the availability of these resources in regional meetings and other communications from the State (*e.g.*, field memos).

During Year 3, the State also made progress developing and releasing effective practice videos to encourage conversations among stakeholders around the CCLS instructional shifts and to provide concrete models of effective CCLS instruction. The video series includes clips with the Commissioner, NYSED staff, and developers of the CCLS, as well as of teachers and students throughout the State implementing ELA and mathematics standards. The State expects to continue to develop and release videos to support CCLS instruction, as well as data-driven instruction and APPR implementation, in Year 4.

Based on feedback from the field, the State determined that more support was needed in the transition to CCLS for educators who work with English learners. During Year 3, the State amended its plan to support development of P-12 curriculum resources (*e.g.*, maps, modules, mini-lessons) differentiated to the needs of English learners. At the end of Year 3, the State established an MOU to create English learner scaffolds and expects to apply those scaffolds to develop and translate Native Language Arts (NLA) curriculum resources and to support an accelerated curriculum for students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) during Year 4.[13]

The State conducted extensive outreach before, in conjunction with, and following the August 2013 release of State assessment results to build understanding and provide support to teachers, principals, parents, and students about the tests and their results. As discussed and illustrated in *State Success Factors*, the State's spring 2013 assessments set a new baseline to assess college- and career-readiness focused on more rigorous standards and used different cut scores to determine proficiency.[14] The State developed resources for interpreting test results, including annotated questions to provide in-depth examples of the thinking students are required to demonstrate in the new assessments and guidelines for analyzing results at the student, classroom, school, and LEA levels to further student learning. To engage educators and families in conversations, the State also developed toolkits including a letter from the Commissioner to parents, resources on the CCLS instructional shifts, and guides for conversations with students on CCLS results.

Additionally, in Year 3, the State engaged its public and independent IHEs as a part of the transition to the CCLS. Through the Higher Education Faculty Development Project, the State worked to provide opportunities for higher education faculty to learn about the CCLS transition shifts and determine how best to ensure that teacher and principal candidates are prepared for CCLS implementation (see "Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals").

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

NYSED made significant progress in the transition to college- and career-ready standards and assessments during Year 3. The State supported educators, principals, Network Teams, and other stakeholders to provide instruction aligned to CCLS in grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics. The State also administered new State assessments designed to measure the CCLS ELA and mathematics instruction delivered in SY 2012-2013.

The State experienced a delay in the release of RFPs for science, social studies, and arts curricular modules, as well as science and social studies assessments for use in SLOs that will align with new curricular standards in those content areas. The State reported that decisions at the State and national level in these content areas contributed to the delay. The State also experienced delays in the development of a formative assessment system application to focus on the release of the primary functionality of the EngageNY Data Portal. In partnership

[12] See http://www.engageny.org/resource/common-core-toolkit.

[13] Native Language Arts (NLA) are the five languages other than English that are most commonly spoken in New York: Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Bengali, and Haitian Creole.

[14] As a result, the State's SY 2012-2013 assessment results are not directly comparable to prior years.

with several vendors and content experts, the State made significant progress in developing, posting, and continuously refining curriculum modules and videos. Initial releases of some resources are now expected to continue into Year 4.

The State continued to improve its feedback loops for the professional development and resources it put in place to support educators in the transition to CCLS. The State used surveys during and following NTIs to gauge satisfaction and utility of resources and to inform future NTIs and refinement of resources available on EngageNY.org. The State expects the EngageNY.org 2.0 release to address the need for navigational enhancements to ensure educators are able to locate resources most applicable to their grade, subject, and role. The State also refined NTIs to better differentiate training sessions for principals and to promote social media to boost engagement with and beyond NTI participants. The State expects a more in-depth evaluation of curriculum modules in Year 4 will provide further feedback to continuously improve the resources available to educators.

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 an SLDS

New York continued to enhance its P-12 data system in an effort to make data and instructional resources available to educators, students, and teachers to support improved instruction and learning outcomes. Previously known as the Education Data Portal, the State rebranded the planned enhancement to its P-12 system in Year 3 as the EngageNY Portal (Portal) to build on the recognition of EngageNY.org in the field. According to the State, the Portal will provide stakeholders access to Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA)-compliant data and resources that are tailored to each stakeholder group's needs for supporting data-driven instruction and implementation of the CCLS, including tools for monitoring academic progress, curricular and instructional resources, and local school and LEA data. In Year 2, the State selected several vendors to support the Portal, including to develop dashboards and to provide project management support. In Year 3, three vendors developed and shared options with LEAs for teacher, student, and parent dashboards that incorporate electronic student transcripts and an early warning system. The early warning system will use indicators to identify students at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school. After refining features available in each dashboard based on feedback gathered through usability testing sessions with educators in SY 2012- 2013, the vendors held 11 "road show" events across the State in summer 2013 to provide live demonstrations of their dashboard and to answer questions to support each LEA in selecting the solution that best meets the needs of its school community. The State also made progress developing the infrastructure needed to launch the enhanced SLDS in order to create an integrated environment that includes curricula, assessments, and reporting tools with shared data standards for use in New York and other States and LEAs.

After delays in Years 1 and 2 when the State's initial proposed single-source Portal contract was not approved, the State made substantial progress with development in Year 3, but did not deploy the Portal by Year 3 as planned. The State reported additional development time is necessary to coordinate across systems and to ensure that data quality, privacy, and security standards are met. The State also revised its approach to building the infrastructure needed to provide users with single sign-on access to all of the EngageNY.org content and dashboards. New York now plans to roll out the enhancements to the P-12 Portal, including updates to the EngageNY.org content management system and launch of the data dashboards selected by each LEA in Year 4. This revised approach further compresses the already limited timeframe for LEAs to experience the Portal during the grant period. Given the delay in launching and trainings educators on the Portal, the State was unable to report against its SY 2012-2013 performance targets for this area of its plan.

