RACE
TO THE
TOP

Tennessee 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.

State's education reform agenda

In January 2010, Tennessee passed the First to the Top Act (FTTT). Supported by the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), FTTT laid the foundation for broad-based education reform. Among other provisions, FTTT: (1) mandated a comprehensive evaluation system for teachers and principals based on multiple measures of effectiveness, including student achievement indicators and annual observations of educator practice; (2) removed the restriction on the use of value-added data for promotion, retention, tenure, and compensation decisions; (3) enabled intervention in the State's lowest-achieving schools; (4) authorized LEAs to adopt alternative salary schedules; (5) appropriated funds to TDOE to support its pre-kindergarten through higher education (P-20) longitudinal data system; and (6) aligned funding policies for a statewide plan for higher education established through the Complete College Act of 2010.

Tennessee's $500,741,220 Race to the Top grant provides additional support to advance the goals established by FTTT. Tennessee plans to narrow the academic achievement gap between student groups while raising overall student performance. In particular, Tennessee is committed to building State capacity to support LEAs and drive student performance gains through Race to the Top's four education reform areas.

State Years 1 and 2 summary

Tennessee received its Race to the Top grant in July 2010 as part of the first round of the competition. During Year 1, TDOE worked diligently to align its organizational structure with the FTTT goals and objectives; however, turnover in key leadership positions, including a change in the Governor and Commissioner of Education, in the middle of the first year of the grant, affected TDOE's project timelines and capacity to support LEAs' implementation of their Race to the Top plans. During Year 2, TDOE revamped its approach to project management to ensure meaningful oversight focused on measuring progress and impact of State initiatives including competitive grants to LEAs. The State also held annual partnership meetings with LEAs focused on data and problem solving and began transitioning its regional centers from a primarily compliance-oriented role to focus instead on collaborating to support local implementation of major reforms.

During Years 1 and 2, the State began to support LEAs in the transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS), starting with kindergarten through second grade (K-2) English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in Year 1 and expanding to grades 3-8 mathematics in Year 2. The State engaged LEA leaders and educators through the creation of the Common Core Leadership Council during Year 2 and together recruited and selected approximately 200 high-performing educators to serve as Core Coaches to train and support their peers in the transition to CCSS. Although TDOE made progress supporting the transition, it acknowledged that its training for K-2 teachers on the implementation of the CCSS was not sufficient and that the depth of its plan in all areas needed further refinement. As a result, it committed to providing more robust and higher quality training in Year 3.

The State also built capacity and piloted its Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) educator evaluation system in Year 1 before fully implementing the system statewide during Year 2. At the end of school year (SY) 2011-2012, based on feedback from educators and other stakeholders and analysis of the first year of implementation, the State began considering continuous improvements for Year 3. For example, the State identified the need to provide additional TEAM training and support for implementation of principal evaluations and information to assist educators on selecting their Academic Achievement Measures, which account for 15 percent of their total evaluation score.

In addition, the State made progress by beginning to establish the Achievement School District (ASD) in Years 1 and 2 to support the lowest five percent of schools in the State. In SY 2011-2012, TDOE co-managed five schools and continued to develop the ASD Central Office, human resource and finance systems, and school-level capacity to begin fully operating the ASD in SY 2012-2013.

While Tennessee accomplished a great deal in Years 1 and 2, it also found the need to make some mid-course corrections. To help collect, disseminate, and analyze student achievement data, the State worked to build strong data systems. However, addressing technical and data quality issues with the Early Warning Data System (EWDS) required a mid-course correction that committed the State to an ambitious timeline with limited time to pilot the system. The State also did not execute against its original plans to expand the instructional resources and professional development offerings available in its Electronic Learning Center (ELC) or establish a Leadership Action Tank with tools and shared resources for principals. Instead, based on implementation to date in other reform initiatives, the State worked to reevaluate and refine its implementation plan for each of these projects to ensure high-quality and strategic approaches to these initiatives during the second half of the grant period (see "Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments" and "Support for principals"). Finally, while the State met the targets for the first half of the grant for establishing and implementing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Hubs and Platform Schools to identify and disseminate high-quality STEM practices, it was a challenge for the State to identify mechanisms to measure the quality and impact of implementation of its STEM initiatives.

Executive Summary

State Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, Tennessee's State assessment results show continued growth across grades and subjects, with particularly notable progress exceeding the State's Race to the Top targets in grades 3-8 and high school mathematics. The State's National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results also evidenced significant gains. Further, the State made progress closing achievement gaps, particularly in the 167 schools identified as Focus Schools based on significant achievement gaps in SY 2011-2012. Focus Schools on average outperformed non-Focus Schools in the percentage gain in proficiency of economically disadvantaged students in all subjects and of the State's aggregated Black, Hispanic, Native American sub-groups in all subjects except Algebra I.[7] In addition, the State transitioned its regional Field Service Centers to provide content-specific supports to LEAs and schools as Centers of Regional Excellence (COREs). In Year 3, COREs provided content-based specialists and regionally-delivered training opportunities to support LEAs and school leaders in using data to improve instruction, transitioning to implementation of CCSS mathematics, refining implementation of TEAM, and addressing student achievement gaps in low-performing schools. The State also identified key practices to support CCSS implementation, educator evaluation, and student assignment that it believed could positively impact student outcomes, and offered an opportunity to LEAs to receive supplemental funds to support their Scopes of Work if they implement these activities.

Based on feedback from CORE offices, educators and other stakeholders, and data from implementation to date, the State assessed implementation plans in several reform areas to ensure continuous improvement and effective implementation and made adjustments. For example, the State refined the TEAM educator evaluation system to provide leaders with greater flexibility in scheduling observations and planned additional training on providing meaningful feedback to ensure educators receive actionable recommendations to improve their practice. Teacher survey data showed increased confidence among the educators, with perceptions around the evaluation system's usefulness in improving practice increasing from the first year of implementation. The State also found that 90 percent of schools that received targeted support from State coaches improved fidelity of implementation in Year 3. The State expanded its plan for support on the transition to CCSS through TNCore resources and professional development opportunities to prepare for full implementation in SY 2013-2014. More than 700 Core Coaches led the State's summer mathematics and ELA training, delivering direct support to more than 30,000 educators in summer 2013. The State also designed a Leadership Course to concentrate on the role of an instructional leader in transitioning to new standards and college- and career-ready assessments that was taken by more than 2,800 administrators.

In its first year operating with six schools, the ASD saw modest achievement gains but as a whole earned a '5,' the highest rating possible, on Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) as a result of student growth. The ASD also reported high levels of satisfaction among parents. The State also expanded the STEM Network and focused attention on clarifying the mission and performance measures of each STEM Hub to better inform conversations about sustainability.

Challenges

While most of Tennessee's initiatives progressed on track in Year 3, the State continued to experience delays with implementing improvements to its data system to provide LEAs with an EWDS and in making P-20 data publicly available. The additional challenges limit the time the State has to fulfill its commitment of making enhanced data systems available to LEAs and the public during the grant period. Additionally, student achievement results in some STEM Platform Schools were not as positive as the State anticipated, and the State is analyzing what school features, learning approaches, or other factors may be contributing to results.

Looking ahead to Year 4

Moving into Year 4 of its grant, Tennessee plans to build on its progress and continuously improve implementation of its key initiatives. The State will also continue to leverage regional CORE offices and their content specialists to support LEAs as they fully implement CCSS and continue to address achievement gaps. Further, the State is prioritizing delivery of training, resources, and other support to LEAs, school leaders, students, and stakeholders in institutions of higher education (IHEs) on the transition to the CCSS and college- and career-ready assessments. In its third year of implementation of TEAM, the State will continue to make refinements to the teacher evaluation system and bring additional focus to supporting principal evaluations. In winter 2013, the State expects to release its first school leader preparation program report that, like the previously released teacher preparation program report card, is expected to include data on program graduates' impact on student achievement. Throughout SY 2013-2014, the State will continue to support LEAs implementing alternative compensation models and look to identify lessons from early adopters as part of broadening support to additional LEAs to develop models suited to their local needs. The ASD is poised to scale up to include a total of 16 schools in SY 2013-2014 and expects to serve three times the number of students in SY 2013-2014 than in SY 2012-2013. Additionally, the ASD will continue to build toward sustainability of the district after the grant period. Based on three rounds of charter authorizations, the State reports that identified proven charter partners are expected to run 72 currently identified Priority Schools by 2020. In SY 2013-2014, the STEM Network will operate a total of 10 STEM Platform Schools throughout the State in association with six regional STEM Hubs partnered with businesses and IHEs to build capacity for STEM career pathways and high-quality instructional practices in schools and LEAs.

