RACE TO THE TOP

Massachusetts 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.

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

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

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

[4] Participating local educational agencies (LEAs) are those LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's Memorandum of Understanding with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU is to provide assistance to States as they implement unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that not only addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, but is also designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU works with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helps States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose is to support Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.[5]

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top grantees, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that adjustments are required to an approved plan, the grantee must submit a formal amendment request to the Department for consideration. States may submit for Department approval amendment requests to a plan and budget, provided such changes do not significantly affect the scope or objectives of the approved plans. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR section 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).[6]

State-specific summary report

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

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

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

The State's education reform agenda

Since the passage of the 1993 Education Reform Act, Massachusetts has focused on accelerating student achievement across the State. In 2011, Massachusetts' fourth and eighth graders led the nation in reading and mathematics performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Despite having high overall levels of student achievement, Massachusetts recognizes that achievement gaps persist and not every student in the State receives a world-class education. Through Race to the Top, Massachusetts is implementing a comprehensive reform plan to provide students with the tools, supports, and technology to help ensure that every student is prepared for success in college and career in the 21st century.

Massachusetts' Race to the Top grant of $250,000,000 supports the State's commitment to transform teaching and learning in classrooms across the State, improve student performance, and close achievement gaps. In keeping with the terms of the Race to the Top grant, Massachusetts is using half of its grant funds to drive State-level work, and distributing the other half of its award to support work aligned with the State's goals in participating LEAs.

The State's Race to the Top grant is focused around four primary objectives: (1) attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally proficient educator workforce to ensure that every student is taught by a great teacher, and every school and district is led by a great leader; (2) provide curricular and instructional resources to give every educator the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement; (3) concentrate great instruction and additional supports for educators, students, and families in the lowest-performing schools and their districts to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement; and (4) increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

State Years 1 and 2 summary

In Years 1 and 2, the State established systems within the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) to support implementation of its Race to the Top reforms. Massachusetts established the Delivery Team within the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to support effective project management through the use of the Delivery approach.[7] In Year 2, the State fully implemented its systems to track progress of projects, assess risk, and provide support for project implementation as needed. Additionally, the State proactively collaborated with key stakeholders throughout the development of major components of its Race to the Top reform efforts, which resulted in greater buy-in from educators.

The State also laid a critical foundation to prepare educators for implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, which incorporate the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). After adopting the CCSS in Year 1, the State engaged more than 150 educators in development of model curriculum units during Year 2 and developed sample curriculum maps. The pace of development for these resources, however, was slower than anticipated, leading to a tight timeframe for completing the resources and disseminating them to LEAs for use in school year (SY) 2012-2013. Additionally, the State launched its first science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Early College High School and supported 13 Innovation Schools in Year 2.

In the first two years of Race to the Top implementation, Massachusetts approved new educator evaluation regulations and prepared its LEAs to implement rigorous new educator evaluation systems that clearly differentiate educators, include measures of student growth, and connect to professional development. In Year 2, Massachusetts released a model evaluation system and extensive guidance for LEAs choosing to develop their own systems. Twenty-one LEAs, including nine Level 4 districts,[8] implemented elements of new educator evaluation systems in Year 2. Additionally, regional "Getting Started" workshops that explained the model evaluation system attracted over 1,000 educators.

Thirty-five low-achieving schools initiated a school intervention model in Year 1, and five LEAs initiated Wraparound Zones. Comprehensive reviews drove school improvement and informed the State's efforts to help low-achieving schools and LEAs build capacity to increase student performance. The State vetted and selected 24 Priority Partners, organizations with proven effectiveness in school improvement, and the Partners began working with low-performing LEAs and schools to implement differentiated strategies for improvement.

State Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In SY 2012-2013, Massachusetts fully implemented the CCSS-aligned Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics. The State continued to build local capacity for implementation of college- and career-ready standards through the delivery of regional trainings and webinars and the development of instructional resources such as model curriculum units and maps. Massachusetts procured, piloted, and launched Edwin Teaching and Learning – the teaching and learning platform through which educators will be able to access an array of curriculum and assessment tools and resources. Although delayed procurement led to a shorter timeframe for SY 2012-2013 activities in this project, Massachusetts rolled out Edwin Teaching and Learning to 34 LEAs in fall 2013. Further, many of the State's projects related to promoting college- and career-readiness (*e.g.*, STEM Early College High Schools) progressed on schedule.

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[7]   The Delivery method emphasizes the use of real-time data, focused analysis and reports, and strong leadership involvement to drive implementation.

[8]   According to the State, definitions of Level 3 and Level 4 districts are as follows: Level 3 – Districts with one or more schools among the lowest-performing 20 percent based on quantitative indicators. Level 4 – Districts identified by quantitative and qualitative indicators through a district review; districts with one or more schools among the lowest-performing and least-improving 2 percent based on quantitative indicators.

Massachusetts continued its efforts to build capacity and raise student achievement in its low-performing schools and districts in SY 2012-2013. Nine schools initiated intervention models, and 34 schools continued to implement the intervention models they initiated in SY 2010-2011.[9] Level 3, 4, and 5 LEAs collaborated with Priority Partners to implement differentiated strategies to support school improvement. Initiatives such as Turnaround Teacher and Leader Teams and Wraparound Zones expanded in Year 3, providing further support to low-achieving schools across the State. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results from SY 2011-2012 indicated that the State's lowest-achieving schools are making progress in improving student outcomes (see *Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools* for more information). In fall 2013, 14 schools exited Level 4 status.

The State improved the performance of and expanded the data and reports available in Edwin Analytics,[10] in Year 3. Two new components – the Early Warning Indicator System and Postsecondary Enrollment and Outcomes reports – were rolled out, and Massachusetts reported that upgrades to the system have increased the number of users and decreased the occurrence of performance issues.

Challenges

Implementation of the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF), a key component of the State's efforts to improve educator access to and use of data to inform instruction, continued to be significantly delayed in SY 2012-2013. As a result of challenges related to the strategy and vendor used by the State to begin implementation in SY 2011-2012, Massachusetts now has a limited timeframe for fully implementing SIF in LEAs statewide during the grant period. Although the State reported that adjustments made in Year 3 will allow for successful and sustainable implementation of SIF in the long-term, far fewer LEAs and educators have been able to benefit from SIF than was expected at this stage of the grant period. In particular, because SIF will enable educators to access real-time data within Edwin Teaching and Learning, delays in this technology initiative have significant impacts on educators' ability to use data to inform instruction.

Although the State made progress in implementing its educator evaluation system and provided a variety of trainings and guidance documents to LEAs and educators regarding educator evaluation, the State encountered challenges in SY 2012-2013 which led to delays in certain components of this initiative. Massachusetts initially expected to fully implement qualifying evaluation systems in all Race to the Top participating LEAs in SY 2012-2013. A majority of the participating LEAs implemented the professional practices component of the evaluation system. However, due to delays in the creation of technical guidance to support LEA identification and development of student growth measures and based on feedback from LEA stakeholders indicating that they were not fully prepared to implement and use student growth measures, the Student Impact Rating component of the evaluation system will not be in place for all educators until SY 2014-2015. Thus, Massachusetts did not fully implement its educator evaluation system as committed to in the State application and Scope of Work.

Further, Massachusetts made limited progress in establishing a comprehensive professional development system in Year 3. As a result of delays in this initiative, the planned Professional Development Toolkit, Planning and Implementation Guide, and processes for identifying and monitoring preferred professional development providers will not be completed until Year 4.

The State continued to face delays in instituting MassCore, a rigorous diploma track designed to promote college- and career-readiness, as the default curriculum for high school students in Massachusetts. However, the State reported that many LEAs engaged in local efforts to increase the rate of MassCore completion by high school students.

Looking ahead to Year 4

Year 4 will present an opportunity for the State to continue to refine implementation of the CCSS through the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics. The State intends to continue providing ongoing training and support for implementation of its college- and career-ready standards, including by making an array of resources available through Edwin Teaching and Learning.

By the end of SY 2013-2014, the State plans to roll out Edwin Teaching and Learning to all LEAs that committed to using the system and intends to provide additional data and reports through Edwin Analytics. Although the State fell short of its target for the number of LEAs in which SIF is fully operational in Year 3, Massachusetts aims to implement SIF and provide educators with real-time access to data in all LEAs in Year 4.

In SY 2013-2014, the State will continue to support LEAs as they prepare for full implementation of qualifying educator evaluation systems. Massachusetts expects LEAs statewide to pilot District-Determined Measures (DDMs), student growth measures for non-tested grades and subjects, in Year 4 and utilize elements of their new educator evaluation systems to evaluate educators. Low-performing schools and LEAs will continue to receive support through initiatives such as Wraparound Zone grants, the State's review process for Level 3 and 4 LEAs, and Priority Partners.

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[9] One of the 35 schools that initiated intervention models implemented a school closure model.

[10] Formerly known as the Education Data Warehouse (EDW).

Building capacity to support LEAs

In Year 3, ESE's OPR continued to oversee and track the State's progress in implementing its Race to the Top initiatives. The Delivery Unit, housed within the OPR, continued to utilize the Delivery method to monitor and assess the progress and quality of implementation of ESE's highest priority projects. In order to discuss progress and address issues, project manager meetings convene once a month, executive sponsor meetings occur every three weeks, and ad hoc meetings are held as needed.[11] Other project management methods include the Commissioner's monthly stocktakes and biweekly calls and other direct communication between the Race to the Top implementation manager and the Executive Office of Education (EOE). Additionally, vendors reported on performance measures through established templates.

Support and accountability for LEAs

In SY 2012-2013, ESE continued to collect and review LEA performance measure data bi-annually and used a color rating system to identify which LEAs were on track in different project areas. Based on LEAs' reported progress toward performance measures and expenditures of grant funds, the State developed communication and technical support plans for LEAs that were off track in one or more areas of Race to the Top implementation. On the basis of this information, the State identified 33 LEAs for additional follow-up and support in Year 4.