In Year 3, New York continued development of its P-20 data system and prepared to launch websites and reports including longitudinal information for use by high schools, LEAs, IHEs, and the public. As part of its P-20 data system development, NYSED established a higher education data warehouse that began collecting higher education data from the State's public IHEs, the SUNY, and the City University of New York (CUNY) in September 2012. NYSED collected the postsecondary enrollment and outcome information data necessary to create "Where are they now?" reports for personnel in LEAs to track students' progress post high school graduation. Once complete,

the P-20 system will expand data collection and reporting linkages with the State's public IHEs, as well as other State agencies and data systems. The State also plans to share aggregate educator evaluation data, as well as higher education enrollment data and teacher and building leader profiles through a public data site (see "Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs"). Once available, users are expected to have the capacity to view the FERPA-compliant data at the State, county, BOCES, district, and school levels. To support data quality, the State implemented a number of data system governance practices, including common definitions and opportunities for check points to review data accuracy. The State had planned to launch its public site and release reports in Year 3 but ultimately decided to take more time to review content with key stakeholders prior to dissemination.

Accessing and using State data

In March 2012, New York State launched the Teacher Roster Verification application, which enables teachers to view data reported to the State. The application allows teachers and principals to review the accuracy of class rosters to improve the accuracy of the teacher-student linkage data that inform student growth calculations.[15] In February 2013, the State released updated guidance for ELA and mathematics teachers for grades 4-8 and principals of those grade levels to review and verify the linkages and their student growth scores. As of September 2013, approximately 110,000 educators in 600 LEAs had created accounts and accessed their reports. Based on the information submitted by teachers and principals, the State provided LEAs with State-provided growth results for SY 2012-2013 in August 2013.

The State sought stakeholder feedback to ensure that the Portal is easy to use and tailored to the needs of users. NYSED and the dashboard vendors received ongoing LEA input through usability testing and meetings. As the State transitions to launching the Portal, it plans to continue engagement with each of the State's 12 Regional Information Centers (RICs), as well as the data system liaisons from the Big Five city districts, particularly, to develop and deliver training on the Portal.[16] The State will need to continue such engagement into Year 4 to ensure the system impacts practice at the local level.

Using data to improve instruction

The State aims to increase educators' use of data to improve instruction through new Portal tools, including data dashboards and early warning systems. New York understands that to achieve effective use of data to improve instruction, it must help educators use data rather than simply provide access. To this end, in Year 2, the State trained its Network Team members in the use of data to improve instruction. In turn, the Network Teams provided training to school-based inquiry and data-driven instruction teams in Years 2 and 3. Together, these teams continue to train and support educators on the use of data to improve instruction. In addition, the school-based inquiry teams analyze local data to create customized reports that detail specific issues in particular schools.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, the State made progress toward building a comprehensive P-20 data system and developing tools and resources to promote stakeholders' ability to utilize data to improve instruction and student outcomes. The State also faced challenges, both in terms of the technical complexity of developing a system that integrates information from various sources and in communicating the purpose and design of its data system.

The State continued to build the capacity of LEAs to use data to improve instruction through school-based inquiry and data-driven instruction teams. NYSED also implemented a variety of feedback loops, including usability tests and surveys, and governance and technical advisory teams, to provide guidance and gather information from the field to inform development of the Portal. Vendors shared three Portal dashboard options with LEAs in summer 2013, and by October 31, 2013, LEAs were expected to make a selection best suited for its local needs. The State continued to work on the technical architecture needed to launch the Portal. Based on concerns regarding data privacy, the State developed informational videos and memos, and worked with RICs and representatives from LEAs to answer questions and institute additional data quality review procedures.

While engaging stakeholders in resource development was critical, it further condensed the timeframe for the State to make a system available to educators and to provide adequate training and time with the Portal during the grant period.

In Year 3, New York continued to work towards developing linkages with the State's public IHEs, early childhood centers, and workforce agencies to better understand New York students' preparedness for college and careers. The State made progress collecting data based on linkages with SUNY and CUNY. However, at the end of Year 3, the State had yet to meet its planned Year 3 milestones. The State expected to release a public data site or reports linking K-12 and higher education data to provide LEAs, IHEs, and the public with information on enrollment and graduates' long-term trajectories. As of October 2013, the State was also awaiting legislation authorizing the State to link and share workforce data to take effect.[17]

[15] New York regulations specify that 20 percent of educator evaluation results be based on State-provided growth data or other comparable measures. See http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/appr-field-guidance.pdf.

[16] The Big Five city school districts are Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers.

[17] See http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&bn=A07911&term=2013&Actions=Y&Memo=Y for more information.

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.

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals

New York is redesigning its teacher and school leader preparation programs by instituting clinically grounded instruction, performance-based assessments, and innovative new certification pathways for educators.

New York continued development of new certification assessments for teacher and leaders, including soliciting feedback from the field and experts through reviews and field tests. To measure incoming educators' writing and reading analysis skills and readiness to address the learning needs of diverse populations, the State added a new Educating All Students Exam and an Academic Literacy Skills Test to its certification process in September 2013. In Year 3, the State completed development, external review, and field testing of both exams. New York also field tested portfolios and other performance assessment frameworks for new school leaders and teachers. The State offered more than 1,800 exam vouchers to teacher preparation programs for new teacher candidates to participate in the new teacher portfolio certification exam, edTPA. As of fall 2013, the State was analyzing results from initial implementation of edTPA, as well as the revised School Building Leader assessment that is focused on performance-based skills of new leaders. The State expects to use analysis from Year 3 implementation of these performance-based certification exams to determine areas for item refinement and set passing scores for future administration. The State also made progress aligning existing Content Specialty Tests required for initial teaching candidates to the CCLS. The new and revised certification assessments will continue to be phased in—during SY 2013-2014, and revised exams will be required for initial teacher and school building leader candidates beginning in May 2014.

As part of the Higher Education Faculty Development project, NYSED also collaborated with SUNY, CUNY, and the Commission of Independent Colleges and Universities to provide outreach to IHEs about the redesigned certification requirements through conferences, webinars, and online materials. Through these training opportunities, the State aimed to build awareness of both the certification exams and broader reforms, such as the new educator evaluation systems and college- and career-ready standards that pre-service candidates will need to be prepared to implement when they enter classrooms. Given delays establishing agreements and the continued importance of providing support to IHE faculty around these transitions, the State was approved to continue to use Race to the Top funds to support Higher Education Faculty Development project engagement through SY 2014-2015.