[7] In September 2012, the State established sub-group targets for its Race to the Top plan to align with its approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility request (ESEA flexibility request), which includes targets for an aggregated sub-group of racial/ethnic sub-groups historically performing below the State average.

State Success Factors

Building State capacity to support LEAs

The FTTT Oversight Team handles performance management of each Race to the Top project through monthly check-ins with all project managers to track and rate projects' progress, highlight areas of need, and make connections across work stream investments. In Year 3, the FTTT Oversight Team also facilitated monthly Project Management Oversight Committee meetings with a broader group of TDOE agency staff and other implementation partners to build awareness across projects in its plan. The revised project management processes the State implemented in Year 2 to focus on the frequency and method of measuring data to assess the progress and quality of each project continued in Year 3. TDOE also established an internal research office to enable rapid response data analysis based on progress of project-specific metrics and to evaluate key reform initiatives in the longer term in collaboration with some of the efforts underway with Tennessee's Consortium on Research, Evaluation, and Development (TN CRED).

Tennessee's approach to performance management was profiled for a series to be published by the RSN. The series will focus on how States can establish a direction and a theory of action on how to achieve the vision. In addition, the series will provide specifics about the kind of progress the State educational agency (SEA) should make day-to-day and week-to-week, types of data to collect to measure success, and how to employ measures of accountability to ensure that the State achieves goals and students achieve at high levels.[8]

Support and accountability for LEAs

During Year 3, TDOE implemented its CORE office strategy for re-envisioning regional centers, previously known as Field Service Centers, as content focused rather than compliance-driven entities to support LEAs. Restructured and repurposed, the nine regional offices are now led by eight CORE directors. CORE offices build off of the partnership meetings implemented by TDOE in Years 1 and 2. The partnership meetings were aimed at establishing relationships between State staff and LEAs focused on data and collaborative problem solving. In Year 3, CORE staff supported LEAs in refining their Race to the Top Scopes of Work based on progress toward four-year goals and in aligning resources and strategies included in Scopes of Work to other local strategic and improvement plans. Based on feedback from LEAs that district-wide meetings were not the best way to help educators to better understand how to integrate the use of value-added and formative assessment data into day-to-day instruction, the State adjusted its contract with Battelle for Kids to prioritize hiring field-based data analysts and mathematics coordinators to work out of CORE offices (see "Using data to improve instruction"). During SY 2012- 2013, these staff provided deeper, embedded support based on local requests and needs identified by CORE directors. CORE offices also deployed TEAM consultants and interventionists to provide support for schools and LEAs in need of mid-course corrections based on educator evaluation and student achievement results from SY 2011- 2012.

At the end of Year 1, the State adjusted its timeline for the annual review and approval of LEA Scopes of Work to allow for the analysis of student achievement data. Additionally, based in part on feedback from the FTTT Advisory Council to orient LEA Scopes of Work on projects that impact student achievement, the State revised its Year 3 submission process to include more detail on planned activities, as well as a peer review process to foster a better understanding of what constitutes a strong plan and to encourage connections among LEAs with shared goals. The FTTT Oversight Team collaborated with CORE offices to conduct the Year 4 LEA Scope of Work approval process in summer 2013 and differentiated the level of review based on each LEA's progress toward meeting student achievement goals. As part of its Year 4 Scope of Work review and approval process, the State also began implementing its approved process to review requests from participating LEAs to extend the project period to June 30, 2015 to complete Race to the Top activities on a case-by-case basis.

Scope of Work Supplemental Fund targets activities to make a local impact on student outcomes

Informed by research and implementation to date, the State developed a specific set of reform activities related to implementation of teacher evaluation, CCSS, and student assignment that it believed could have an immediate impact on student outcomes. For example, options for teacher evaluation include implementing student surveys, conducting co-observations, and using observers from outside the school to observe teachers with the lowest evaluations in the prior year. The State aimed to offer options in each category that take into consideration both the variability in LEA size across the State and the practices that could have the highest leverage on quality of implementation. During Year 4, the State plans to gather data on the impact of these activities on LEAs in collaboration with the newly established TDOE research office. The results from educator evaluation activities, including co-observation and student survey pilots, are expected to inform potential revisions for TEAM for SY 2014-2015.

For more information, please see: https://news.tn.gov/sites/default/files/Supplemental%20Fund%20Overview%20and%20Participants.pdf and http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/resources.html.

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[8] These publications, *Performance Management: Establishing a Clear Destination, Describing a Clear Path, Performance Management: Achieving Results Through Accountability; Performance Management: Putting Resources in the Right Places, and Performance Management: Achieving Results through Accountability*, will be available in winter 2014 at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/resources.html#capacity-building.

Prior to the Year 4 Scope of Work submission process, in late spring 2013, the State announced an opportunity for LEAs to receive supplemental Race to the Top funding, the "Scope of Work Supplemental Fund." Informed by research and implementation to date, the State developed a specific set of reform activities related to implementation of teacher evaluation, CCSS, and student assignment that it believed could have timely impact on student outcomes. Based on local memorandums of understanding submitted to TDOE in summer 2013, the State reported that 82 LEAs committed to implement one activity each for teacher evaluation and CCSS in SY 2013-2014 and will receive a proportional share of the $8 million budgeted for this project. For student assignment, LEAs will plan in SY 2013-2014 to implement activities such as assigning highly effective teachers to more students in SY 2014-2015.
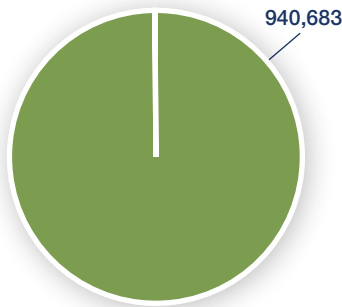
LEA participation

In Year 3, Tennessee reported that 140 LEAs participated in Race to the Top.[9] As part of its Race to the Top grant, Tennessee created the ASD, which was fully established in SY 2012-2013. The ASD did not exist as an LEA at the time Tennessee began its grant and is, therefore, not considered a participating LEA, although its schools, teachers, principals, and students are included in the State's reported data.

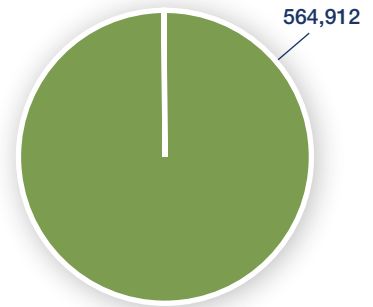LEAs participating in Tennessee's Race to the Top plan

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140
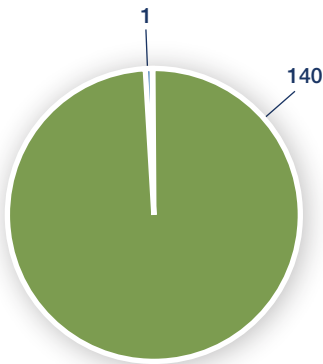
Participating LEAs (#)

Other LEAs

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

940,683

K-12 students (#) in participating LEAs

K-12 students (#) in other LEAs

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

564,912

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.

9   This number includes 136 LEAs, and 4 State special schools: Alvin C. York, Tennessee School for the Deaf, Tennessee School for the Blind, and West Tennessee School for the Deaf.

Stakeholder engagement

The FTTT Advisory Council continued to meet in Year 3 to provide input on key initiatives and approaches to challenges during implementation. The State also engaged district leaders and educators to provide initiative-specific implementation guidance through groups, including the Common Core Leadership Council, subject-specific ELA and mathematics Common Core Leadership councils, and the STEM Advisory Council. The State continued to share resources and updates through weekly Commissioner's updates, as well as newsletters from TEAM and TNCore regarding the educator evaluation system and CCSS implementation, respectively.