ESE liaisons continued to provide targeted support for Level 4 LEAs in SY 2012-2013. The State made improvements to its LEA review process and conducted reviews in Level 3 and 4 LEAs. These in-depth reviews help the State to identify areas of progress and areas in which additional support is needed in its lower-performing LEAs.
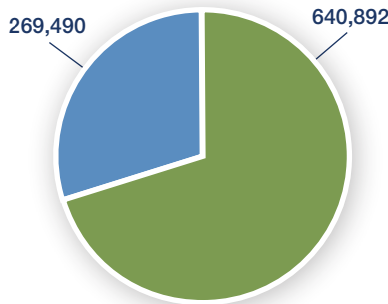
LEA participation

As depicted in the graphs below, as of June 30, 2013, Massachusetts reported 234 participating LEAs. This represents approximately 70 percent of the State's kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) students and approximately 91 percent of its students in poverty.

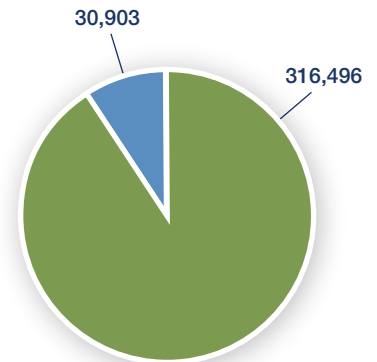LEAs participating in Massachusetts' Race to the Top plan

169   234
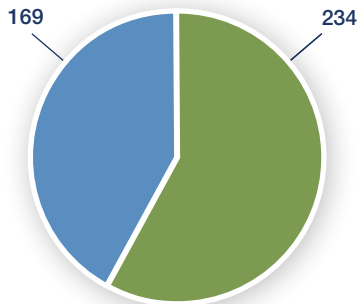
- Participating LEAs (#)
- Other LEAs

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

269,490   640,892

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

Students in poverty in LEAs participating in Massachusetts' Race to the Top plan

30,903   316,496

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

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

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

[11] Executive sponsors are senior staff who lead each Race to the Top project area.

Stakeholder engagement

Massachusetts continued to communicate and seek feedback from stakeholders about key Race to the Top program components in order to promote awareness of and support for statewide efforts. In early 2013, ESE released its comprehensive Year 2 report on Race to the Top implementation and distributed it to a variety of stakeholder groups. This report incorporated LEA- and vendor-reported data as well as State data and ESE took into account feedback and suggestions from advisory groups in developing the report.

Building on the extensive communications initiative the State undertook in Year 2, Massachusetts developed a common set of messaging documents for use by ESE staff, a video and report about the State's goals, and a new set of logos to represent Massachusetts' major initiatives. The State reported that these efforts have ensured common messaging across ESE offices and have improved educator understanding of and buy-in for key initiatives.

ESE also held conferences in SY 2012-2013 to build LEA capacity for implementation, particularly of the educator evaluation system and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. More than 700 teachers, district and school leaders, union leaders, and representatives from educator preparation programs attended the Educator Evaluation Spring Convening in 2013 and ESE held a Curriculum and Instruction Summit in fall 2012. Additionally, Massachusetts recruited 24 educators to serve on an Educator Leader Cadre (ELC), which conducted outreach around CCSS implementation and CCSS-aligned assessments. Through presentations delivered across the State in Year 3, the ELC reached over 2,000 stakeholders.

In Year 3, Massachusetts participated in the RSN Transitions workgroup, which convened in early 2013. The convening focused on developing solutions to the implementation challenges Race to the Top States will face in SY 2013-2014 as they transition to new standards and assessments and new evaluation systems. Massachusetts worked to design new approaches to coordinate and integrate reform efforts underway in the State, including by developing integrated key messages and communications plans across ESE.

Continuous improvement

Throughout Year 3, ESE continued to use the Delivery method to monitor and assess the progress and quality of implementation of ESE's highest priority projects. The Delivery Team regularly assessed progress against detailed Delivery plans that include implementation benchmarks and interim outcome measures. The State has revamped Delivery plans as needed, based on project progress, and conducted joint reviews of interrelated initiatives as appropriate (*e.g.*, educator evaluation and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks implementation). The Delivery Unit's processes, which include project team check-ins, data reviews, and field visits, provide an early indication of projects' progress, quality of implementation, and potential challenges.

Program evaluations of all Race to the Top projects were underway in SY 2012-2013. ESE received monthly status reports, formative finding reports, and year-end reports from external evaluators and used this information to inform project implementation. For example, the State reported that results of an LEA standards implementation survey and analysis of selected districts' approaches to implementing the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks were used to determine priorities for future professional development and support for LEAs. The State also used several project-specific methods to support continuous improvement, such as surveys, emails, and in-person communication to assess LEA progress and experiences, as well as to identify areas for support.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, the State continued to experience delays in implementing the grants management system it intended to begin utilizing for the LEA performance measure reporting process in Year 2. Due to ongoing delays, it appears that LEAs will not be able to use this system during the grant period. While Massachusetts reports that it is still collecting the performance measure data through Excel spreadsheets, a process with which LEAs are familiar, the State has been unable to benefit from the more efficient data collection and analysis the grants management system would offer.

Through LEA performance measure reporting, district reviews, stakeholder engagement, and evaluations of Race to the Top projects, the State has a variety of sources of information about progress and quality of implementation. Massachusetts appears to be using this information to assess areas of need in the field and to inform adjustments to its implementation and communication strategies.

Despite the continued use of project management and Delivery Unit processes, some areas of Massachusetts' Race to the Top program were delayed at the end of Year 3. In particular, the delays related to implementation of the Rating of Impact on Student Learning component of their qualifying educator evaluation system (see *Great Teachers and Leaders* for more information) is of concern, given the importance of this initiative to Massachusetts' Race to the Top reform program. The State reports that some initiatives have been delayed in order to ensure appropriate attention to and high-quality implementation of the higher-priority elements of its plan. However, this leaves limited time for LEAs and educators to experience and benefit from particular resources and systems slated for development and deployment in the State's Race to the Top plan. Further, it provides less time for the State to assess quality and make any necessary adjustments to projects which are delayed during the grant period.

Student outcomes data

Results from Massachusetts' SY 2012-2013 State assessment illustrate a slight increase in growth for grade three Mathematics and grade five mathematics and ELA. For most other grades the growth in both subject areas remained relatively the same with the exception of grade three, which decreased slightly in ELA.

Student proficiency on Massachusetts' ELA assessment
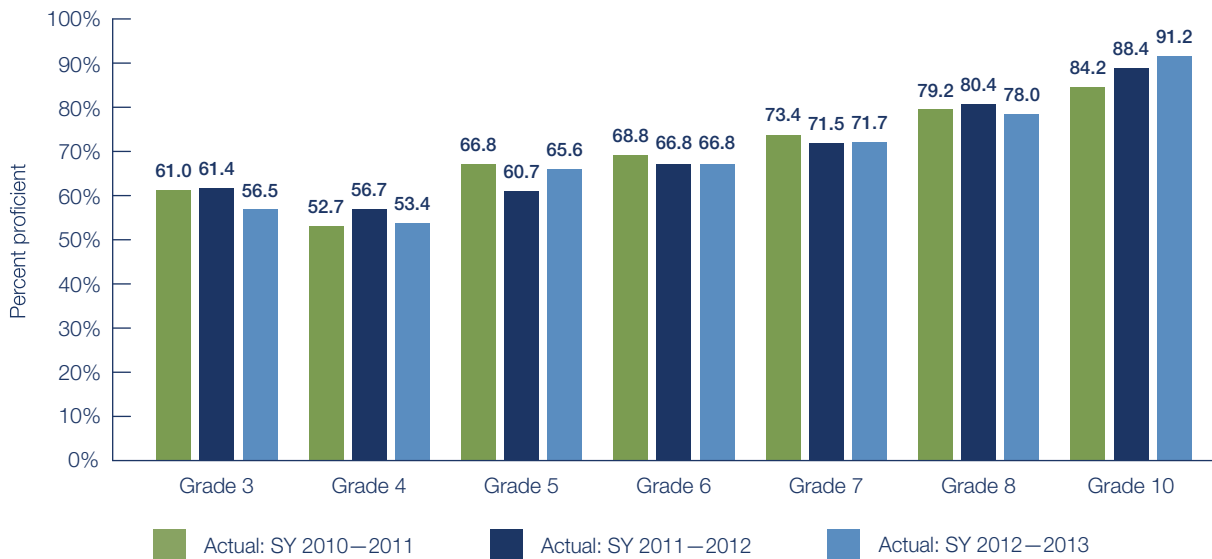
Student proficiency on Massachusetts' mathematics assessment
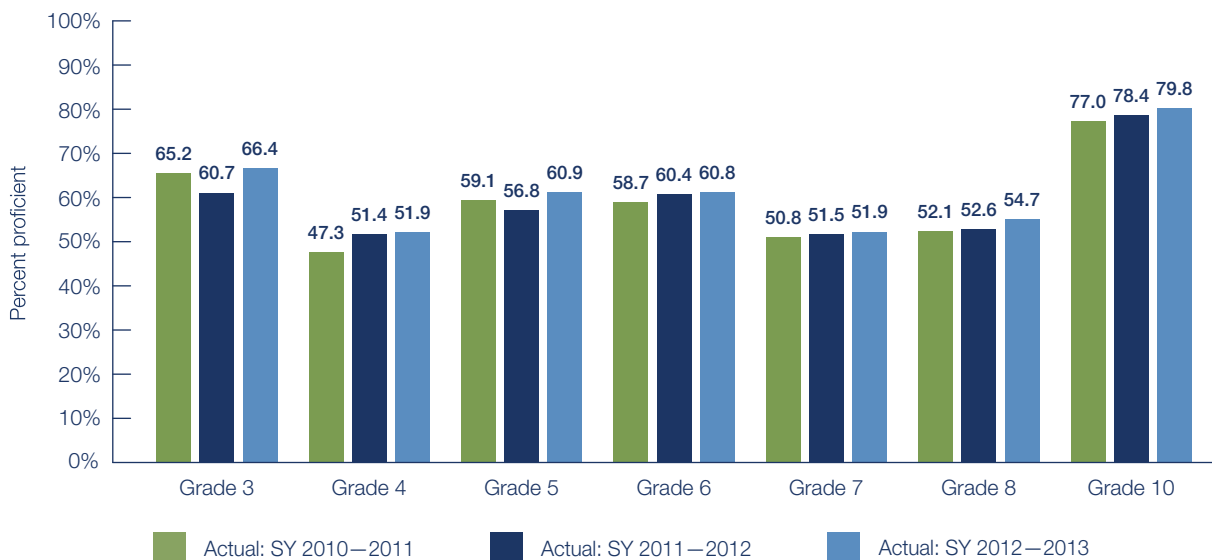
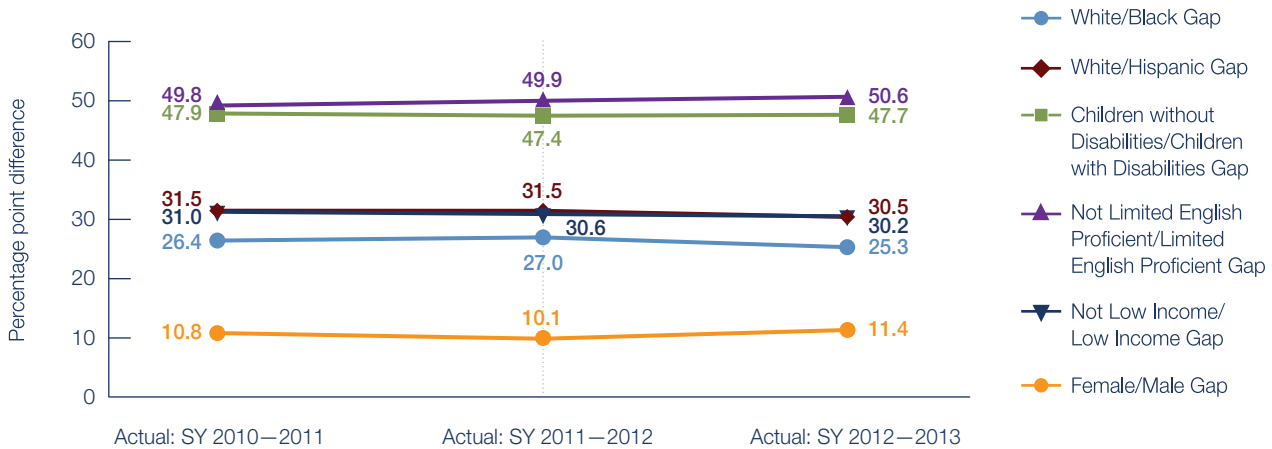Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: October 17, 2013.