To further support effective educator preparation, New York launched competitive grant opportunities for piloting new alternative certification programs for teachers. The Clinically Rich Graduate and Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Pilot programs, which recruit high-caliber candidates who are committed to teaching in high-need schools, incorporate an intensive residency, link theory to practice through a research-based curriculum, and focus on skills and practices that have been shown to make a difference in the classroom. After awarding 11 grants to institutions to create graduate-level programs in Year 2, programs graduated their first cohorts of participants in Year 3. Program graduates are expected to teach in high-needs schools in New York for a minimum of at least four years following graduation. The State plans to track data on program graduates' placement rates and through its preparation program report cards. As of fall 2013, the State reported that nearly 200 students completed the preparation programs with a job placement rate of more than 80 percent. The State experienced some delays and took additional time to refine the undergraduate-level grant based on lessons learned from the graduate-level process and did not make awards until November 2012. Programs granted to two universities for undergraduate-level programs got underway in Year 3, recruiting a total of 28 candidates to begin their programs.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

During Year 3, LEAs in New York made significant progress developing and beginning to implement their APPRs, or teacher and principal evaluation systems that use multiple measures and four distinct rating categories to review and provide feedback to improve educator performance. APPRs are developed locally based on a State framework that specifies 20 percent of the APPR be based on student growth on State tests or other comparable measures, 20 percent be

based on locally selected growth measures or achievement measures, and 60 percent be based on other measures, including multiple classroom observations.[18]

New York State regulations specified that in order for LEAs to receive their State aid increase for SY 2012-2013, they were required to develop APPR plans based on the State regulations and submit collectively bargained plans for NYSED approval. To ensure evaluation plans are rigorous, transparent, and fair, the State required each LEA to submit a complete APPR plan, using a State-prescribed form for Commissioner approval. Plans must include, in part, locally-selected student growth measures, a proposal for how to use other measures, descriptions of how the LEA will assign points for each evaluation component, a method to ensure proper evaluator training, and a means to ensure that the LEA will handle appeals of evaluation results in a timely manner. The Commissioner may reject any plan that does not adequately meet the State law and/or APPR regulations.[19]

The State provided guidance to LEAs on APPR planning through resources available on EngageNY.org, including training modules, webinars, road maps for key decisions needed to implement APPRs, and other guidance documents as well as by facilitating sharing among LEAs through conferences and posting of approved plans. By the State's January 17, 2013, deadline, a total of 685 LEAs – 99.1 percent of the LEAs in the State – were approved after a rigorous review by the State. The State continued to work with the other LEAs in the State and, by May 8, 2013, a total of 690 LEAs' APPR plans were approved for SY 2012-2013.

Based on changes to State law in 2013, unless changes are requested and approved, LEAs' plans from SY 2012-2013 automatically continue into SY 2013-2014. Prior to the timeline for LEAs to submit requests for updates to their SY 2013-2014 plans, the State made an effort to streamline and increase the usability of the tool used for APPR submission, known as "Review Room." Throughout Year 3, the State also continuously updated tip documents, hosted webinars, and responded to a dedicated email box to provide ongoing support for plan development and implementation.

The State overcame a significant challenge in this area on June 1, 2013, when an APPR plan was determined by the Commissioner for New York City. Delays establishing a plan for New York City began in June 2011 when NYSUT filed a lawsuit regarding the State's plans for using student growth data in teacher and principal evaluations. While an agreement outlining the State framework described above settled the lawsuit in March 2012, delays in New York City's implementation continued into Year 3. New York City did not meet the State's January or May 2013 deadlines for submitting an APPR plan aligned to State regulations or come to an agreement after pre-arbitration conferences. State law specified that any district without an approved APPR plan by May 29, 2013, would have an evaluation plan determined by the Commissioner after a two-day arbitration proceeding. When an agreement was not reached by May 29, 2013, an arbitration proceeding on the APPR provisions impacting classroom teachers and principals was held with representatives of NYSED, the United Federation of Teachers, and the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators. Based on submissions, evidence, and testimony during and following the proceeding, the Commissioner announced New York City's APPR plan on June 1, 2013. Implementation of New York City's APPR plan will not begin until SY 2013-2014, which represents a delay from the State's Race to the Top commitment for LEAs to begin implementation in SY 2012-2013. The delay also impacted New York City's eligibility for competitive LEA Race to the Top grant funding during much of Year 3.

During Year 3, the State worked to support LEAs to select, build local understanding, and continuously refine the multiple measures that contribute to APPRs. The State developed and released student growth reports through the Growth Reporting System, including a roster of students included in the growth calculation, student characteristics, and assessment data. Educators received reports in December 2012 based on SY 2011-2012. SY 2012-2013 data were available to LEAs in August 2013, and reports via the online Growth Reporting System were released in September 2013.

To support interpretation of results, NYSED developed animated videos, field memos, and frequently asked questions for LEAs. The State also worked to support LEAs in selecting locally-determined growth and achievement measures and rubrics for evidence-based observations of practice. Based on an ongoing Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, the State continued to review and post lists of approved assessments for measuring student growth and/or achievement, as well as teacher and principal practice rubrics, and surveys of P-12 students and families for use in evaluations for teachers, principals, and other staff.

Based on requests and needs identified in the field, the State also continued to produce resources on SLOs, which are used in grades and subjects where a State-provided growth score is not generated (*i.e.*, outside of teachers instructing grades 4-8 ELA and mathematics). The State made an effort not only to share resources on development of SLOs, such as quality rubrics, guidance documents and annotated SLO examples that have been used in the field, but also to offer webinars and other training opportunities to build the capacity of LEAs to determine the quality of SLOs and continuously refine them based on initial implementation. For the APPR observation component, the State requires LEAs to use approved rubrics. While LEAs may submit their own rubrics for approval through a variance process, the State also continued to provide a list of approved rubrics for teacher and principal evaluations to assist LEAs. To ensure that evaluators apply rubrics consistently, the State awarded funding for vendors to develop trainings for teacher and principal evaluators.