As part of its plan, TDOE contracted with TN CRED to evaluate and examine Tennessee's reform initiatives. To date, TN CRED's work has focused most extensively in studying the State's teacher and principal evaluation systems. In SY 2012-2013, as in the first year of implementation and during the pilot, TN CRED conducted surveys and focus groups with educators to assess the implementation of the evaluation systems, and to inform the State of LEAs' progress and to identify areas in need of adjustment (see "Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance"). In Year 3, TN CRED's evaluation of other initiatives was also underway. TN CRED shared its first alternative compensation report, including individual program summaries, at a convening for grantees in January 2013. During Year 3, TN CRED also continued data collection for reports documenting the start-up of the ASD and STEM investments, as well as studies of professional development and workforce trends including mobility and pathways to teaching and leadership.

Through the RSN, Tennessee provided a resource to the Race to the Top community by sharing its communications strategies and tools to help other SEAs map out their strategies, plans, and efforts. The State contributed to two publications regarding its social media use to reach stakeholders: *Building Enduring Race to the Top Education Reforms: Using Social Media to Engage With* and *Communicate to Key Stakeholders and Measurable Success, Growing Adoption, Vast Potential: Social Media Use Among State and Local Education Agencies.*[10]

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Throughout Year 3, the State made progress hiring content-specific staff and building relationships to implement the vision set forth in Year 2 for CORE offices to help LEAs improve student achievement outcomes through targeted, differentiated support.

The State continued its partnership with TN CRED but also established a research entity within TDOE to allow for more real-time analysis and to consider broad initiative impact analyses to inform sustainability planning. The State utilized these structures, as well as project-specific engagement with advisory councils and communication channels, to continuously assess progress in the field and provide regular updates, resources, and opportunities for engagement. At the end of Year 3, the State also launched a Classroom Chronicles blog to share more information on how implementation of reforms, such as the CCSS, is making an impact for teachers and students at the classroom level.[11]

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[10] These publications are available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/stakeholder-communications-engagement-webinars.html.
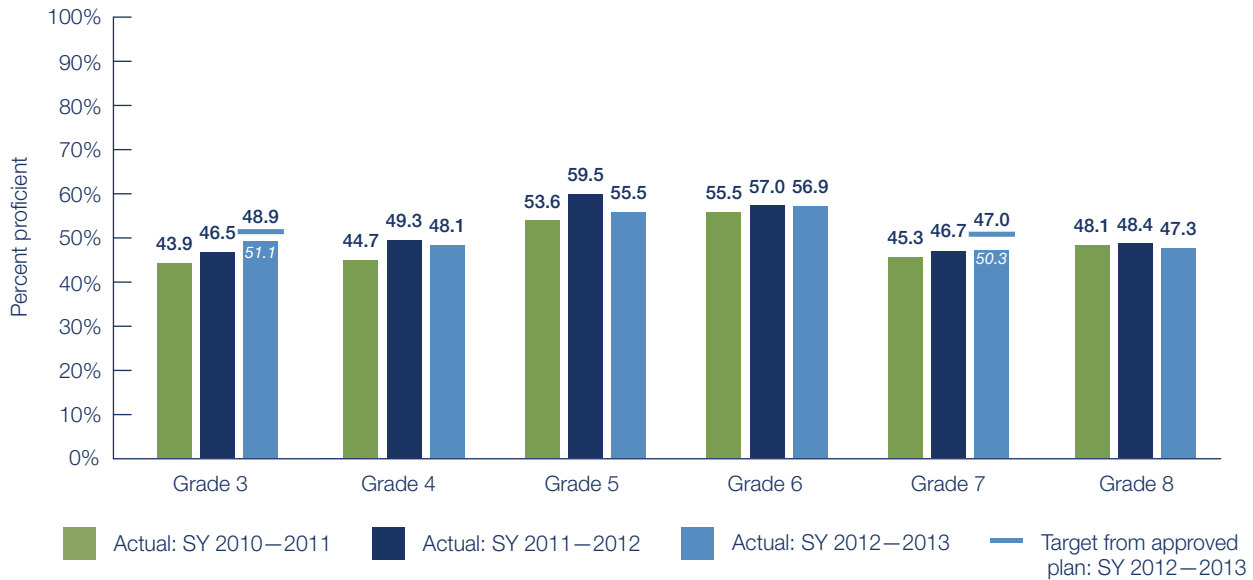
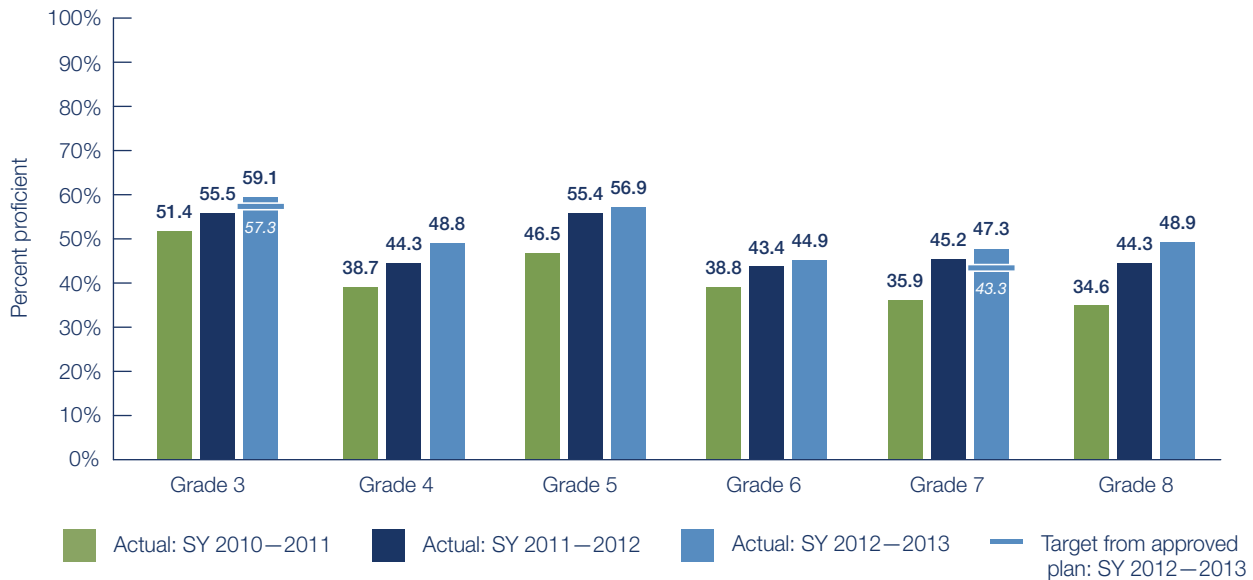[11] See http://tnclassroomchronicles.org.

Student outcomes data

Results from Tennessee's SY 2012-2013 State assessment show continued growth across all grades for mathematics and remained relatively the same overall for ELA.