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.
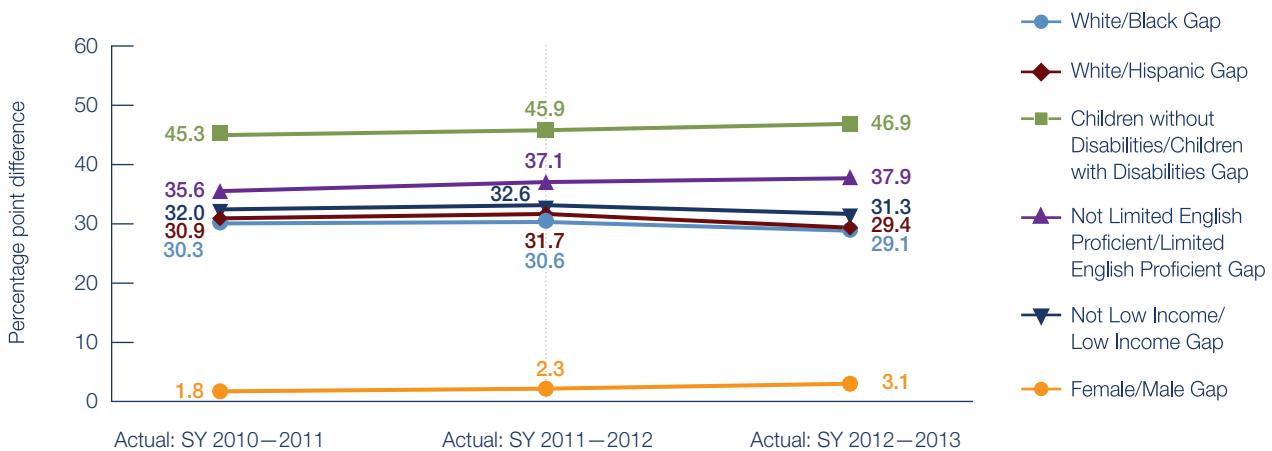
State Success Factors

Results from Massachusetts' SY 2012-2013 State assessment show achievement gaps for all sub-groups remained relatively the same as compared to SY 2011-2012 in mathematics and ELA.

Achievement gap on Massachusetts' ELA assessment

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

Y-axis: Percentage point difference

Actual: SY 2010—2011: 49.8, 47.9, 31.5, 31.0, 26.4, 10.8
Actual: SY 2011—2012: 49.9, 47.4, 31.5, 30.6, 27.0, 10.1
Actual: SY 2012—2013: 50.6, 47.7, 30.5, 30.2, 25.3, 11.4

Achievement gap on Massachusetts' mathematics assessment

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

Y-axis: Percentage point difference

Actual: SY 2010—2011: 45.3, 35.6, 32.0, 30.9, 30.3, 1.8
Actual: SY 2011—2012: 45.9, 37.1, 32.6, 31.7, 30.6, 2.3
Actual: SY 2012—2013: 46.9, 37.9, 31.3, 29.4, 29.1, 3.1

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: October 17, 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

The 2013 NAEP assessment results show that Massachusetts' grade four reading scale score was significantly lower (p < .05) in 2013 than in 2011, while its 2013 grade eight reading scale score remained relatively the same when compared with the 2011 level. In mathematics, Massachusetts' 2013 NAEP assessment results were not significantly different than 2011 results for either grade four or grade eight students. However, the percentage of Massachusetts' grade eight students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2013 increased slightly when compared with 2011 levels.[12]

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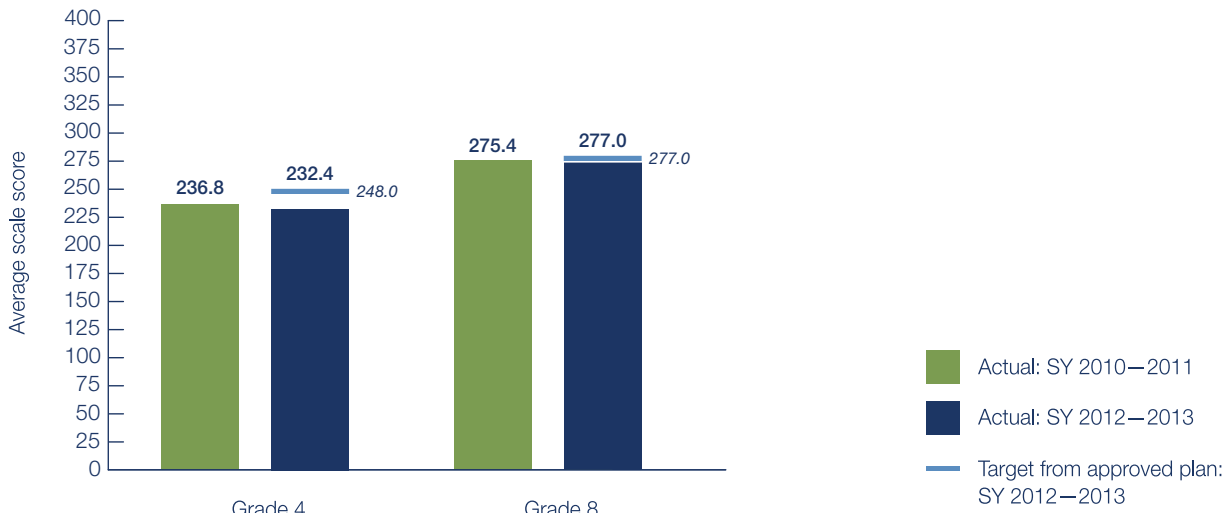
Student proficiency, NAEP mathematics
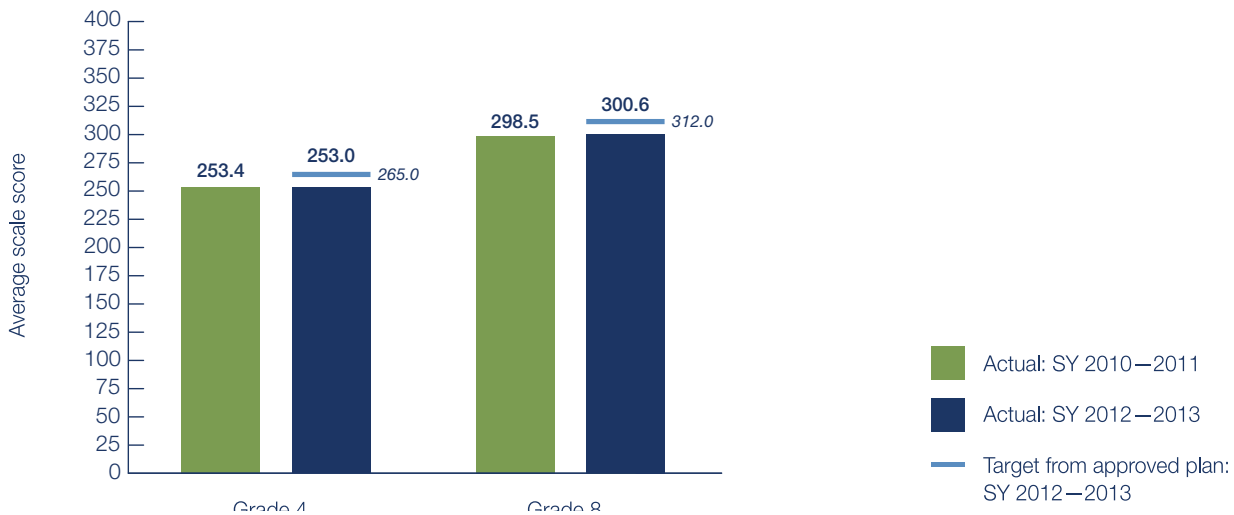
NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

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

[12] For State National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data on the percentage of students scoring Proficient or above please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

State Success Factors

Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments as compared to 2011 illustrate that achievement gaps remained relatively the same for most sub-groups in grade four and grade eight reading. Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments as compared to 2011 show an increase in achievement gaps for most sub-groups in grade four mathematics and most sub-groups in grade eight mathematics, except for Hispanic students compared to White students.

Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

- 37.5 → 36.7
- 36.2 → 36.3
- 35.4 → 35.9
- 6.6 → 6.9

Actual: SY 2010—2011 Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Percentage point difference

- 35.0 → 37.3
- 32.6 → 33.2
- 32.0 → 33.1
- 10.5 → 10.7

Actual: SY 2010—2011 Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

- 39.8 → 42.0
- 34.7 → 39.4
- 34.2 → 35.9
- 3.5 → 1.0

Actual: SY 2010—2011 Actual: SY 2012—2013

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Percentage point difference

- 37.2 → 35.1
- 33.0 → 38.5
- 32.5 → 35.2
- 0.9 → -0.6

Actual: SY 2010—2011 Actual: SY 2012—2013

Legend:
- White/Black Gap
- White/Hispanic Gap
- Female/Male Gap
- Male/Female Gap
- Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/ National School Lunch Program Eligible

NAEP is administered once every two years. The two most recent years are SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013. Massachusetts' 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/.
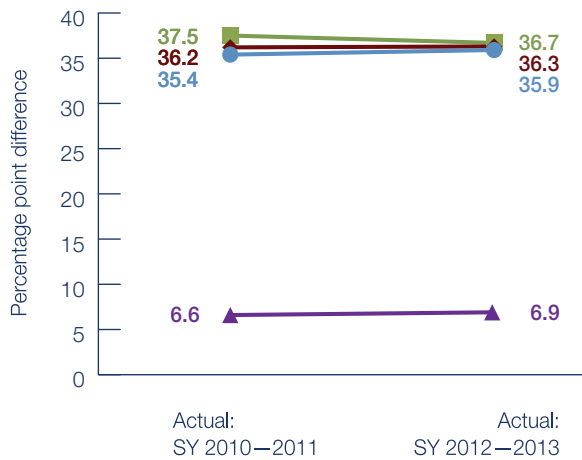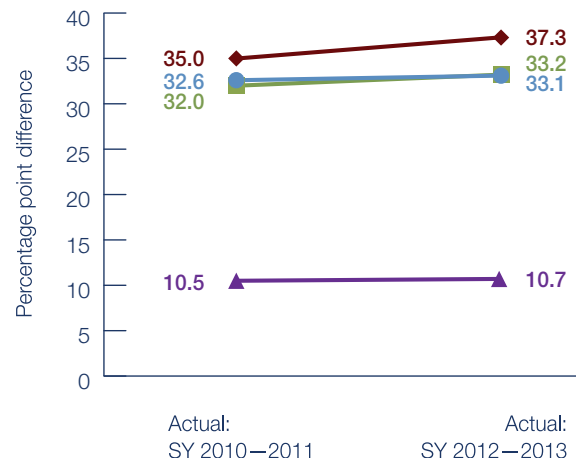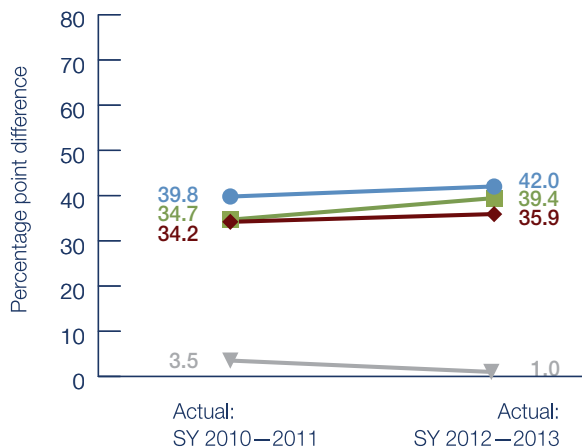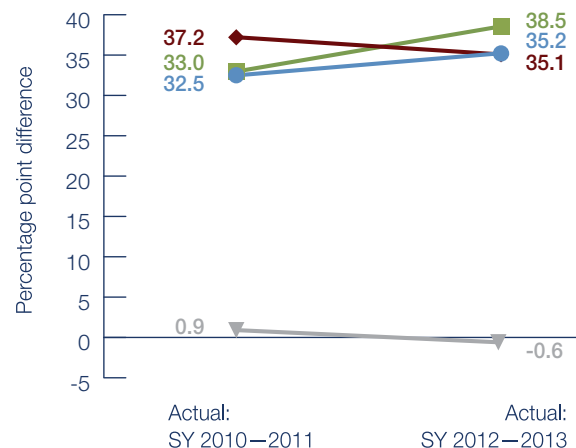
Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two sub-groups on the NAEP reading and NAEP mathematics.

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

Massachusetts' high school graduation rates increased from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2011-2012 and exceeded the State's target. The State's college enrollment rates remained about the same from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013.
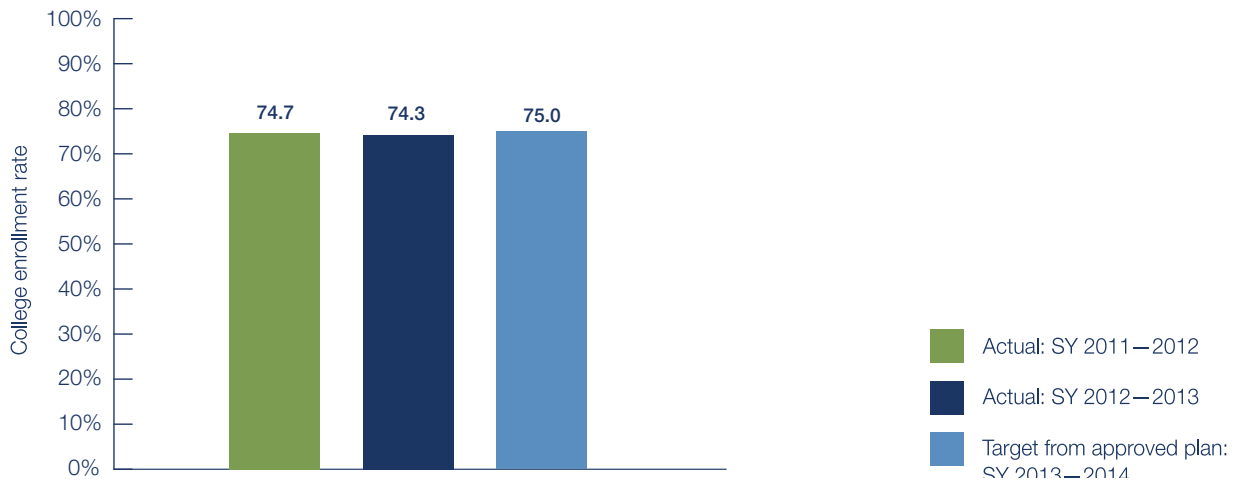
High school graduation rate

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011
- Actual: SY 2011—2012
- Target from approved plan: SY 2013—2014

Bar values: 83.4, 84.7, 80.0
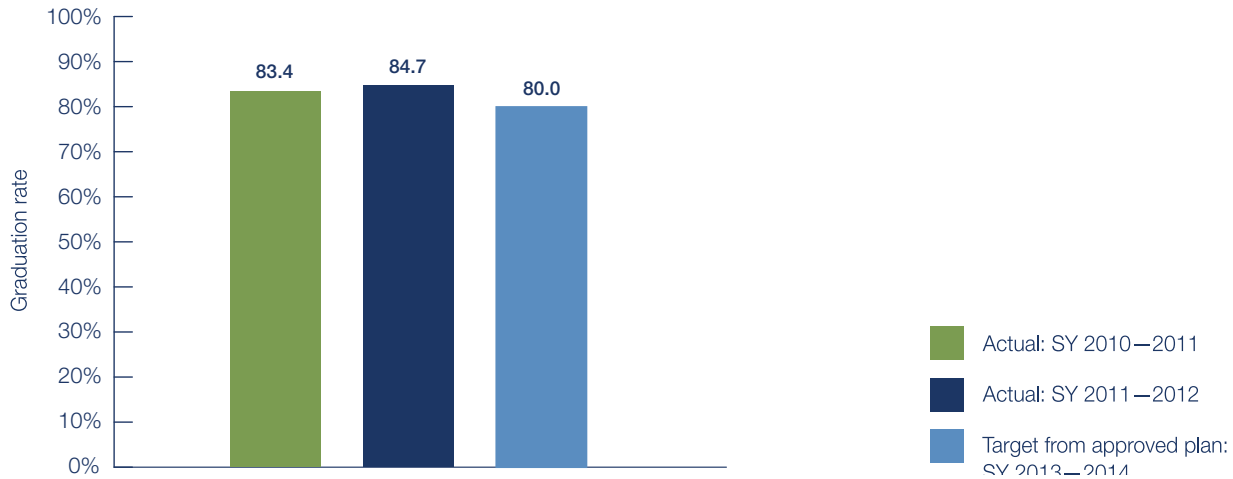
Preliminary SY 2011-2012 data reported as of: August 13, 2013.
For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

College enrollment rate

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2011—2012
- Actual: SY 2012—2013
- Target from approved plan: SY 2013—2014

Bar values: 74.7, 74.3, 75.0

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: August 21, 2013.

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

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

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

Adopting standards and developing assessments

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) unanimously voted to adopt the CCSS in ELA and mathematics in July 2010. In SY 2012-2013, the State fully implemented the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics, which include the CCSS and some State-specific standards.[13]

In Year 3, Massachusetts continued to play an active role in the development of CCSS-aligned assessments through its work with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. The State is a governing member, the Commissioner served as PARCC's chairperson, and Massachusetts participated in many of the consortium's working groups. In order to gauge readiness for the shift to online assessments, LEAs across the State implemented the Technology Readiness Tool. Further, the State recruited and selected educators to serve on the ELC. Throughout SY 2012-2013, the ELC delivered over 75 presentations to approximately 2,000 participants on aspects of the CCSS and PARCC to local, regional, and State audiences.

Since PARCC assessments will not be available until SY 2014-2015, the State has been working to adapt the MCAS to align with the CCSS, to allow for educators and students to be assessed on the new standards. In SY 2012-2013, MCAS assessments assessed students against the standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for the first time.

Supporting college- and career-readiness

Massachusetts continued to promote college-readiness through several initiatives in Year 3. ESE's pre-Advanced Placement (AP) trainings helped middle and early high school teachers prepare their students to meet high academic standards as AP students. Over 1,100 teachers have participated in 28 trainings held across the State. Initial findings from the external evaluation of Massachusetts' college- and career-readiness initiatives indicate patterns of increased AP course-taking, exam-taking, and exam performance.