[18] In SY 2014-2015, the 20 percent measure based on student growth on State tests or other comparable measures will increase to 25 percent for educators with a value-added score and, for such educators, the locally selected growth or achievement measure will be reduced to 15 percent. See http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2013Meetings/June2013/613p12hea1.pdf for more information.

[19] For more information, please see pages 15 to16 of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) Field Guidance document, available at http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/appr-field-guidance.pdf.

The State began monitoring implementation of APPRs during SY 2012-2013. To provide more consistent and comprehensive customer service and support to LEAs and BOCES, NYSED restructured its Office of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness, Policy and Programs into regional teams. The State also established feedback loops such as surveys to assess the extent to which understanding about the APPR process reached different audiences, including Network Teams, BOCES, teachers, and principals. Based on feedback from educators and lessons learned from SY 2012-2013, the State updated field guidance documents, webinars, and other materials to be more user-friendly and comprehensive for SY 2013-2014. In order to be eligible for an increase in State aid in SY 2013-2014, all LEAs were required to fully implement their approved APPR plans for SY 2012-2013. In order to demonstrate that each LEA or BOCES fully implemented their APPR plan in SY 2012-2013, NYSED required LEAs to submit an additional certification form. The State reported that it received this form from all LEAs and BOCES.[20]

The State's efforts to strategically identify BOCES, LEAs, and schools where evidence suggests a need for targeted support and to continuously improve implementation statewide based on data trends and patterns geared up in fall 2013 based on data reported from implementation in SY 2012-2013. In October 2013, per the required evidence of implementation in SY 2012-2013, the State collected data from LEAs and BOCES on teacher and principal evaluation composite and subcomponent ratings. Based on preliminary statewide results in SY 2012-2013, the State reported the following rating distribution for teachers: 91.5 percent were rated Highly Effective (49.7 percent) or Effective (41.8 percent); 4.4 percent were rated Developing; and 1 percent were rated Ineffective. The data for principals show 86.9 percent were rated Highly Effective (26 percent) or Effective (60.9 percent); 7.5 percent were Developing; and 2.1 percent were rated Ineffective. These results do not include New York City.[21]

The State was unable to report data in the SY 2012-2013 APR against its targets related to the distribution of effectiveness ratings, including the distribution of those ratings in high-poverty, high-minority and low-poverty-, low-minority schools, for LEAs that implemented qualifying evaluation systems as the data was still being reviewed by LEAs for accuracy as of November 2013.

In April 2013, NYSED staff participated in an RSN convening, "Promoting Evaluation Rating Accuracy," during which the team analyzed their available educator evaluation rating results to identify patterns and draw conclusions about implementation to date and areas to further support the field. The State conducted a data review alongside feedback from peer States in the Quality Evaluation Rollout Workgroup that also implemented evaluation systems in SY 2012-2013. The review informed the creation of an action plan to improve evaluation rating accuracy in New York.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

In Year 2, New York's Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grant program was re-formulated by combining several related initiatives. STLE grants aim to encourage and support LEAs that wish to use their new educator evaluation systems to develop, implement, or enhance a comprehensive systems approach to recruitment, development, retention, and equitable distribution of effective teachers and school leaders. In the first competition, applicants were required to create initiatives that met at least one of three criteria: (1) recruitment and placement initiatives that work toward equitable teacher distribution, (2) career ladders that enable educators who receive evaluation ratings of "effective" or "highly effective" to earn additional pay for increased responsibility, or (3) supplemental compensation for educators rated "effective" or "highly effective." New York released the RFP for the program in April 2012, and initial award announcements were made in October 2012. The State requires APPR approval as an eligibility requirement for competitive grant funding to LEAs. The prerequisite of APPR approval caused delays, but the State issued a total of 47 awards in the first round of the competition. The State began providing supports to LEAs on development of comprehensive human capital systems in Year 3 through webinars, monthly calls, and annual reports, and worked to coordinate outreach and oversight from NYSED related to STLE and APPR implementation. The State also developed a site visit rubric and a system to organize evidence collected across LEAs over time to analyze core metrics, information gained from stakeholder groups, and other elements of grant implementation. The State is working with STLE grantees to help them share stories of successful implementation of their comprehensive approaches to implementing systems of educator support and development in local media, video clips, and through Engaged Voices on EngageNY.org.[22]

Given expressed interest and an identified need to support additional LEA approaches to the "full teacher and leader effectiveness continuum," the State ran a second round of STLE grants. Building on lessons learned from the first competition, the State announced an opportunity for LEAs or consortia of LEAs to apply for STLE grants in July 2013. The second round featured an added emphasis on cohesion across activities in an LEA's plan and on LEAs establishing career ladders to provide recognition and advancement to educators. An additional 74 LEAs (33 individual LEAs and 6 BOCES-led consortiums serving an additional 35 LEAs) were awarded grants in October 2013, alongside an announcement for a third round. In order to provide adequate time for LEAs to implement comprehensive human capital system approaches and for the State to support and learn from implementation, the State was approved to extend implementation of STLE grants until July 1, 2015.

[20] New York State law specifies that LEAs that have a SY 2013-2014 APPR plan determined by the Commissioner pursuant to Education Law §3012-c(2)(m) are deemed to satisfy the requirement of documenting full implementation of the APPR for the SY 2013-2014 to receive their increase in State aid.

[21] Totals are less than 100 percent due to a small percentage of unreported scores. See http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2013Meetings/October2013/APPR.pdf.

[22] See http://www.engageny.org/engagedvoices.

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

During Year 3, the State continued to work to promote greater alignment between teacher and principal preparation programs in the State and the reform efforts taking place in K-12.