Student proficiency on Tennessee's ELA assessment

Bar chart — Percent proficient by grade:

Grade	Actual: SY 2010–2011	Actual: SY 2011–2012	Actual: SY 2012–2013	Target from approved plan: SY 2012–2013
Grade 3	43.9	46.5	48.9	51.1
Grade 4	44.7	49.3	48.1	
Grade 5	53.6	59.5	55.5	
Grade 6	55.5	57.0	56.9	
Grade 7	45.3	46.7	47.0	50.3
Grade 8	48.1	48.4	47.3	

Student proficiency on Tennessee's mathematics assessment

Bar chart — Percent proficient by grade:

Grade	Actual: SY 2010–2011	Actual: SY 2011–2012	Actual: SY 2012–2013	Target from approved plan: SY 2012–2013
Grade 3	51.4	55.5	59.1	57.3
Grade 4	38.7	44.3	48.8	
Grade 5	46.5	55.4	56.9	
Grade 6	38.8	43.4	44.9	
Grade 7	35.9	45.2	47.3	43.3
Grade 8	34.6	44.3	48.9	

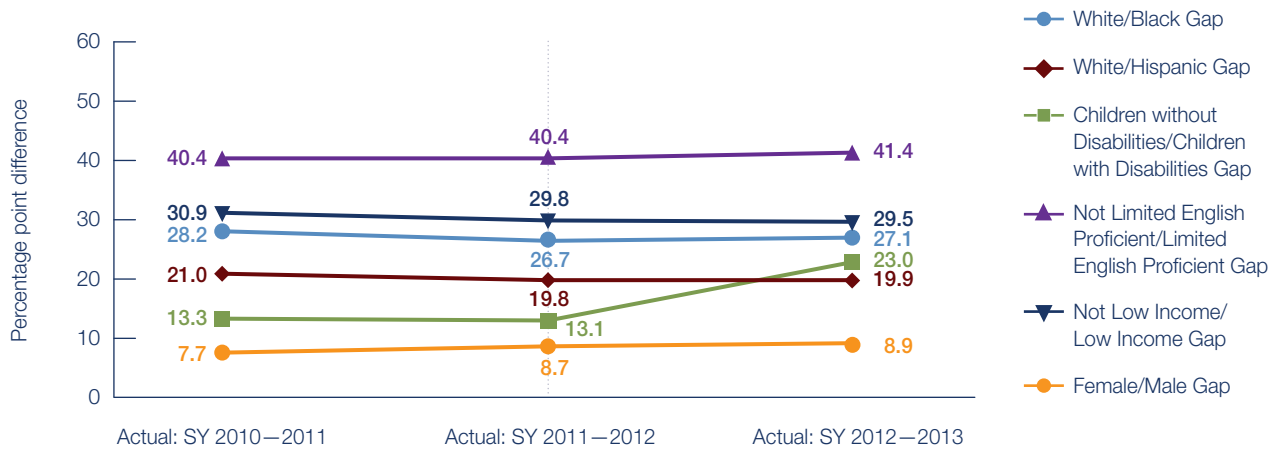Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: November 22, 2013.

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

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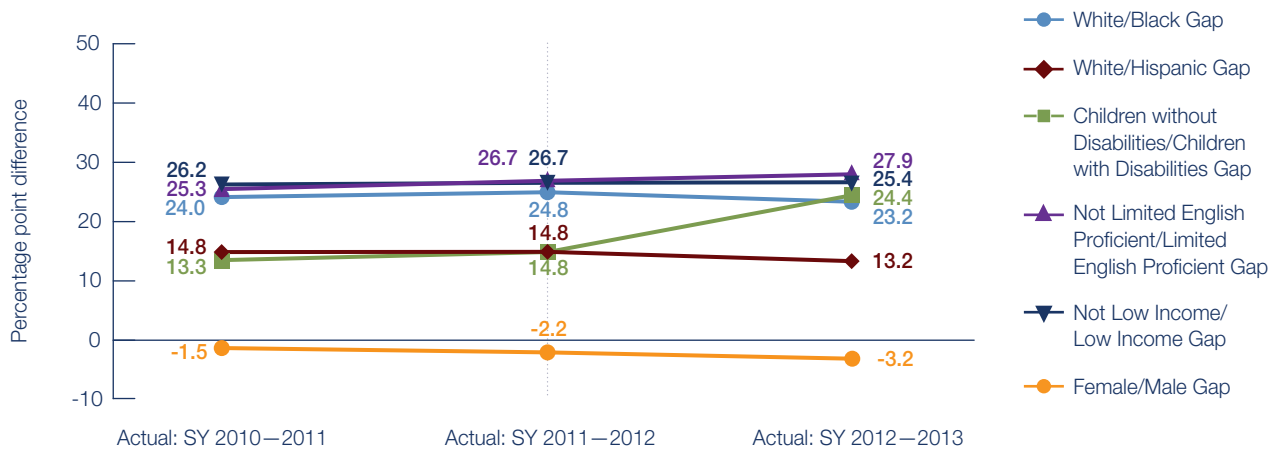
State Success Factors

Results from Tennessee's SY 2012-2013 State assessment show achievement gaps between children with disabilities and children without disabilities increased in SY 2012-2013 as compared to SY 2011-2012 in mathematics and ELA. For most other sub-groups in mathematics achievement gaps decreased slightly and in ELA most other achievement gaps remained the same.

Achievement gap on Tennessee's ELA assessment

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

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

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2011—2012	Actual: SY 2012—2013
Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap	40.4	40.4	41.4
Not Low Income/Low Income Gap	30.9	29.8	29.5
White/Black Gap	28.2	26.7	27.1
White/Hispanic Gap	21.0	19.8	19.9
Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap	13.3	13.1	23.0
Female/Male Gap	7.7	8.7	8.9

Achievement gap on Tennessee's mathematics assessment

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

Y-axis: Percentage point difference (-10–50)

	Actual: SY 2010—2011	Actual: SY 2011—2012	Actual: SY 2012—2013
Not Low Income/Low Income Gap	26.2	26.7	27.9
Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap	25.3	26.7	25.4
White/Black Gap	24.0	24.8	24.4
Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap	13.3	14.8	23.2
White/Hispanic Gap	14.8	14.8	13.2
Female/Male Gap	-1.5	-2.2	-3.2

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

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

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

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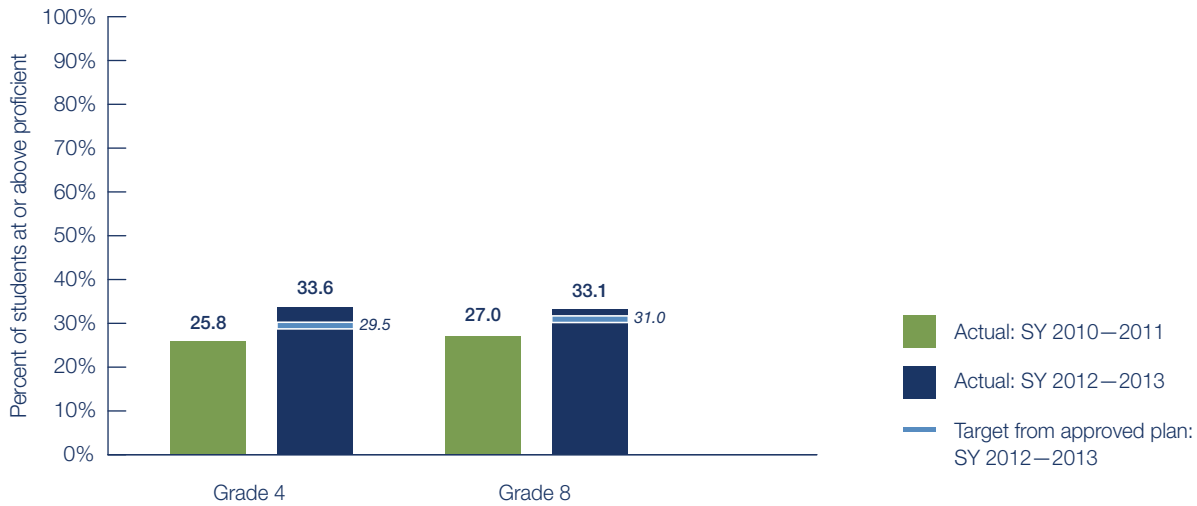
NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