Innovation Schools

In SY 2012-2013, 47 Innovation Schools were in operation, serving more than 16,000 students in Massachusetts, and the State expected that additional schools would apply for the greater autonomy and flexibility offered through Innovation School status prior to Year 4. Many Innovation Schools are organized around specific themes, such as STEM, dual-language programs, International Baccalaureate programs, alternative education opportunities, virtual platforms, and turnaround services. LEA superintendents evaluate Innovation Schools annually, assessing the extent to which they have met goals and successfully implemented their innovation plans. Additionally, ESE provides technical assistance to this group of schools through webinars and convenings of the Innovation Schools Network. The Network gives educators and administrators planning and operating Innovation Schools an opportunity to meet one another, provide ongoing planning and implementation support, and share best practices.

Although the adoption of MassCore as a statewide high school graduation requirement was delayed again and did not occur in Year 3, the State reports that some LEAs have still adopted MassCore.[14] As of June 30, 2013, the State reported that approximately 68 percent of high school graduates successfully completed the MassCore requirements.

In SY 2012-2013, there were 47 Innovation Schools implementing innovative school models and serving over 16,000 Massachusetts students. Innovation Schools are in-district schools that have greater autonomy and flexibility on curriculum, scheduling, professional development, and other policies. ESE provided ongoing technical assistance to Innovation Schools through webinars and other means in Year 3.[15] Further, six STEM Early College High Schools were in operation in SY 2012-2013 (see *Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics* for additional information).

During Year 3, a total of 37 LEAs participated in the Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling project (Mass Model). Mass Model promotes more effective school counseling through a standards-based framework. The State reported a three percent average increase in graduation rates across LEAs that have elected to participate in this program.

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[13] States that adopt the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are permitted to augment the CCSS with up to an additional 15 percent of content.

[14] MassCore requires students to complete four years of English and mathematics, three years of lab-based science and history, two years of the same foreign language, one year of arts, and five additional core courses such as business education, health or technology.

[15] The State receives funding from the Gates Foundation and the Boston Foundation to support technical assistance.

Dissemination of resources and professional development

Massachusetts expanded the resources available to support LEAs and educators in implementing the CCSS. Educators piloted over 30 model curriculum units in classrooms across the State and provided feedback to ESE throughout SY 2012-2013. In Year 3, ESE led the development, rubric-based review, and revision of model curriculum units, making an additional 60 available for use in Year 4. Each curriculum map is accompanied by a curriculum-embedded performance assessment (CEPA), a stand-alone performance assessment designed to measure student progress against multiple standards simultaneously.

The State released three of four planned curriculum maps to serve as a guide for LEAs to develop their own maps, and provided training on curriculum map development in Year 3. Massachusetts held eight webinars in spring 2013, reaching participants from over 250 LEAs in the State. Further, representatives from over 100 LEAs took part in two-day regional institutes on curriculum mapping and alignment in summer 2013. The State reports that feedback from educators and LEAs on the model curriculum units and maps has been positive; curriculum maps serve as a helpful starting point for educators, who can adapt units that have been vetted by the State for use in their own classrooms.

ESE also continued to develop resources for the digital resource library, accessible through Edwin Teaching and Learning, which includes both curricular and assessment resources. In Year 3, ESE worked to tag content and began to migrate content from the former resource portal into Edwin Teaching and Learning. In conjunction with a local Public Broadcasting Service affiliate, the State developed multiple video resources for inclusion in the digital library, including videos on curriculum unit development and implementation.

In December 2012, Massachusetts and Ohio successfully completed a joint procurement for a teaching and learning system, known as Edwin Teaching and Learning in Massachusetts. Please see *Data Systems to Support Instruction* for more information.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, Massachusetts expanded the resources and supports available for LEAs and educators as they fully implemented the CCSS-aligned Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. While feedback from the field indicates positive response to this support, the State recognized that implementation is challenging and that the extent and quality of standards implementation varied across LEAs. It will be important for Massachusetts to continue to assess progress and quality of implementation at the local level and to use this information to inform additional resources and support.

Completing procurement and initial roll-out of Edwin Teaching and Learning was a major milestone for Massachusetts in Year 3, as the system will make an array of tools and resources available to educators to support implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Still, due to delays in finalizing the contract for the system, project activities in SY 2012-2013, including the pilot of the system, were conducted in a condensed timeframe. As full roll-out proceeds in Year 4, the State will need to utilize communications and training mechanisms to receive ongoing feedback from users and to help ensure that educators are prepared to use Edwin Teaching and Learning effectively.

Although many high school graduates are completing the MassCore requirements, in the absence of a statewide requirement, all LEAs in the State are unlikely to adopt these high school graduation requirements. MassCore is an opportunity to provide students across the State with access to a rigorous high school curriculum, regardless of demographics or geographic location, and it will be important for the State to develop a plan to realize these goals in the absence of a statewide requirement.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system

During Year 3, Massachusetts continued its efforts to link, upgrade, and expand its data systems so that educators and other stakeholders have access to comprehensive and actionable information. Central to these efforts are Edwin Analytics, and SIF.

Edwin Teaching and Learning and Edwin Analytics

The State's Edwin platform includes two major systems: Edwin Teaching and Learning and Edwin Analytics. Edwin Analytics includes analysis and reporting tools for educators, including student profiles, an Early Warning Indicator System, and dashboards and reports. Edwin Teaching and Learning includes instructional tools, a digital library, and student assessment tools. For example, State-created model curriculum maps and units are available in Edwin Teaching and Learning and educators can create, store, and share curriculum units, maps, and lesson plans within the system. The digital library will include videos, interactive elements, images, and text resources from a variety of open-source digital providers. The Edwin Teaching and Learning student assessment tools allow educators to develop, store, deliver, and score their own assessments and assessment items for their classes, schools, or districts in order to assess student learning and inform instruction. MCAS items, tagged to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, are included in the system.

Over the past three years, the State has improved performance of Edwin Analytics through hardware upgrades and expanded capacity. Massachusetts reported that these upgrades have increased the number of users and significantly reduced the occurrence of performance errors. In SY 2012-2013, Massachusetts added new components to Edwin Analytics. The Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) identifies students in grades 1 through 12 who may be at risk of missing key educational targets (*e.g.*, graduating from high school) and the Postsecondary Enrollment and Outcomes reports provide a variety of data on postsecondary outcomes of Massachusetts students, including college enrollment, persistence, and graduation information.

Through SIF, the State intends to reduce the data reporting burden on LEAs and enable educators to access student data in real time. Following significant delays in Years 1 and 2, SIF implementation continued to encounter delays in Year 3, and the State fell short of its target of implementing SIF in 258 LEAs. After piloting SIF in nine LEAs in SY 2011-2012, Massachusetts determined that its vendor's strategy was not a sustainable solution. In SY 2012-2013, the State began working with a new vendor and implementing a new method of transferring data from the LEA to the State level. While 168 LEAs have completed the onboarding process and are ready to begin sending data to ESE, SIF was only available to allow educators to access data in real-time through Edwin Teaching and Learning in nine LEAs at the end of Year 3.

As a result of ongoing delays with SIF implementation, the State prioritized communication with LEAs in Year 3. ESE conducted webinars, developed a new website, and communicated with LEAs on a weekly basis to ensure they were informed about SIF updates and implementation status.

Accessing and using State data

As noted above, in Year 3 Massachusetts and Ohio successfully completed a joint procurement of a teaching and learning system, known as Edwin Teaching and Learning in Massachusetts. Thirty-four LEAs participated in a pilot of the system in spring 2013. LEAs tried out different functionalities, familiarized themselves with the system, and provided feedback to the State and shared experiences with each other through webinars. Edwin Teaching and Learning gained additional functionality throughout summer 2013. At the beginning of SY 2013-2014, the 34 LEAs began implementing Edwin Teaching and Learning district-wide. Massachusetts intends to roll out Edwin Teaching and Learning to other participating LEAs in phases throughout SY 2013-2014.

Massachusetts also made progress in expanding educator access to data through the development of dashboards and portals which will provide a user-friendly environment in which educators can access data and reports. In Year 3, the State began building the dashboards and portals and reported that it was on track to roll them out in SY 2013-2014. The dashboards will display critical student-, classroom-, and school-level indicators that will support data-driven instruction.

Using data to improve instruction

In SY 2012-2013, data specialists continued to work with LEAs and educators through District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) to provide training on using Edwin Analytics. The State also identified a vendor to develop a series of "Data In Action" online professional development courses to support educators' use of data to inform

instruction. However, Massachusetts' progress in this area was limited; while it piloted one course in Year 3, its intention was to fully deliver all courses.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Massachusetts made substantial progress in expanding Edwin Analytics in Year 3, and continued to improve the performance of this system to meet users' needs. Further, the State reported that it is on track to roll out new elements – additional reports and dashboards designed to increase usability of the system – in Year 4. However, due to delays in developing and making available the Data In Action courses, educators do not yet have access to State-developed professional development to support data use.

SIF implementation continued to face challenges in SY 2012-2013, resulting in it being operational in fewer LEAs than expected. Although Massachusetts reports that mid-course corrections made in Year 3 related to its vendor and strategy will benefit the initiative in the long run, ongoing delays have limited the extent to which educators can access and utilize timely and actionable data to inform instruction and LEAs can experience and benefit from SIF during the grant period.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by supporting high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing effective supports to all educators. As part of these efforts, Race to the Top States are designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals; conducting annual evaluations that include timely and constructive feedback; and using evaluation information to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, and tenure decisions.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Educator evaluation

In Years 1 and 2, Massachusetts laid the groundwork for and began phased-in implementation of its educator evaluation system. Following approval of new regulations in June 2011, the State released a model educator evaluation system that aligns with the BESE regulations – the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation – in early 2012. LEAs have the option to adopt this system, adapt it, or develop their own in alignment with the regulations.[16] The new framework for educator evaluation will result in every educator receiving a Summative Performance Rating and a Rating of Impact on Student Learning.[17] Although the State initially expected to fully implement

The Educator Evaluation Framework

Summative Rating			
Exemplary	1-yr Self-Directed Growth Plan	2-yr Self-Directed Growth Plan	
Proficient			
Needs Improvement	Directed Growth Plan		
Unsatisfactory	Improvement Plan		
	Low	Moderate	High
	Rating of Impact on Student Learning		

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[16] LEA-developed systems must clearly differentiate educators based on four performance levels and aid in connecting educators to appropriate professional development.