In addition to the Higher Education Faculty Development project, Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot programs, and enhanced teacher and principal certifications, the State is also working to hold teacher and principal preparation programs accountable for the results of program graduates. After adopting new educator preparation standards in January 2011, the State initially planned to partner with stakeholders to develop a program performance accountability system by December 2011 and provide guidance on implementation to the field by June 2012. However, the need for additional engagement in the process and attention to data quality extended the development timeline. The State expects that its teacher and school leader preparation program data profiles will both foster accountability and transparency of program outcomes to institutions, prospective students, and the public and expand collaboration between P-12 and IHEs to align coursework with career ready skills needed to be highly effective in the field. After beginning to work with stakeholders from K-12 and public and private IHEs to design and solicit input on the profile reports in Year 2, the State continued to use focus groups, webinars, and other meetings to refine the design of the profiles in Year 3. The State also devoted time in Year 3 to resolving data quality errors and establishing business rules to ensure consistency between data compiled from K-12 and higher education data systems to create the reports. The State presented the profile design, which includes data on preparation program demographics, certification exam results, placement of program completers in New York State public schools, and effectiveness of program graduates based on the 20 percent State-provided growth scores as available, to the Regents for approval in fall 2013. The State now expects to share draft reports with institutions in late 2013 and release initial public reports in 2014.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

In April 2012, NYSED awarded three LEAs Model Teacher Induction Program grants to create or scale up innovative, research-based approaches to support teachers working in high-poverty, low-performing schools in shortage teaching areas, including English learners, students with disabilities, secondary STEM subjects, and elementary mathematics and science. As in other areas of its plan, NYSED required all LEA competitive grant recipients to have approved APPR plans prior to receipt of funding, which condensed the planning period during Year 2. In SY 2012-2013, the three awarded programs in Albany, Buffalo, and Wyandanch began implementation. Approximately 75 teachers were supported in Year 3 through strategically recruited and trained mentors and other professional development. However, one LEA experienced some delays and challenges fully and consistently implementing in SY 2012-2013. During Year 3, the State used monthly calls and quarterly site visits to monitor and support Model Teacher Induction Program grantees and to refine implementation as needed based on feedback and observations. The State identified a need to develop better mechanisms for the programs to share best practices among themselves and with other LEAs.

To ensure adequate support for implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation system, the State required its participating LEAs to plan to use at least one-quarter of their local Race to the Top allocations to provide training to build educators' capacity in this area. In Year 3, the State provided support for educators on the integrated transitions in the Regent's Reform Agenda by holding six NTIs between September 2012 and July 2013 and providing a growing set of resources on the EngageNY.org website. To support teachers and principals to develop an integrated approach to implementation of the changes associated with CCLS, data-driven instruction, and APPR, the State continued to expand its video library of CCLS teaching models and other tools for aligning curriculum, observing the CCLS instructional shifts, and evaluating highly impactful professional development. Also, to build teacher and leader capacity to develop their own expertise redelivering learning experiences among their peers, the State developed training kits.[23] Most of the kits currently available focus on the transition to new standards and include online modules, webinars, video samples, and planning templates tailored to specific grade and subject bands. Additionally, the State differentiated training opportunities by audience, for example, offering principal-specific sessions at NTIs in July 2013. Many LEAs also delivered training locally or received support from BOCES.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, New York worked to ensure the preparedness of its educator workforce to implement college- and career-ready standards, data-driven instruction, and new educator evaluation systems through development and refinement of teacher and principal certification exams, focused engagement with public and private IHE faculty, and new Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot programs. The State completed field reviews and pilot tests of its teacher certification exams and worked to refine items and determine passing scores for future administrations. While in Years 1 and 2, the State experienced delays making awards for Clinically Rich Graduate and Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Pilot programs, 13 programs are now operating, and the first cohorts graduated in spring 2013. To enable more thorough analysis of data gathered from implementation of these pilot programs and to continue to support candidates and build relationships with high-need K-12 schools for job placement, the State was approved to extend implementation of this project through SY 2014-2015. The State also engaged stakeholders and addressed data quality challenges to move forward with development of new report

[23] See http://www.engageny.org/resource/make-your-own-institute-for-principals and http://www.engageny.org/resource/make-your-own-institute-for-teachers.

cards for educator preparation programs in order to hold the programs accountable for their graduates' performance.

Additionally, the State supported educators currently in the field through face-to-face conferences and online modules, videos, and other resources. As the resources to support CCSS, data-driven instruction, and APPR expand, the State found that many LEAs were not aware of the supports available and how different elements connected to each other. The State developed the "New York State Metrics & Expectations" document, which includes extensive information on curriculum, instruction and feedback, data-driven instruction, APPR implementation, and a culture of safety and development by role (*i.e.*, teacher, principal, Network Team, superintendent, district superintendent) to offer LEAs with a starting point for accessing support materials related to key initiatives.[24]

The State overcame challenges in the development and approval of APPR plans and all LEAs, including New York City, have approved plans to implement in SY 2013-2014. NYSED restructured its Teacher and Leader Effectiveness, Policy and Programs to emphasize regional delivery of professional development and other supports for APPR. The State also increased its training and outreach to LEA superintendents and BOCES over the past year and reported that the outreach improved the quality and rigor of the plans submitted by LEAs. The State released preliminary staff evaluation rating distribution for APPR from all LEAs except New York City in October 2013. Moving into Year 4, the State plans to expand on the analysis to identify promising practices to learn from and to target and differentiate support to BOCES, LEAs, and schools based on APPR data and other monitoring metrics.

The State experienced challenges with support for principal evaluation. Due to quality and capacity concerns, the State decided to cancel the contract intended to provide professional development to support statewide implementation and instead leveraged other NYSED and partner organization events to build capacity of superintendents and other leaders.

Approval of APPR plans also ramped up the State's progress with two competitive grant opportunities, the Model Teacher Induction Program and the STLE grant program. The State believes that both offer opportunities for LEAs to establish innovative approaches to the distribution of highly effective teachers and made progress establishing performance management routines to monitor, provide technical assistance, and gather best practices from grantees during SYs 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

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.[25]

Support for the lowest-achieving schools

In Year 3, the State made significant progress providing support to LEAs to build their capacity and boost student achievement at low-performing schools through competitive funding and implementation of a robust LEA review process. NYSED's Office of School Innovation (OSI) oversees the State's supports to low-achieving schools, school innovation, and safe and healthy schools, and houses the Regents' charter school authorizing and oversight responsibilities for all public charter schools in the State. OSI manages the School Turnaround Office (STO), which disseminates information on best practices and proven models to educators in the field and distributes federal grants to restructure and reframe schools and support district-level planning. The STO also coordinates with NYSED's Office of Accountability (OA) around the State's approach to low-performing schools and districts identified as Priority and Focus based on the State's approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request.