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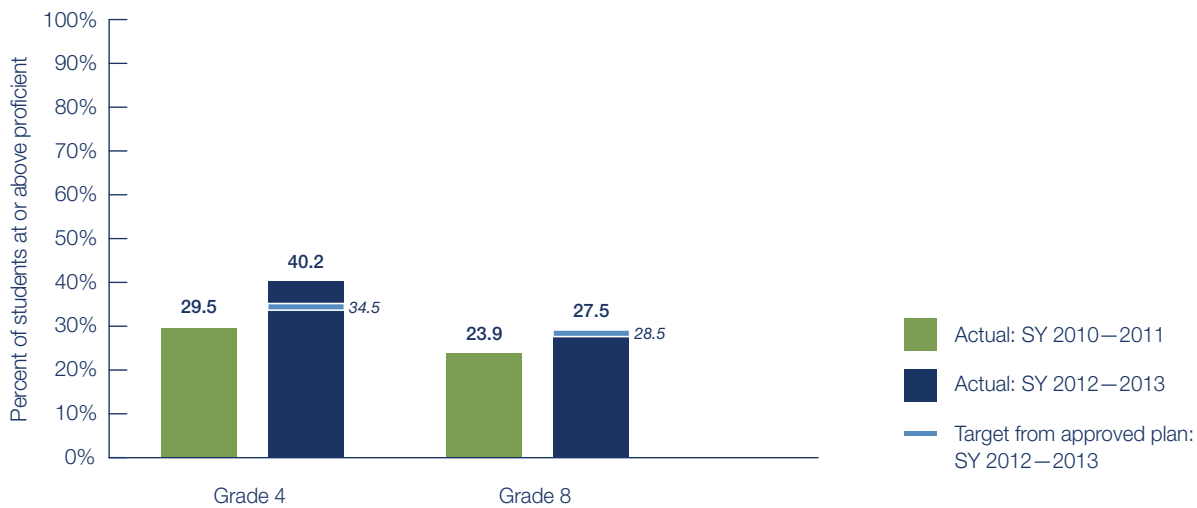
State Success Factors

Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments illustrate significant growth in Tennessee's reading and mathematics results for grades four and eight as compared to 2011 NAEP results.

Student proficiency, NAEP reading

Percent of students at or above proficient
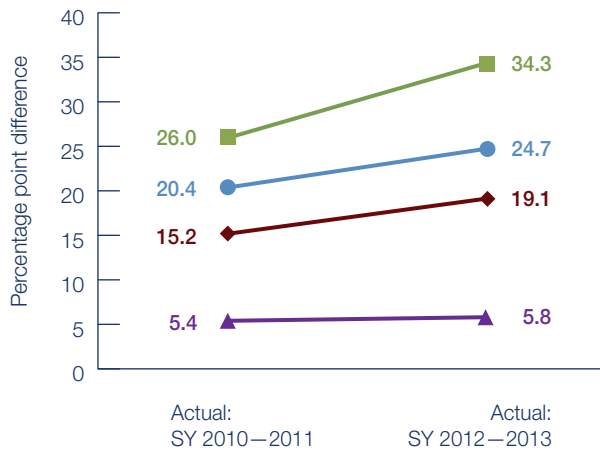
	Grade 4	Grade 8
Actual: SY 2010—2011	25.8	27.0
Actual: SY 2012—2013	33.6	33.1
Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013	29.5	31.0

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011 (green)
- Actual: SY 2012—2013 (dark blue)
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013 (line)

Student proficiency, NAEP mathematics

Percent of students at or above proficient

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Actual: SY 2010—2011	29.5	23.9
Actual: SY 2012—2013	40.2	27.5
Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013	34.5	28.5

Legend:
- Actual: SY 2010—2011 (green)
- Actual: SY 2012—2013 (dark blue)
- Target from approved plan: SY 2012—2013 (line)

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/.

Tennessee's approved Race to the Top plan included targets for NAEP results based on percentages, not based on students' average scale scores.
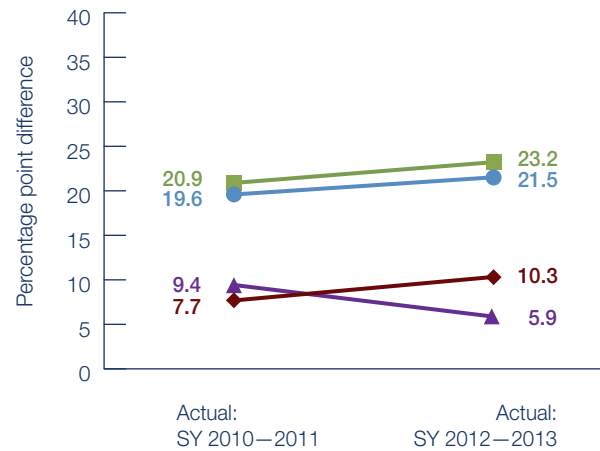
State Success Factors

Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments as compared to 2011 illustrate that achievement gaps increased for all sub-groups in grade four reading and for all sub-groups, except gender, in grade eight reading. Results from the 2013 NAEP assessments illustrate that achievement gaps increased for all sub-groups in grade four mathematics except gender as compared to 2011, whereas, results for Tennessee's grade eight mathematics achievement gaps were mixed.
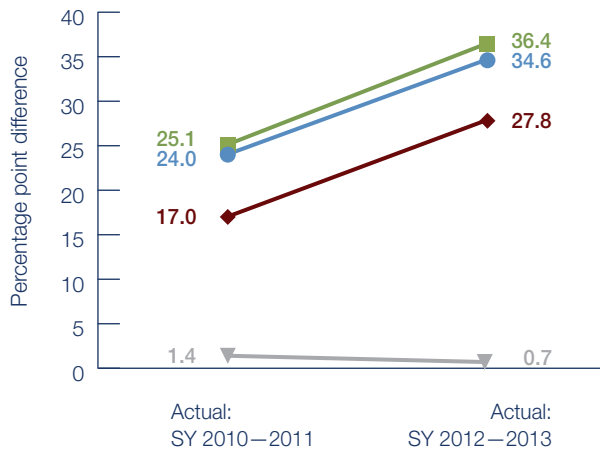
Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/National School Lunch Program Eligible: 26.0 → 34.3
White/Black Gap: 20.4 → 24.7
White/Hispanic Gap: 15.2 → 19.1
Female/Male Gap: 5.4 → 5.8

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

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP reading

Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/National School Lunch Program Eligible: 20.9 → 23.2
White/Black Gap: 19.6 → 21.5
White/Hispanic Gap: 7.7 → 10.3
Female/Male Gap: 9.4 → 5.9

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

Grade 4 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/National School Lunch Program Eligible: 25.1 → 36.4
White/Black Gap: 24.0 → 34.6
White/Hispanic Gap: 17.0 → 27.8
Male/Female Gap: 1.4 → 0.7

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

Grade 8 achievement gap on NAEP mathematics

Not National School Lunch Program Eligible/National School Lunch Program Eligible: 22.9 → 27.3
White/Black Gap: 19.2 → 22.9
White/Hispanic Gap: 12.8 → 11.4
Male/Female Gap: 4.5 → 1.3

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. Tennessee's NAEP reading and mathematics results are provided by the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To learn more about the NAEP data, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap in a school year between two sub-groups on the NAEP reading and NAEP mathematics.
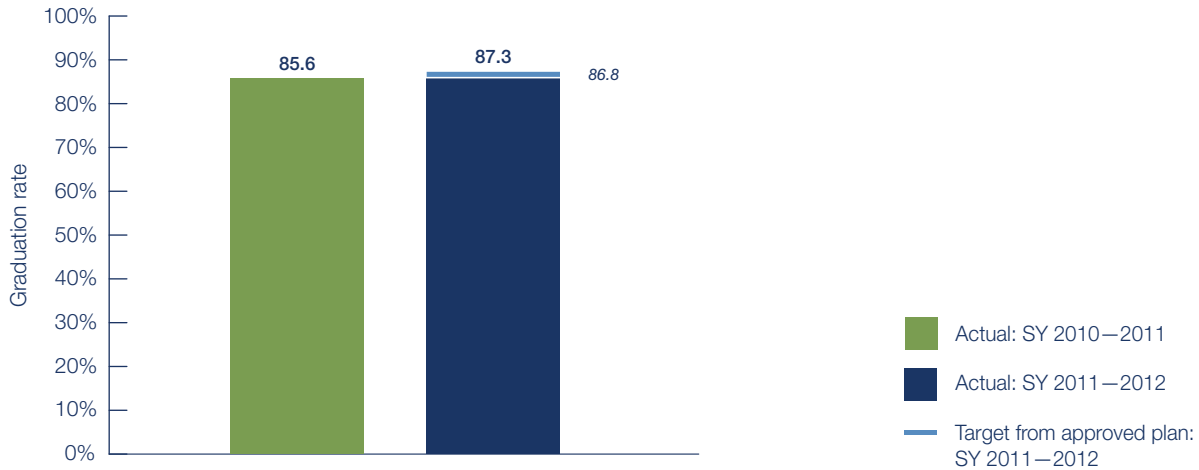
Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