[17] Evaluators utilize products of progress, multiple measures of student learning, and other evidence to rate educators' performance on four standards, for which educators can receive ratings of exemplary, proficient, needs improvement, or unsatisfactory. Ratings on the four standards help to inform an educator's Summative Performance Rating (on which educators can receive one of the four ratings mentioned above). A Rating of Impact on Student Learning is based on trends and patterns in student learning, growth, and achievement. In order for a Rating of Impact on Student Learning to be given, educators must have two years of data from at least two State or district-wide growth measures. State regulations require that Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) student growth percentiles (SGP) be used as one measure where available (i.e., for teachers of tested grades and subjects). For those educators for whom MCAS SGPs are not available, LEAs must develop District-Determined Measures (DDMs) to serve as measures of growth. On the basis of these data, educators receive a low, moderate, or high Rating of Impact on Student Learning.

its educator evaluation system in all Race to the Top participating LEAs in Year 3, challenges in preparing LEAs to establish and utilize student growth measures led ESE to defer implementation of the Rating of Impact on Student Learning. However, this delay has not impacted the implementation of the Educator Evaluation Framework for the professional practices portion of the educator evaluation system. Since the participating LEAs have only implemented one part of the educator evaluation system, Massachusetts is delayed with full implementation. Massachusetts now expects that all components of the new system for evaluating teachers and principals will be in place in SY 2014-2015.[18]

Massachusetts began phasing in elements of the State's evaluation system in SY 2011-2012, with 21 LEAs (34 Level 4 schools[19] and 11 volunteer pilot districts) utilizing their new educator evaluation systems to provide Summative Performance Ratings for the professional practices portion of the evaluation system for educators. All Race to the Top participating LEAs were required to submit an educator evaluation plan for implementation of the Summative Performance Rating component for approval by ESE prior to implementation in SY 2012-2013. However, some LEAs were unable to finalize locally bargained agreements until the school year was already underway, and seven LEAs out of the 234 participating LEAs were unable to reach an agreement during the school year. Additionally, all Race to the Top participating LEAs were expected to begin implementing their new educator evaluation systems and provide Summative Performance Ratings to at least 50 percent of educators in Year 3. Although all LEAs reported to the State that they provided training to educators on the new systems, the extent to which all LEAs engaged in meaningful use of elements of their educator evaluation systems is not clear. ESE is utilizing an external evaluator to provide ESE with more information about the LEAs' engagement and use of their educator evaluation systems.

ESE conducted trainings and disseminated an array of guidance documents to assist LEAs in the transition to the new evaluation system. As a result, the State reported that LEAs feel supported by ESE and have gained an understanding of the changes to teacher and principal evaluation systems that are underway. Following Year 2 regional "Getting Started" workshops, attended by more than 1,000 LEA and school leaders from Race to the Top participating LEAs, Massachusetts held "Getting Started" workshops for other LEAs in the State during Year 3. ESE also released, in phases, seven parts of an eight-part series of guidance documents intended to support effective implementation of educator evaluation (*e.g.*, the District-Level Planning and Implementation Guide and Implementation Guide for Principal Evaluation). The State also developed a four-part series of training workshops for teachers and a six-part series for evaluators.

In Year 3, the State made progress in preparing LEAs to create and use DDMs.[20] State regulations originally called for LEAs to begin implementing DDMs and collecting the first year of data to inform Ratings of Impact in SY 2013-2014. However, due to delays in ESE work and feedback received from LEAs, State unions, and additional stakeholders regarding the need for additional time to identify, develop, and pilot DDMs, ESE is requiring LEAs to pilot DDMs in SY 2013-2014 with full implementation in SY 2014-2015. In summer 2013, approximately one year later than expected, ESE released district exemplars of DDMs. Beginning in spring 2013, Massachusetts presented an eight-part webinar series to build LEA capacity to develop and utilize DDMs in their educator evaluation systems. LEAs received additional training and support through technical guides and guidance documents such as "Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined Measures of Student Learning."

In fall 2013, all LEAs in the State were expected to submit a plan to ESE to conduct a pilot of DDMs in SY 2013-2014. ESE required that the plan address how the pilot DDMs, in specific areas, align with State priorities, particularly the implementation of the new Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Based on feedback from and engagement with LEAs, Massachusetts believes that LEAs need a year to pilot and make necessary adjustments to the DDMs they have identified. In spring 2014, all LEAs are expected to submit an additional plan to ESE to use at least two statewide or local measures of growth for all educators in SY 2014-2015 when data on student growth will be included in the evaluation process.

Additionally in Year 3, the State continued its support to local superintendents through the Superintendent Induction program. As of spring 2013, a total of 68 superintendents from three cohorts were participating in the program and Massachusetts expects a fourth cohort to begin in SY 2013-2014. A report developed by the State's external evaluator indicated that participants in this program valued the coaching element highly and offered positive ratings of coaches' knowledge and support.

As a part of its efforts to learn from implementation to date and continuously improve the State's approach to teacher and principal evaluation, Massachusetts participated in an RSN two-day convening, "Learning from Experience to Generate Continuous Improvement of Evaluation Systems" with other Race to the Top States. During this meeting the State identified new and existing approaches to support the development and implementation of educator evaluation systems that are designed for continuous improvement.

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[18] The State reported that it intends to submit to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) a no-cost extension amendment request to continue work in this area of its Race to the Top plan in school year (SY) 2014-2015.

[19] Level 4 schools are the State's most struggling schools based on an analysis of four-year trends in absolute achievement, student growth, and improvement trends as measured by MCAS. On January 18th, 2010, Governor Patrick, Senate and House leaders enacted landmark education reform legislation to intervene in these schools. Level 4 schools are allowed flexibilities to accelerate student achievement and are given priority to receive ESE targeted assistance.

[20] According to the State, DDMs are measures of student learning, growth, and achievement related to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Massachusetts Vocational Technical Education Frameworks, or other relevant frameworks, that are comparable across grade or subject levels district-wide. These measures may include, but shall not be limited to: portfolios, approved commercial assessments and district-developed pre- and post-unit and course assessments, and capstone projects.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Human capital management

BESE's new performance-based licensure regulations, passed in December 2011, outline new educator preparation and licensure standards that align with new administrative leadership evaluation standards. The State finalized a contract for the development of a principal licensure performance assessment system in fall 2012 and the vendor developed assessment tasks and evaluation rubrics throughout SY 2012-2013.[21] Massachusetts began a pilot of the principal licensure performance assessment system in fall 2013, one year later than initially planned. The State also intended to develop a teacher licensure assessment system and to create career ladder endorsements for teachers through its Race to the Top program. As part of the State's planning for this project, a survey was distributed to LEA staff in order to collect information to support project development. Based on the survey results, Massachusetts determined that the initial approach and project commitments, which involved amending regulations, would not be positively received by the field. The Department is considering an amendment request submitted by the State to change its approach to the project.[22]

Massachusetts also implemented a pilot program to improve LEA human resources systems so that they are more efficient and supportive of educator effectiveness. The State continued to work in Year 3 with three LEAs that were awarded grants to pilot new human resources systems, and a technical assistance vendor will create a human resources reform toolkit based on this work.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

ESE intends to monitor the distribution of effective educators through the Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) and Teacher Effectiveness Quality Improvement Plan (TEQIP) data systems. Following SY 2012-2013, the State collected information through these data systems on educator evaluation ratings on the Summative Performance Rating components from Race to the Top participating LEAs, all of which began implementing elements of the educator evaluation system in Year 3.[23]

Massachusetts administered the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning in Massachusetts (TELL Mass) survey – a statewide educator survey designed to gather input from educators on issues such as school facilities and resources, community engagement and support, and instructional resources – for the first time in Year 2. After using the data to identify areas for improvement, LEAs developed and implemented plans for making progress in the identified areas during SY 2012-2013. LEAs will be able to gauge their progress in addressing these issues when TELL Mass is administered again in Year 4.

In Year 3, the State made progress integrating the aMAzing Teachers website, which recruits teachers specifically for low-performing schools, with the State's existing educator recruitment website. The integrated website, made available in summer 2013, serves as a gateway for educator preparation programs, licensure, and K-12 job opportunities. Additionally, Massachusetts is working with a vendor to create a marketing plan for the new website.

The State's efforts to expand the supply of highly effective teachers and school leaders also continued through mentoring and leadership programs in Year 3. Five cohorts of participants, including over 100 educators, began instructional leadership training through the National Institute for School Leaders in fall 2012. Although participation in the project has been lower than anticipated, 83 teachers had obtained National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification by the end of Year 3. Online mentoring, intended to help Level 3 and 4 LEAs retain new teachers and increase their effectiveness, continued in Year 3, reaching over 150 teachers. Massachusetts continued to deliver online courses for teachers of English as a Second Language and special education, although it appears that the State will fall short of its target to license a total of 468 new teachers in these areas by the end of the grant period.

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

Massachusetts strengthened educator preparation program approval requirements in Year 2, through new regulations passed in June 2012. In July 2013 the State published "Guidelines for Program Approval",[24] which outline procedures for the approval of all educator preparation programs in Massachusetts. During Year 3, the State's efforts to hold educator preparation programs publicly accountable for their performance progressed. Massachusetts completed updates to the online data collection system for educator preparation programs, enabling all programs to successfully submit required data through the new web-based system. Using the information collected, the State released educator preparation program report cards (Preparation Program Profiles) in summer 2013. Information on employment and retention rates for preparation programs' graduates were published on the profiles in December 2013.[25] Evaluation ratings of program completers will be published on the profiles in 2015.

[21] The Department's understanding at the time of the writing of the Year 2 State-specific Summary Report was that the State executed a contract in summer 2012.

[22] The Department's understanding at the time of the writing of the Year 2 State-specific Summary Report was that the State had already developed a teacher licensure assessment system in Year 2.

[23] These LEAs reported on the following data elements for all educators evaluated under the new evaluation framework in SY 2012-2013: (1) professional teacher status; (2) overall Summative Performance Rating; (3) rating on Standard I; (4) rating on Standard II; (5) rating on Standard III; and (6) rating on Standard IV. Educators will not receive, and LEAs will not be expected to report on, educators' Ratings of Impact on Student Learning until SY 2015-2016.