In Year 3, the OA and STO worked together to provide oversight and support to schools and LEAs previously identified as persistently low-achieving and to refine competitive funding opportunities and supports for those identified as Priority or Focus in the State's new

[24] http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-metrics-expectations-2013-2014.

[25] 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.

accountability system.[26] After delays in Year 2 due to LEA challenges meeting APPR requirements, the State made progress implementing the federal SIG program in Year 3. STO and OA redesigned the Cohort Four application process based on lessons learned and decided to issue awards in two rounds to enable some schools to have additional time to prepare prior to initiating full implementation of a model in SY 2013-2014. The State awarded five LEA grants in spring 2013 to begin planning for 18 schools to implement models. An additional seven LEAs were awarded grants in July 2013 to implement reform models in 34 schools beginning in SY 2013-2014.

In addition to the SIG competition, the STO and OA also collaborated around the process for conducting site visits to the lowest-performing schools. In alignment with its plan, during Year 3, the State implemented its DTSDE. DTSDE allows NYSED staff and members of LEA and school communities to establish a shared understanding around the optimal conditions for effective schools and LEAs. It is grounded in six tenets that are aligned to proven practices of effective schools: (1) District Leadership and Capacity, (2) School Leadership Practices and Decisions, (3) Curriculum Development and Support, (4) Teacher Practices and Decisions, (5) Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health, and (6) Family and Community Engagement. Building on lessons learned from pilots in two LEAs at the end of Year 2, during summer and fall 2013, the State provided extensive training to NYSED staff, as well as leaders in Priority and Focus LEAs and schools on the DTSDE process. Additionally, to support full implementation in Year 3, the OA also restructured its team to prioritize collaborative, site-based support through the OA School and District Review Team.

The State began conducting two- or three-day reviews with an Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) in November 2012. The IIT includes NYSED staff, an outside educational expert selected by the LEA and approved by NYSED, an LEA representative(s) and, in some cases, experts in the education of English learners and/or students with disabilities. During their visits, IITs gathered evidence of each school's progress implementing optimal learning practices in each of the six DTSDE tenets and rated them according to the rubric. In its October 2013 report to the Regents, the State reported that IITs conducted 132 school and 39 LEA reviews during SY 2012-2013. Additionally, for schools designated as Focus or Priority that did not receive IIT onsite reviews, LEAs used the DTSDE process to lead or provide oversight, in a total of 231 schools reviews. The New York City Department of Education also used its Quality Review Process to visit an additional 291 Priority and Focus Schools.[27]

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE)

The DTSDE rubric allows NYSED staff and members of LEA and school communities to assess school and district effectiveness and to use results to identify and target the most impactful support to schools identified as low performing. In SY 2012-2013, State and LEA teams led or oversaw a total of more than 400 DTSDE reviews at Priority and Focus Schools.

The State found some trends in schools' progress demonstrating evidence for practices aligned to the six tenets included in the comprehensive DTSDE rubric. Based on the initial visits in Year 3, the State found that schools generally received higher ratings on evidence related to how school leaders use resources, how schools develop partnerships to promote social and emotional health, and how schools create an atmosphere that is welcoming to families. Observers also found schools had the most room for improvement in how instructional practices are linked to lesson plans and student goals, how teachers are using data to inform their instruction, and how schools are sharing student data with families.

Based on feedback and lessons learned from initial implementation, the State made refinements to the tools used for classroom visits and observations and to logistics, including adding a day for site visits to better provide immediate, actionable feedback. The State also plans to provide additional opportunities to build the capacity of LEA and school leaders to implement the DTSDE process and to share successful strategies through DTSDE-specific professional learning communities, institutes, and a certification program

In addition to federal SIG and charter school funding (see *Charter Schools*), New York supports innovative school models through its SIF grants. This fund enables LEAs to partner with external organizations to propose innovative and transformative new school designs to improve student outcomes in schools identified as in need based on the State's accountability system which are not already receiving support. In November 2012, the State awarded four LEAs grants in the second SIF competitions, and schools completed the pre-implementation phase during Year 3. The initial two SIF recipients also implemented their programs during SY 2012-2013. The STO conducted onsite visits and established online toolkits and an online community to provide technical assistance and leverage lessons learned across sites.

[26] On September 23, 2011, the Department offered each interested State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility ("Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility") on behalf of itself, its LEAs, and its schools, regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. For more information on ESEA Flexibility, see www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility.

[27] According to the State, the New York City Department of Education fully participated in the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) visits, and the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) rubric was used in the same way as it was used in other NYSED visits to Focus Districts. New York State provided the New York City Department of Education permission to use its Quality Review Process (QRP) in lieu of doing a District led-DTSDE review or School Review with District Oversight, for those schools not visited by an IIT.

The STO also targets support to LEAs with low-achieving schools through the SSDST grant program. The SSDST program focuses supports on LEAs with the highest concentration of the State's Priority Schools and empowers LEAs to recruit, screen, and select external partner organizations to work collaboratively to build local teams capacity to turn around under-performing schools. After some preliminary announcements in Year 2 pending APPR plan approval, LEAs and their partners submitted final MOUs and the State awarded grants to 16 of the 18 eligible LEAs and implementation began in Year 3. The State's experience developing a vendor database to support LEAs in identifying external partner organizations best suited to their needs is included in the March 2013 RSN publication, "Race to the Top Highlights: Third-Party Providers and School Turnaround."[28]

NYSED also worked to provide additional support to low-performing schools through the Commissioner's Schools Dissemination and Replication grants. The program aims to identify schools that are high-achieving or rapidly closing achievement gaps and scale these schools' best practices throughout the State. After awarding five such grants in October 2012, the State held a competition in winter SY 2012-2013 for other sites to implement the practices identified by the program in their settings. In March 2013, 15 schools received grants to replicate approaches identified by the winning grantees, such as using multi-level data teams and training for literacy across subject areas. The STO began supporting both School Dissemination and Replication grant sites in sharing and refining implementation of these strategies to improve implementation of CCLS and data-driven instruction.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