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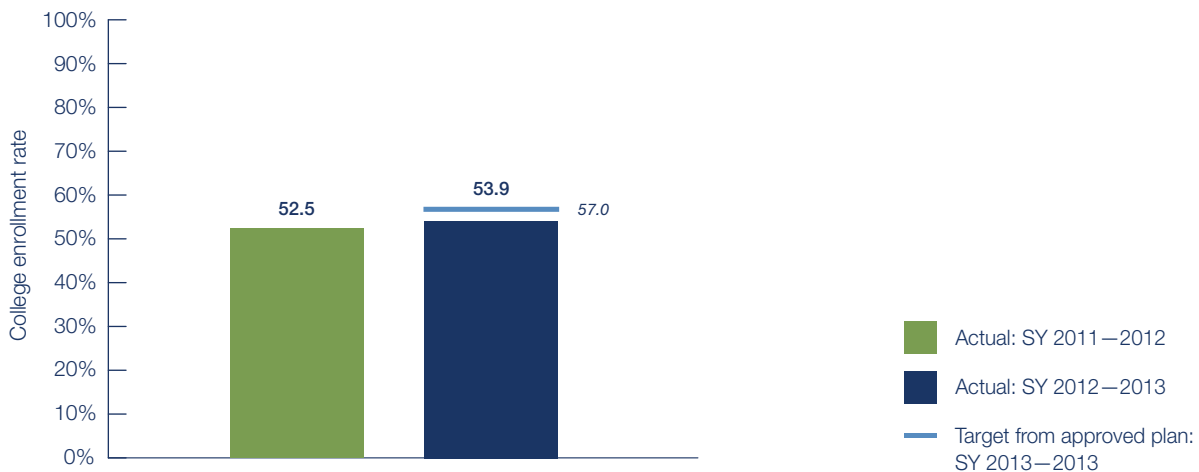
State Success Factors

Tennessee's high school graduation rates increased from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2011-2012 and exceeded the State's target. Tennessee's college enrollment rates increased slightly from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013.

High school graduation rate

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

Bar values: 85.6, 87.3, target 86.8

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—2013

Bar values: 52.5, 53.9, target 57.0

Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: October 29, 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

In Year 3, Tennessee continued its transition to CCSS and participation as a governing member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment consortium. During Year 3, Tennessee fully implemented the CCSS in K-2, expanded implementation of grades 3-8 mathematics, and piloted ELA implementation in various grades and subjects in 60 LEAs. TDOE and its LEAs will continue to work collaboratively to fully implement the new standards in all grades and subjects by SY 2013-2014 and new assessments by SY 2014-2015.

In Year 2, Tennessee established a Common Core Leadership Council, a working team of 13 district leaders from across the State, to guide the development of the training and roll-out plan for transitioning to CCSS. In Year 3, the Common Core Leadership Council continued to contribute to the State's engagement and support strategy, including the design of summer 2013 statewide training, recruitment and selection of Core Coaches, and conceptualization and execution of a Common Core Leadership Course for principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches on leading the transition in their schools. The State helped to ensure transparency and communication with all educators by publishing bi-weekly newsletters featuring updates from the Council, new instructional tools, and training opportunities, available at www.tncore.org.

The State expanded the Core Coach model started in Year 2 by selecting and training more than 700 teachers to serve as Core Coaches in Year 3. The expanded cadre of peer leaders received intensive training from the State and the Institute for Leaning (IFL) and led training in summer 2013. The summer 2013 large-scale training tripled participation from the previous year, with more than 30,000 educators participating in two- to four-day grade- and subject-specific workshops focusing on the expectations and instructional strategies needed to support CCSS implementation.

In Year 3, in collaboration with mathematics specialists and data coaches in each of the CORE offices, Core Coaches served as resources for supporting other schools and LEAs in their regions while maintaining their own classroom roles and responsibilities. In SY 2012-2013, the State also focused on increasing transparency around the CCSS instructional shifts and how CCSS content will be assessed. The State provided professional development on a prioritized set of standards at each grade level known as "focus standards" and made optional assessments available to LEAs that emphasized these critical skills. Core Coaches provided support in training educators to score informal, no-stakes writing assessments and mathematics constructed-response assessments (CRAs) locally. According to the

Tennessee's analysis of the impact of its CCSS mathematics professional development

Based on analysis conducted by the TDOE research office on Tennessee's 2012 mathematics CCSS training, the State found positive and significant effects of the training on participants' instructional practice and on their effectiveness at raising student test scores. The State reported that:

- The gains in educator evaluation observation scores for participants in the CCSS training were equivalent to gains made by the average teacher between the first and second year of teaching.

- The gains in instructional practice ratings within the educator evaluation rubric were largest for the practices emphasized in the CCSS mathematics training sessions, including skills such as questioning, providing academic feedback, and teaching problem-solving techniques.

- Participants who had a Core Coach working at their school made significantly greater increases in questioning practices compared to participants without this support.

Source: "The Impact of the 2012 TNCore Math Training on Teaching Practices and Effectiveness."

Available at: http://www.tn.gov/education/research/doc/impact_of_TNCore_Training.pdf.

State, these resources provided valuable opportunities for students to practice with questions aligned to CCSS and teachers to more deeply engage with the depth and content of the new standards and to build awareness where students may have skills or gaps.

Based on feedback from the Common Core Leadership Council and educators, as well as observations from the field, the State identified a need for more opportunities to provide ongoing training specific to the role of school and district leaders in the transition to CCSS. The State developed the content and launched the Common Core Leadership Course in each CORE region in spring 2013. School leaders selected as facilitators delivered training on topics including text complexity and text-based questioning, what to look for in rigorous mathematics tasks, and using collaborative teams to support the transition and implementation. Based on interest among the 2,800 administrators who participated, as well as those who did not participate in the initial course, the State plans to redeliver the Leadership 101 course and offer a second Leadership 202 course throughout the State in SY 2013- 2014.

To support Tennessee's educator preparation programs, the State contracted with the Ayers Institute, a Tennessee-based philanthropy group working in conjunction with Lipscomb University, to develop CCSS training and resources for teacher training programs throughout the State. In Year 3, the State developed and released five middle grades ELA and mathematics instructional videos highlighting CCSS in the classroom and provided teacher commentary on instructional practices, professional learning communities, and educator evaluation.[12] The videos are accompanied by facilitators' guides that include add itional resources and activities for teacher preparation program faculty to use with pre-service candidates to train them to enter the field with the pedagogy and teaching practices needed to immediately implement CCSS. To highlight these resources and provide an opportunity for faculty to discuss campus-specific implementation issues, TDOE partnered with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to hold two-day workshops for faculty from colleges of education and arts and sciences, as well as faculty from alternative preparation programs in Year 3. The State plans to develop additional modules and offer additional regional trainings in SY 2013-2014 to continue supporting program faculty to implement revisions to preparation program syllabi and curriculum to align with statewide CCSS in K-12.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State made major progress in the implementation of this reform area as evidenced by continued and deepened support to LEAs, school leaders, teachers, and students in the transition to CCSS.

With input from the Common Core Leadership Council, the State made additional tools and training available throughout SY 2012-2013 to provide opportunities for teachers and students to participate in authentic learning experiences to gain familiarity of the rigor and expectations of the instructional shifts and writing skills in the CCSS. The State also developed mechanisms to reach leaders responsible for managing local transitions to the CCSS through the development and implementation of regionally-delivered CCSS Leadership Courses. The State began developing and releasing online content modules, particularly focused on reading instruction, but will need to accelerate the pace to ensure the resources are disseminated to the field during the grant period (see "Support for teachers"). The State also used lessons learned from the first half of the grant period to scale up and utilize more than three times as many Core Coaches than in 2012 to deliver training to more than 30,000 educators in the State in summer 2013.