[24] For more information regarding the Guidelines for Program Approval, please see http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/ProgramApproval.pdf.

[25] The preparation program profiles can be found at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/search.aspx?leftNavId.

Great Teachers and Leaders

To support the scaling up and expansion of effective teacher and principal preparation programs, Massachusetts awarded grants to support the expansion of two teacher preparation programs which have proven models of success in recruiting and preparing effective teachers. Massachusetts did not make awards to any principal preparation programs in Year 3, as it received no applications that met the requirements for receiving grant funding.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Following an extensive development and revision process that offered multiple opportunities for stakeholders to provide input, the State completed the Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development in 2012. The Standards will provide a foundation for the statewide professional development system that was still in the planning and development stages during Year 3. Throughout SY 2012-2013, nearly 200 schools utilized the Standard Assessment Inventory survey to gather information on professional development quality. Schools received technical assistance to analyze and utilize the survey results.

During Year 3, the State worked with a vendor on the development of a Massachusetts Professional Development Evaluation Toolkit. Due to challenges and delays in the development of the Toolkit, the State does not anticipate that it will be completed until Year 4. As a result of delays in developing the Toolkit, the State also delayed work on a professional development Planning and Implementation Guide, to ensure that the resources are not duplicative. ESE convened a task force in spring 2013 to develop professional development provider performance criteria and selection, approval, and monitoring processes. However, due to delays in this work, the State does not anticipate finalizing these processes or publishing a preferred professional development provider list until Year 4.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, the State expanded the resources, guidance documents, and trainings available for its LEAs and educators related to the new educator evaluation system. LEAs reported feeling highly supported by ESE in this area of Race to the Top implementation. However, Massachusetts experienced challenges in Year 3 that led to a delayed timeline for the implementation of the Student Impact Rating component of the evaluation system; thus, delaying full implementation of its evaluation system. All Race to the Top participating LEAs were supposed to implement the Summative Performance Rating element of their educator evaluation systems in SY 2012-2013, however challenges in reaching local bargaining agreements resulted in a few LEAs' inability to implement this component of their evaluation system. Additionally, the State released exemplars and guidance for developing and utilizing DDMs later than initially planned. All LEAs will pilot DDMs in Year 4, before collecting the first year of data to inform Ratings of Impact on Student Learning in SY 2014-2015. Massachusetts expects that educators will receive their first Ratings of Impact on Student Learning in SY 2015-2016.

Massachusetts successfully gathered and publicly released report cards on educator preparation programs in spring and summer 2013 and awarded two teacher preparation program expansion grants in Year 3. While some of the State's initiatives related to equitable distribution of teachers and principals fell short of participation targets, all projects continued on schedule in SY 2012-2013. On the other hand, the State experienced delays in the development of planned teacher and principal licensure assessment systems and career ladder endorsements.

As a result of ongoing delays in the State's efforts to develop a comprehensive statewide professional development system, LEAs will not have access to professional development planning and assessment tools until Year 4. This limits Massachusetts' ability to influence professional development at the local level during the grant period and may jeopardize the quality of professional development available to support implementation of the State's Race to the Top initiatives.

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.[26]

Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools

Implementing intervention models

In SY 2012-2013, 34 persistently lowest-achieving (PLA)[27] schools in Massachusetts continued to implement the intervention models they initiated in Year 1 and an additional 9 schools began implementing intervention models.[28] Massachusetts made progress in this area of its Race to the Top plan in Year 3, as many of these schools have posted student performance gains. SY 2011-2012 State assessment data indicated that 25 of the 34 schools have improved three or more percentage points in ELA MCAS performance since 2010, and 22 have improved by three or more percentage points in mathematics MCAS performance. Fourteen schools exited Level 4 status in fall 2013, based on their improved performance. The State determined that fifteen schools will be left in Level 4 status for at least one more year in order to have the support needed to continue their progress. Four Level 4 schools were placed in Level 5 status.

In order to assess progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide formative feedback to help schools identify action steps for improvement, Massachusetts completed site visits to all Level 4 schools in the State during Year 3. Further, the State continued its efforts to build LEA capacity based on needs identified during the review process. In particular, efforts focused on strengthening human resource systems, particularly to support implementation of the educator evaluation system, and instituting management structures that facilitate swift and effective identification of urgent priorities. Six Level 4 LEAs continued to receive support from a District Plan Manager who helps to ensure that improvement plans are implemented effectively. In SY 2012-2013, 16 LEAs participated in the District Governance Support Program

(DGSP), designed to help LEAs strengthen governance practices and relationships between LEA superintendents and school committees. LEAs participating in DGSP completed curriculum modules and received support from coaches in Year 3.

Murkland Elementary School: A Success Story

Murkland Elementary School in Lowell was designated a Level 4 school in 2010 and made great progress early on, achieving the Measurable Annual Goals it was expected to meet in Year 3 after only its first year of improvement work. The school continued on this successful path, ultimately exiting Level 4 status and moving to Level 1 in 2013.

Using the Transformation Model of improvement, the school was able to work with existing staff to make these notable gains. Murkland focused on professional development through a school-designed coaching model in which in-house coaching attention has been provided to every teacher on an extended basis, with the school's mantra being that "everyone deserves coaching." Because the sharing of practice comes not only from those in Instructional Coach roles but also from teacher peers and the school's principal, the entire building is involved in collaboratively building and analyzing lessons to determine what works best for each student. With effective professional collaboration being a part of daily practice at the school, Murkland is a model that is highlighted for other schools in Lowell and across the State.

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[26] 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.

[27] The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) identifies the PLA schools based on the State's accountability rating system. ESE selects Level 4 schools from among the lowest-performing 20 percent of schools in the State based on student achievement and growth in ELA, mathematics, and science, as well as graduation and dropout rates for high schools. Schools that demonstrate the least improvement receive the Level 4 designation. In turn, Level 4 schools that fail to reach improvement benchmarks after three or more years receive Level 5 status, which triggers State governance and requires the Commissioner to convene a local stakeholder group, create a turnaround plan that will rapidly improve student achievement, direct the superintendent or an appointed receiver to implement the plan, and evaluate the school at least annually. The State also may designate a school district as chronically underperforming, resulting in the designation of a Level 5 district. All schools designated as Level 4 must implement a turnaround plan, which needs to be aligned with the turnaround principles presented in the State's approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request. Level 4 schools that successfully apply for School Improvement Grant funding must implement one of the four school intervention models.

[28] One of the 35 schools that initiated models in SY 2010-2011 utilized the school closure model.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Throughout SY 2012-2013, Lawrence, the State's only Level 5 district, continued to operate under the management of a State-appointed receiver and to receive intensive support. Additionally, in fall 2012 the State identified nine Level 4 schools at risk of being designated Level 5 schools and connected them with State-approved turnaround operators. Most schools began formalizing partnerships with turnaround operators to be prepared to implement interventions in SY 2013-2014, when Massachusetts expects to designate its first Level 5 schools.

Promoting student achievement in low-performing schools

In Year 3, Massachusetts expanded its Wraparound Zone initiative, designed to build capacity in and reform low-performing schools. Wraparound Zone schools create and implement systems for identifying academic and non-academic student needs; offer customized and multi-faceted interventions to at-risk students; connect social workers and families to school practices; and monitor the effectiveness of their programs. The 21 schools from five LEAs that launched Wraparound Zones in Year 2 refined their implementation strategies, while two additional LEAs launched Wraparound Zones in Year 3.

LEAs implementing Wraparound Zones received monthly technical assistance and participated in cross-district meetings, calls, and peer learning exchanges. During SY 2012-2013, Massachusetts held content seminars and two leadership and learning exchanges during which LEAs shared promising practices that had proven useful in their Wraparound Zone implementation. The State also conducted monitoring visits to assess implementation progress and inform planning and supports for Year 4. Data gathered during the monitoring visits in Year 2 indicated that staff in all LEAs reported progress, especially in terms of improved school climate and family engagement and increases in the quantity and quality of school-community partnerships. The data also showed that while the LEAs were all considering and planning for sustainability of their efforts, there were some emerging key differences among LEAs, specifically in terms of priorities, leadership styles, and mechanisms for providing district-level support to the Wraparound Zone schools.

Massachusetts' Turnaround Teacher Teams and Turnaround Leaders, part of the State's strategy for promoting high-quality instruction in low-performing schools, trained and deployed additional teams of teachers and leaders in Level 3 and Level 4 schools in SY 2012-2013. Turnaround Teacher Teams expanded notably in Year 3, with a total of 110 new and experienced teachers participating in the initiative. The State recruited and trained 10 leaders through the Turnaround Leaders program, and the majority of program completers attained principal or assistant principal positions for SY 2013-2014.

ESE's 21 Priority Partners collaborated with Level 3, 4, and 5 LEAs to implement differentiated interventions to support district and school turnaround. The State vetted each Priority Partner to ensure it has a proven ability to accelerate school improvement. As of summer 2013, all Level 4 districts were working with at least one Priority Partner to address one or more of the conditions for school effectiveness: Students' Social, Emotional, and Health Needs; Leadership, Human Resources, and Financial Management; Maximizing Learning Time; and Effective Use of Data.

Throughout SY 2012-2013, the Network of Priority Partners convened to share information and best practices and to coordinate and align services across schools and LEAs served by the Partners. The State assessed the Priority Partners in summer 2013, reviewing progress reports to determine whether they demonstrated effectiveness and soliciting feedback from LEAs and schools to gauge satisfaction with the Partners' services. In Year 3, the State also vetted and selected six turnaround operators to receive funding to build organizational capacity to manage chronically low-performing schools or to implement intervention models to meet the needs of students in low-performing schools.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Massachusetts continued in Year 3 to implement a thoughtful and coordinated approach to turning around low-achieving schools through identification of and attention to the core conditions that affect school success. The State gathered data and feedback on progress and quality of implementation of initiatives such as the Priority Partners and Wraparound Zones and utilized this information to inform its work going forward. The improvements in student outcomes in many of the LEAs and schools served through the State's work in this area, noted above, are evidence of the positive impact of the State's approach.

The State recruited and trained fewer Turnaround Leaders in Year 3 than expected based on factors such as program cost, time commitment, and the fact that Turnaround Leaders is a new program. Massachusetts adjusted its recruitment strategy and hopes to boost program participation in Year 4 to meet its goal for participation in this initiative.