After delays and revisions to its approach in Years 1 and 2, the State accelerated progress against a more coordinated approach to support low-performing schools and LEAs in Year 3. The State refined its approach to SIG grants, and most of the 10 LEAs that had SY 2011-2012 SIG funding suspended until they had approved APPR plans were able to get back on track in Year 3. While New York City's educator evaluation plan was approved by the end of Year 3, the State only restored SIG funding to schools implementing turnaround models during SY 2012-2013. The State also made opportunities available to eligible low-performing schools and LEAs through the SIF, SSDST, and Commissioner's Development and Replication grants in Year 3, and the STO began to monitor implementation and provide technical assistance during SY 2012-2013.

The State also began implementing the DTSDE to provide a cohesive and coordinated approach to identifying needs and delivering supports to low-achieving schools. In Year 3, the State restructured the OA and devoted resources to training State, LEA, and school leaders on full implementation of the DTSDE process. Based on implementation in SY 2012-2013, the State evidenced progress in the alignment of District Comprehensive Improvement Plans to the DTSDE rubric. The State also intended to issue a contract to a vendor to provide expanded capacity for DTSDE implementation, including school reviews. An RFP was released at the end of Year 3, but the contract was not yet finalized.

The STO also worked with the RSN in Year 3 on its continuous improvement strategy, particularly on routines to better support LEAs in managing school performance through participation in two School Turnaround Workgroups: Human Capital and Evaluating School Turnaround and Performance Management for School Turnaround Programs. As part of a September 2013 Workgroup meeting, New York provided a resource to the Race to the Top community by sharing information on its DTSDE planning process and data analysis routines. Also in fall 2013, based on lessons learned in Year 3, the State began to provide additional training to reviewers for SY 2013-2014 implementation, particularly on how to evaluate school practices, such as alignment of instruction to the CCLS, and how to connect feedback from DTSDE reviews to concrete action plans for schools and LEAs. This commitment to continued capacity building and ongoing improvement of the tool will continue to be important in Year 4.

Charter Schools

In Year 3, 209 charter schools operated in New York serving more than 78,000 students statewide, and the State began implementing new charter school approval and renewal practices focused around student performance and promoting transparency. In November 2012, the Regents integrated the Charter School Performance Framework into its charter school renewal policy. The Framework establishes qualitative and quantitative benchmarks for operations, fiscal health, and academics, with the latter paramount in informing the Regents' oversight and renewal decisions. Applicants for renewal must demonstrate progress against the benchmarks and establish new benchmarks as part of its renewal proposal. According to the State, each of the seven charter schools eligible for renewal in SY 2013-2014 submitted applications in August 2013. The State intends to conduct site visits in fall 2013 utilizing new protocols aligned to the Performance Framework and will consider evidence gathered, alongside applications, to make renewal determinations. As prescribed by the State's updated Charter School Law in 2010, in summer 2012, the Regents established school-level enrollment and retention targets for

[28] Available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/third-party-providers-school-turnaround.pdf.

special populations. In Year 3, the State provided training to support charter schools to set enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, low-income students, and English learners in line with these expectations.

The State also made progress in Year 3 toward expanding high-quality charters for future years. The State completed pre-opening site visits to charters opening in fall 2013, and a total of 12 new schools opened successfully at the beginning of SY 2013-2014. The State also implemented a new, uniform charter school application for all public charter schools in the State. Of 18 applications received in the first round of 2013, five were notified of preliminary approval to establish new charter schools as of fall 2013.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Since updating its Charter School Law in 2010, the State has made progress implementing policies and practices to promote higher and clearer benchmarks for charter school accountability. In Year 3, the State implemented new uniform charter school applications and renewal processes grounded in evidence of student performance to promote high-quality charter schools. The three major charter authorizers in the State – the New York State Board of Regents, NYSED, and SUNY's Board of Trustees – also made progress toward their commitment of increased transparency by releasing a more streamlined annual charter school report in August 2013.

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 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (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

After refining its approach in Year 2, the State completed its first year of the VAP program in SY 2012-2013. In fall 2013 the State awarded 17 grants to LEAs and BOCES-led consortiums to adapt existing or create new VAP courses. According to data the State compiled from quarterly grantee reports, more than 12,800 students participated in VAP courses in Year 3, and 520 teachers engaged in the program by teaching or developing courses or participating in professional development. The State expects more than 100 online or blended VAP courses to be developed through the initial round of grantees.

In addition to program oversight completed by NYSED, the State also identified SUNY to conduct VAP Program Monitoring and Evaluation. Based on results from Year 3 and during Year 4, SUNY will inventory, monitor, collect, and analyze quantitative and qualitative data on VAP programs to inform potential continuation or replication of strategies. The State's plan also includes the development of a VAP Statewide Repository to capture, tag, and publish highly effective content for use beyond sites participating as current grantees. As of the end of Year 3, the State had not released or issued an RFP.

During SY 2012-2013, the State continued to provide STEM professional development to secondary educators in high-poverty and low-performing schools. The workshops are targeted to teachers in high-need LEAs, in order to help them improve their content knowledge and pedagogical skills to offer Advanced Placement courses. Nearly 850 teachers participated in five-day intensive STEM workshops in 2012 and will receive an additional 30 hours of training before completing the program.

In Year 2, New York adopted regulations to create two new certification options for individuals with secondary teaching experience who also hold an advanced degree in STEM areas: the STEM pathway and the Transitional G certificate. These new pathways expedite the path to certification for such candidates. The STEM pathway requires candidates to hold a graduate degree in their subject or a related field, while the Transitional G certificate allows individuals to teach mathematics or science without the ordinarily required two years of pedagogical coursework. After two years of successful experience, Transitional G certificate holders will become eligible for full certification. In SY 2012-2013, the State issued one Transitional G certificate and seven STEM pathway certificates.