In response to lessons learned from K-2 and ELA pilots in Years 2 and 3 and student achievement results, the State plans to launch a year-long CCSS Reading Course in fall 2013. The seven-part course will be offered by grade level in each CORE region to build capacity in reading instruction across subject areas and is expected to reach approximately 8,000 teachers throughout SY 2013-2014. As the State transitions to full implementation across grades and subjects in SY 2013-2014 and prepares for implementation of common, college- and career-ready assessments in SY 2014-2015, the State will need to continue to utilize Core Coaches and CORE offices to support leaders and teachers and provide feedback on where instructional changes are taking hold in LEAs and classrooms.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

Fully implementing an SLDS

The State's plan includes enhancements to the accessibility and display of data currently contained in the SLDS through EWDS teacher dashboards and by connecting TDOE K-12 data with higher education and workforce data to provide a comprehensive P-20 data system.

After initial development and demonstrations with LEAs of an EWDS in Year 2, the State elected to delay statewide implementation of the EWDS to address technical issues and ensure quality data. Ultimately, the State also determined it was necessary to revise the broader system architecture to launch an EWDS that would add value to educators' day-to-day instruction. While the State planned to launch dashboards including data on attendance, behavior, course completion, and other indicators in a Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA)-compliant way in spring 2013, additional technical and

[12] See http://www.lipscomb.edu/ayers/invest.

contractual challenges set back this timeline. In Year 3, the State convened stakeholders and user groups to refine an off-the-shelf EWDS dashboard application for the State's unique needs. Additional engagement with LEAs exposed challenges with the connections between local and State data systems, and options for addressing these challenges were more costly and time-consuming than initially anticipated. While the State made refinements to the dashboard based on this feedback, educators will not have access to the dashboards until additional refinements to the system infrastructure are complete. The Department is currently reviewing a no-cost extension amendment request from the State to revise its approach in Years 4 and 5 to continue piloting and refining an EWDS, develop and implement training opportunities for LEAs, and launch an EWDS as part of a broader data system enhancement. Given that LEAs will be selecting new local student information systems before SY 2014- 2015, the State began to collaborate with LEAs and vendors in Year 3 to consider technical system specifications that will enable stronger integration to the enhanced State system once it is fully developed.

TDOE made progress on developing the infrastructure needed to link data among TDOE, THEC, and the Tennessee Department of Labor in P-20 dashboards. The University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) is managing the project and facilitating collaboration among the State agencies. The State conducted focus groups with K-12, IHE, and business leaders on the functionality and content of the P-20 system. While the State initially planned to release a public website in early 2013, the State experienced delays and, at the end of Year 3, decided to leverage the aggregate data compiled and share it in a de-identifiable manner through other channels, such as the State website devoted to the Governor's workforce readiness initiative, www.driveto55.org, and the State's LEA report cards. Data available as of fall 2013 includes trends in supply and demand for career paths statewide. Over time, the State expects to add interactive dashboards that connect workforce and wage records as well as college enrollment and course completion data to data on K-12 LEA records. The State also plans to make opportunities available to researchers to access the P-20 data sets for analysis and to integrate data from the Department of Children's Services and the Department of Human Services.

In Year 3, Chief Information Officers (CIO) in Race to the Top States continued a network to learn from each other and work together on collaborative projects. Tennessee contributed, along with its peers, to an inventory of work underway in Race to the Top States to share best practices and lessons learned around enhancing data systems to support instruction.

Using data to improve instruction

To build local capacity to provide data to LEAs alongside necessary support to analyze and apply data to improve instruction, TDOE partnered with Battelle for Kids and the SAS Institute. In Years 1 and 2, Battelle for Kids provided in-person regional workshops and online resources around using and understanding value-added

data and instructional practices. In Year 3, based on feedback from LEA leaders and teachers, the State shifted resources from large-scale trainings to embedded staff in regional offices. By September 2012, the State recruited and placed a total of 16 consultants in CORE offices to deliver ongoing, personalized support to LEAs in CCSS implementation and data analysis. In SY 2012-2013, these staff provided support to LEAs in areas including: building internal capacity around curriculum design aligned to CCSS; forming, implementing, and monitoring regional data collaborative teams; and providing best practice and sharing ideas among LEAs. Based on analyses conducted by the State, the 71 LEAs that received directed support from CORE offices throughout SY 2012-2013, on average, outpaced other LEAs in the State in the percentage of students scoring above proficient in grades 3-8 mathematics and Algebra 2.

The State also continued to make online resources available to educators on value-added data, formative instruction, and strategic compensation. For example, the SAS Institute enhanced its web portal to better enable educators to access and export LEA- and school-level data, as well as teacher value-added and student performance data and college readiness projections. TDOE developed short documents on understanding TVAAS data and profiles describing how educators utilize TVAAS data to make instructional decisions.[13] The SAS Institute also developed eight hours of TVAAS content for pre-service institutions. As of fall 2013, 200 professors and 650 pre-service students in Tennessee, as well as additional users beyond Tennessee, had module accounts – short of the State's SY 2012-2013 goal of implementing these modules for 2,000 pre-service teachers in the State.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

As evidenced by the positive feedback from LEAs and improvement in student achievement results, the integration of data specialists and mathematics coordinators to the CORE offices was a strong approach to rethinking resources to best support the capacity needs of LEAs.

The State is monitoring usage and continuing to solicit feedback from pre-service programs on implementation of the TVAAS modules. While feedback from users has been reported as positive, as the State continues conversations on potential revisions to pre-service program approach, it will be important for the State to consider how to more formally integrate the TVAAS modules into course structures.

The State successfully engaged educators and other stakeholders in the development of the P-20 and EWDS systems. The State appears poised to meet its commitment of making P-20 trends and data sets available to the public by leveraging other State initiatives. Given the additional challenges the State experienced in the development of the EWDS in Year 3, it is unclear whether there is sufficient time to make the enhanced P-12 data system available to LEAs and to train educators to utilize data to improve instruction in a meaningful way. The Department is currently reviewing a no-cost extension amendment request from the State to meet the commitments for this activity.

Great Teachers and Leaders

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

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals

During Year 3, Tennessee continued to implement several teacher and leader pathway programs funded through Race to the Top. The State also continued to expand its UTeach program and provided supports for and oversaw implementation of four LEAs receiving competitive pre-service and exemplary leadership residency grants.

The UTeach program is one of the largest teacher pathway programs in the State. It focuses on preparing secondary education teachers in STEM fields. Two of the new UTeach sites supported through Race to the Top graduated a total of 13 program completers in spring 2013. Retention rates between the two components of the program range from 30 to 50 percent across sites, and some sites have progressed more than others by drawing interest for initial enrollment and maintaining the size of enrollment classes across stages of the program. However, based on overall enrollment gains in Year 3 and additional time for students to complete requirements, the State estimates that the Race to the Top-funded expansion of the program will produce an additional 150 mathematics and science teachers by SY 2014-2015, exceeding the State's target of 100 teachers. Given that UTeach sites are expected to take on proportionally more funding responsibility over time to ensure the ongoing success of the program, the State staff also continued to monitor efforts to build endowments to sustain UTeach programs through visits with local funders and national partners. As more data on program completers is available, TDOE will track and analyze graduate performance data (*e.g.*, value-added and TEAM results) through teacher preparation program report cards.

The four LEAs awarded grants to implement teacher and leader residency programs completed their second full year of implementation during SY 2012-2013. The State used Race to the Top funds to provide four-year competitive grants to support two exemplary leadership awards in Metro Nashville Public Schools and Memphis City Schools and to expand two pre-service programs: the Memphis Teacher Residency program in partnership with Memphis City Schools and Hamilton County's TEACH/Here pre-service residency model.

TDOE continued its performance management and support of the four teacher residency grantees through quarterly check-ins and year-end performance reports to assess progress toward specific and measureable targets (*e.g.*, participant effectiveness, enrollment figures, program retention). The State reported that most sites met their enrollment targets and were generally successful in placing SY 2011-2012 program completers. Additionally, according to the State, some programs have made refinements to implementation based on data and feedback from the summer 2012 site visits conducted by TDOE staff. For example, the Memphis Executive Leadership project made adjustments to its mentor selection and assignment process based on TEAM results. Additionally, the State convened all grantees in spring 2013 to share best practices on recruitment and selection, placement, support (*e.g.*, coaching, mentoring), continuous improvement processes, and financial management including sustainability.