Massachusetts is in the early stages of considering sustainability for the initiatives being implemented in this area of its Race to the Top program. As the end of the grant period approaches, it will be important for Massachusetts to fully develop a plan for sustaining both supports for and improvements made in low-achieving schools and districts.

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

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

State's STEM initiatives

Massachusetts' STEM Early College High Schools are intended to improve access to STEM courses and resources among traditionally underrepresented groups through LEAs' partnerships with institutions of higher education that offer high school students the opportunity to earn college credits in STEM fields. One STEM Early College High School opened in SY 2011-2012, and five additional schools launched their programs in SY 2012-2013. Throughout the year, STEM Early College High Schools receive technical assistance, connect with business and other partners at the local level, and convene for networking meetings to share ideas and lessons learned.

During SY 2012-2013, 71 candidates participated in the State's STEM-focused educator preparation site, UTeach. Although this level of participation represents an increase from Year 2, Massachusetts faces a challenge in meeting its goal of preparing 250 new STEM teachers through the UTeach program by the end of the grant period.

State efforts to promote college- and career-readiness through enhanced standards in Year 2 also promoted a focus on STEM disciplines. MassCore, a rigorous diploma track completed by approximately 68 percent of high school students in the State, requires students to take at least three years of lab-based science coursework and four years of mathematics. Additionally, through a partnership with Mass Math and Science Initiative – Advancing College Readiness, the State has trained over 1,100 teachers in pre-AP strategies and content. (See *Standards and Assessments* for more information.)

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Massachusetts' STEM Early College High Schools are learning from each other as their programs progress. Additionally, the State applied lessons learned from the first STEM Early College High School's launch in SY 2011-2012 to inform technical assistance and support to the new programs that opened in SY 2012-2013.

Additional adjustments may be needed to recruitment strategies for the State's UTeach program; although more candidates were enrolled in Year 3 than in previous years, Massachusetts is not on track to meet its participation goals at this point.

Progress Updates on Invitational Priorities

In its SY 2012-2013 APR, Massachusetts reported the following progress:

Innovations for improving early learning outcomes

In December 2011, Massachusetts was awarded a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. The State's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge plan is designed to ensure that all children have access to high-quality pre-kindergarten education, through initiatives such as providing support to early childhood educators to improve their practice, creating the Massachusetts Early Learning and Development Assessment System, and increasing engagement with parents, families, and community members.

ESE worked collaboratively with the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) on developing a birth to grade three framework. The framework is aimed at addressing third grade reading scores by aligning practices across the birth to age five system of early childhood services and the K-3 system of early elementary services. It addresses both the vertical and horizontal elements of: instructional tools and practices; data and assessment; instructional environment; engaging families; administrators and leadership quality; transition and pathways; teacher quality and capacity; and mechanisms for cross-sector alignment.

When the State adopted the new Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks incorporating CCSS, it used the flexibility to add 15 percent State-specific content to include standards for pre-kindergarten in both ELA and mathematics. The curriculum and instruction

materials being developed for the State's teaching and learning system includes materials for K-3 in all four core subjects (ELA, mathematics, history/social studies, and science) and supplemental ELA materials for grades two and three. The State is currently in the process of revising curriculum resources for pre-school and kindergarten teachers. The revisions will bring these resources into greater alignment with the CCSS and will reflect expected revisions to the State's Science and Technology/Engineering Framework.

ESE is partnering with EEC to plan for the future development of EWIS data for early education sites. As of September 2012, EWIS data were available for grades 1 through 12 statewide. The EEC-level EWIS would mirror the elementary and secondary level-EWIS, providing risk level information on children from birth through kindergarten.

ESE is also partnering with EEC to include a School Readiness component within the preschool through college (P-20) Longitudinal Data System. The two Departments are currently working to develop the data and reporting requirements to provide educators from both Departments with information that will help improve the educational outcomes of young children who are high needs. Although the State hoped to make the data available to LEAs in spring 2013, this is now expected in fall 2013.

Expansion and adaptation of statewide longitudinal data systems

ESE has designated data systems as one of its six priority projects that will guide the work of the agency through its strategic planning delivery process. In 2011, EEC, ESE, and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) signed a data sharing agreement with the Executive Office of Education that serves as the basis for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act compliant P-20 database. Since that time, the agencies have started to assign State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) under this agreement. In November 2012, college feedback reports resulting from this data exchange were released to agency and LEA users. In addition to the agencies listed above, the State also began the process of assigning SASIDs to the Adult Basic Education community. As of September 20, 2012, the data system has been populated with approximately 133,000 SASIDs.

As of fall 2013, ESE had developed a comprehensive P-20 database within Edwin Analytics. Version 3.0 of the Education Data Warehouse has been in place for the past two school years. This version has succeeded in correcting many of the inefficiencies and performance issues of prior versions, leading to a record number of reports being released without any performance issues.

The SIF project has experienced delays, but is now functioning at a level that will allow many LEAs to send data to ESE in a near real-time fashion. At this time, 168 LEAs have gone through the onboarding process and are ready to begin sending data to ESE. Massachusetts intends to have all Race to the Top participating districts connected via SIF in SY 2013-2014.

P-20 coordination, vertical and horizontal alignment

ESE is continuing to work collaboratively with the EEC to develop a birth to grade three framework for enhancing developmental and learning outcomes for all children in Massachusetts. This framework is focused on improving third grade reading scores (as measured by the MCAS) by better aligning policies and practices across the birth to age five system of early childhood services and the K–3 system of early elementary services. ESE and EEC are increasing both vertical and cross-sector alignment by addressing issues related to instructional tools and practices, data and assessment, instructional environments, family engagement, the quality of leaders and administrators, teacher quality, and professional pathways for early educators. Further, ESE and EEC are collaborating on the development of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment system, a project included in the State's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge plan.

Each of the six Readiness Centers hosted regional events to provide educators from early education, elementary and secondary education, and higher education with additional guidance regarding the implementation of the Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics. ESE is working with the EOE and the Readiness Centers to plan additional training events for SY 2013-2014.

ESE is continuing to work with the EOE, EEC, and DHE to establish a P-20 database and share information across State education entities. Additionally, representatives from DHE and Massachusetts public institutions of higher education are participating in ongoing discussions about the implementation of key Race to the Top initiatives (including educator evaluation, the Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics, and PARCC) and their relationship to college readiness, student assessment, educator preparation and licensure, and increasing alignment between high schools and public institutions of higher education. This collaboration resulted in the creation of a definition of college- and career-readiness in the State, which the BESE adopted in early 2013.

School-level conditions for reform, innovation, and learning

An element of the 2010 Achievement Gap Act was the creation of Innovation Schools, in district public schools that operate with increased autonomy in the areas of curriculum, budget, school schedule and calendar, staffing, professional development, and school district policies. There are now 47 Innovation Schools in urban, suburban, and rural communities across the State. Some schools are increasing instructional time for students, and many are organized around specific themes including STEM, dual-language instruction, alternative education opportunities, virtual learning platforms, and providing comprehensive support services to children and families.

The Achievement Gap Act also provided new tools, rules, and supports to accelerate the improvement of low-performing schools in Massachusetts. The law gave local superintendents and the

Progress Updates on Invitational Priorities

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education the ability to increase flexibility in these schools, such as by adding budgetary flexibility; increased planning time for teachers; and bonuses and other awards to attract and retain high-quality teachers. The law also required that turnaround plans incorporate comprehensive services for high-need students and their families and strategies to engage families and communities in supporting student academic success.

Three years after the legislation's implementation, each of the Level 4 schools has used one or more of these provisions. The alignment of the new autonomies in the reform legislation with the elements of the four federal SIG school intervention models is providing an extra incentive for schools to use these autonomies. The most commonly used provisions of the reform legislation include increased planning time for teachers, longer school days for students, comprehensive wraparound services to address students' non-academic barriers to learning, and new strategies to engage families and communities in supporting student academic success.

Looking Ahead to Year 4

The State's progress during the first three years of implementation laid a foundation for continued implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Massachusetts intends to continue to support educators through professional development sessions and developing and refining instructional tools and resources. The State plans to administer its standards implementation survey again in SY 2013-2014 to better understand LEAs' progress in implementing the new standards. College- and career-readiness initiatives, such as the Pre-AP program and the STEM Early College High Schools, will also continue.

Year 4 presents an opportunity for Massachusetts to fully roll out two major technology initiatives – Edwin Teaching and Learning and SIF. Following the initial launch of the teaching and learning system in selected LEAs in fall 2013, the State plans to phase in implementation across other LEAs throughout SY 2013-2014. Although the SIF project has faced ongoing challenges throughout the grant period, Massachusetts is confident that all LEAs will be able to utilize SIF in Year 4, reducing the reporting burden on LEAs and providing critical educator access to real-time data through Edwin Teaching and Learning.

SY 2013-2014 is a critical year for Massachusetts' educator evaluation work. After two years of phasing in use of elements of the new system in Race to the Top participating LEAs, all LEAs in the State are expected to pilot DDMs in Year 4 and utilize their new evaluation systems to provide Summative Performance Ratings to educators. The State will continue to provide support and training to prepare the field for full implementation of its qualifying educator evaluation system in SY 2014-2015.

Massachusetts' initiatives are expected to improve educator effectiveness through high-quality educator training and higher licensure standards. The State aims to increase participation in programs such as the National Institute for School Leadership, National Board certification, UTeach, and Turnaround Teacher Teams and the Turnaround Leaders program. In Year 4, Preparation Program Profiles are expected to include additional employment and student growth and achievement data for educator preparation program graduates.

ESE will continue to support school innovation and improvement in low-performing schools. Schools that initiated intervention models will continue to implement them in SY 2013-2014, as the State considers sustainability for the supports for, and improvements in, its low-achieving schools and districts. Additionally, through external evaluations, the State will be able to gauge the impacts of initiatives such as Wraparound Zones, Priority Partners, and STEM Early College High Schools, to inform potential future implementation.

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.

Glossary

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

Highly effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Persistently lowest-achieving schools: As determined by the State, (1) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (2) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (1) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (2) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. (For additional information please see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html.)

Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student achievement: For the purposes of this report, student achievement (1) for tested grades and subjects is (a) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in number (2) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (2) for non-tested grades and subjects, alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

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

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