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

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State made progress in Year 3 building the capacity of LEAs to provide online and blended Advanced Placement opportunities to teachers and students, particularly in high-needs schools that do not traditionally have access to high-quality content. After delays in Years 1 and 2, the State ran a competition and awarded New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, and 13 additional LEAs and BOCES grants to develop, refine, and implement courses. Development and implementation of these VAP programs, as well as initial data collections and surveys to evaluate and monitor these investments, made headway in Year 3. However, after additional delays with an RFP for a statewide VAP repository, the State will need to work quickly on a strategy to share high-quality VAP content statewide.

According to the State, feedback from the field on STEM Advanced Placement professional development has been positive. Due to challenges recruiting additional participants and conducting training in New York City and Long Island during fall 2012 as a result of Superstorm Sandy, it may be difficult for the State to serve as many educators as originally targeted. Additionally, the State may need to request a no-cost extension amendment to ensure that the current 850 participants have an adequate opportunity to receive the total of 70 hours of training provided through this program.

Progress Updates on Invitational Priorities

Innovations for improving early learning outcomes

New York developed a long-term comprehensive approach to address the implications of the Regent's Reform Agenda for early childhood curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Building on efforts in Years 1 and 2, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) continued to make progress implementing this plan in Year 3.

In partnership with the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council, OEL continued implementing the QUALITYstarsNY rating and improvement system in early childhood programs that feed into the State's lowest-achieving schools in SY 2012-2013. More than 300 programs received provisional ratings and quality improvement plans in fall 2013 based on self-ratings and observations conducted by evaluators utilizing an independent environment rating scale in Year 3. The State expects that this initial feedback and follow-up professional development from the State and CUNY will drive program enhancements in Year 4. Once the full cycle is complete, parents and caregivers will be able to assess the quality of early childhood programs based on the QUALITYstarsNY rating system. The Early Learning Initiatives also includes the development and dissemination of assessment guidance as well as the development of a self-assessment tool for LEAs to use to evaluate the effectiveness of their pre-kindergarten to kindergarten transitions. While the State did not complete pilots of the transition tool during Year 3, it convened transition forums in several LEAs. Additionally, development of assessment guidance continued. However, the State delayed releasing guidance to the field during SY 2012-2013. The State plans to share the guidance document to the field for use and additional feedback through in-person meetings and online in Year 4.

Looking Ahead to Year 4

In Year 3, New York made significant progress overcoming challenges and timeline delays from Years 1 and 2 and plans to continue to build on the momentum of implementation progress in all major Race to the Top initiatives. In Year 4, New York plans to make continuous improvements to its supports around the transition to CCLS and implementation of APPR based on lessons learned from surveys and other feedback loops. The State expects to fully implement enhanced sub-recipient monitoring routines and tools for LEA and vendor oversight in Year 4.

The State plans to grow from the lessons learned during phased-in implementation of CCLS in Years 2 and 3 to fully implement ELA and mathematics CCLS during Year 4. NYSED will continue to conduct professional development for educators on CCLS and other initiatives through NTIs. For example, the State plans to include evening sessions in SY 2013-2014 NTIs that connect the three stages of data-driven instruction – assessment, analysis, and action – to the CCLS. The State also plans to continue to develop and release CCLS curriculum modules, videos, and other resources for educators, as well as comprehensive kits to support educators responsible for redelivering

training at the local level. During Year 4, the State plans to make additional annotated modules and modules for special populations including English learners and high school students in need of remediation available to the field. The State will also enhance the navigation and organization of EngageNY.org to more readily enable stakeholders to access curricular tools and resources to implement instruction that prepares students for college and careers. As a governing member, New York also plans to participate in the PARCC field test in spring 2014.

After several delays, the State is expected to fully launch the EngageNY Portal, including an enhanced content management system and data dashboards based on the solutions selected by LEAs. The State also plans to identify a group of pilot LEAs and work with RICs, data personnel in LEAs, and its project management vendor to develop a comprehensive training plan and to provide ongoing help desk support to educators after the enhanced system features are made available. In Year 4, the State is also expected to apply the linkages established between P-12 and New York public IHEs to release "Where are they now" reports and teacher and building leader profiles. Lastly, to provide full P-20 perspective, the State will work toward legislative changes necessary to include workforce data in the P-20 system.

In Year 4 the State plans to use feedback from the field and analysis of SY 2012-2013 APPR implementation to identify areas in need of additional support. The State plans to then target and differentiate their statewide outreach and resources, in addition to differentiating resources for specific BOCES, LEAs, and schools. The State will support New York City in its first year implementing an approved APPR. The State also plans to continue to support innovative LEA approaches to implementing APPRs as part of a broader approach to recruiting, developing, supporting, and rewarding educators through multiple competitive grants, including the Model Induction Program and STLE grants, and to establish Professional Learning Communities and new resources on EngageNY.org to facilitate sharing best practices among grantees and other LEAs in the State.

In Year 4, the State expects to implement and continue field-testing new exams for new leaders and teacher candidates to ensure new educators have skills and content knowledge needed to be effective in today's classrooms. The State also plans to continue aligning expectations and offerings in IHEs with the Regents Reform Agenda through training opportunities for higher education faculty, pilots of Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot programs and the first release of preparation program report cards that include APPR ratings of program graduates.

In Year 4, the State will build on progress implementing competitive grant opportunities and a robust school and district review process. The State plans to implement refinements to the DTSDE process and tools based on initial implementation and offer additional opportunities to build the capacity of LEA and school leaders to implement the DTSDE process, as well as share successful strategies through Professional Learning Communities, DTSDE Institutes, and a DTSDE Certification Program. The State revised its rubric to more clearly connect practices with expected impacts and plans to continue to provide support to reviewers and LEA and school leaders on connecting feedback from the DTSDE rubric to drive improvements in school performance. The State will continue to monitor implementation, provide support, and consider lessons for scaling and sustaining effective practices for innovative school models and building local capacity to implement reforms in low-performing schools through the SIF, SSDST, and Commissioner's Dissemination and Replication grants.

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.

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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.)

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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."