The State also provided educators with pre-service supports through its Teach Tennessee Commissioner's Fellows program. To date, through additional support with Race to the Top funds, the State recruited and trained 96 new fellows to teach in high-need subject areas. The State faced challenges with recruitment and placement of program completers of this alternative route program and is currently behind in its goal of funding 140 Commissioner's Fellows during the four-year grant period.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

In SY 2012-2013, the State completed its second full year of implementation of its teacher and principal evaluation system in all LEAs. In Year 3, as part of its continuous improvement strategy, the State implemented revisions to TEAM based on feedback received in SY 2011-2012. TDOE worked with the State Board of Education to adjust the requirements in the observation schedule to better enable principals to differentiate schedules based on teachers' prior performance. In addition to implementing these revisions, the State continued mechanisms developed in Year 2 to provide real-time responses to LEA questions, feedback loops to inform ongoing improvement, and data review processes to analyze trends in the field and areas in need of additional training or support.

Based on survey data, teachers' perceptions of the State's evaluation system improved between the first and second years of implementation. Based on the statewide sample of teachers included in TN CRED's

annual FTTT survey, 81 percent of teachers surveyed indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the teacher evaluation process used at their school in SY 2012- 2013, as compared to only 68 percent in SY 2011-2012. Additionally, whereas one-third of teachers believed that the processes used to conduct their evaluations were fair last year, more than two-thirds of teachers now feel that the process treats them fairly in this year's survey.

The State found that more teachers found value in the evaluation process for improving teaching and student outcomes at the end of

SY 2012-2013 than after the first year of implementation. According to the TN CRED survey, nearly half of teachers in 2013 perceived feedback from teacher observations to be more focused on helping them improve their practice than on judging their performance compared with one-third of teachers last year. This is significant because TN CRED also found that teachers who perceive the feedback to be more focused on helping them to improve practice were nearly three times as likely as teachers who perceive judging their performance to be the primary focus of evaluation to find higher value in the system's ability to help them improve as professionals.

Teacher perception of Tennessee's evaluation system over time
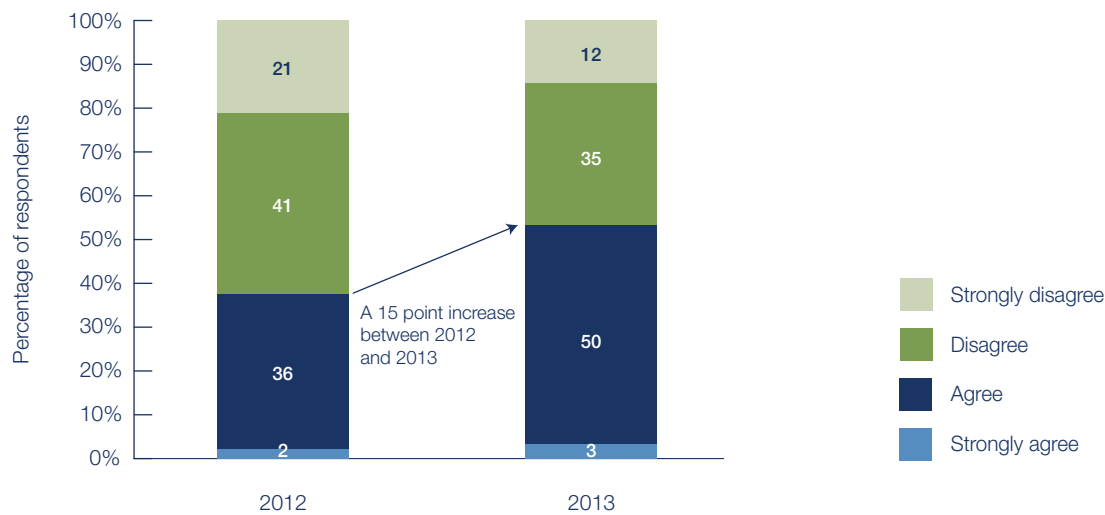
The State reported that more teachers found value in the evaluation process for improving teaching and student outcomes in the second year of full implementation than in the first year. Nearly 15 percent more teachers surveyed at the end of SY 2012-2013 as compared to teachers surveyed at the end of the first year of full TEAM implementation believed that the evaluation process would improve their teaching and improve student achievement. Furthermore, teacher perceptions of the value of the evaluation process were not dependent on their own final ratings. Teachers rated as highly effective were equally likely as those with lower overall ratings to believe that the process could improve teaching and student achievement.

Source: "Educator Evaluation in Tennessee: Initial Findings." Tennessee Consortium on Research Evaluation and Development via "Classroom Chronicles."

Available at: http://www.tnconsortium.org/projects-publications/first-to-top-survey/first-to-the-top-survey-present-publications/index.aspx.

In 2012, after the first full year of TEAM implementation, the rates of evaluators who reported that they felt adequately prepared to conduct various aspects of teacher evaluation ranged between 70 and 85 percent, depending on the particular task. By 2013, more than 90 percent of evaluators in TEAM districts felt adequately prepared for each aspect of teacher evaluation. While there has been significant improvement, the State acknowledges a continued need for support. The survey on SY 2012-2013 implementation also reinforced the

demand for additional focus on feedback from the evaluation process. Nearly half of teachers surveyed in 2013 reported not receiving follow-up on the area identified in their observation as most in need of improvement. In response to this identified need for feedback, the State included co-observations as one of the specific reform activities related to teacher evaluation in its supplemental fund for LEAs (see "Support and Accountability for LEAs").
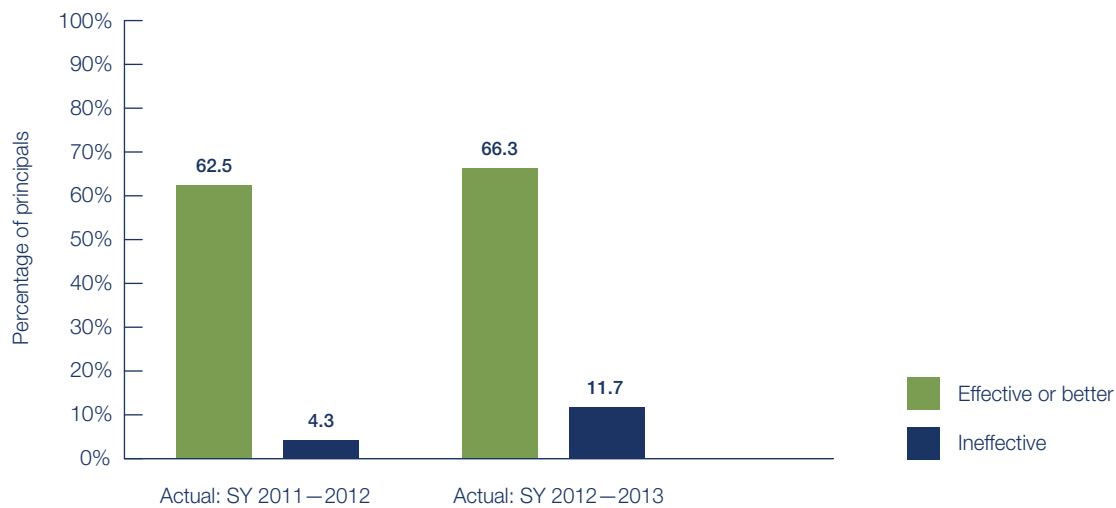
Great Teachers and Leaders

The State plans to continue to refine implementation based on areas identified through surveys and other feedback loops, such as better trained evaluators to deliver meaningful feedback. After two full years of implementation, the State's summer 2013 evaluator training represented a shift toward a more sustainable training model. The State increased the rigor of the process for evaluators to be re-certified and focused face-to-face sessions delivered in CORE regions on those that did not pass an online exam to re-certify, new evaluators, and schools identified based on unexpected patterns in their value-added and observation data from the prior year. The State also provided training to nine LEAs piloting a revised version of the principal evaluation rubric aligned to the new leadership standards.

Percentage of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better or ineffective in the prior academic year
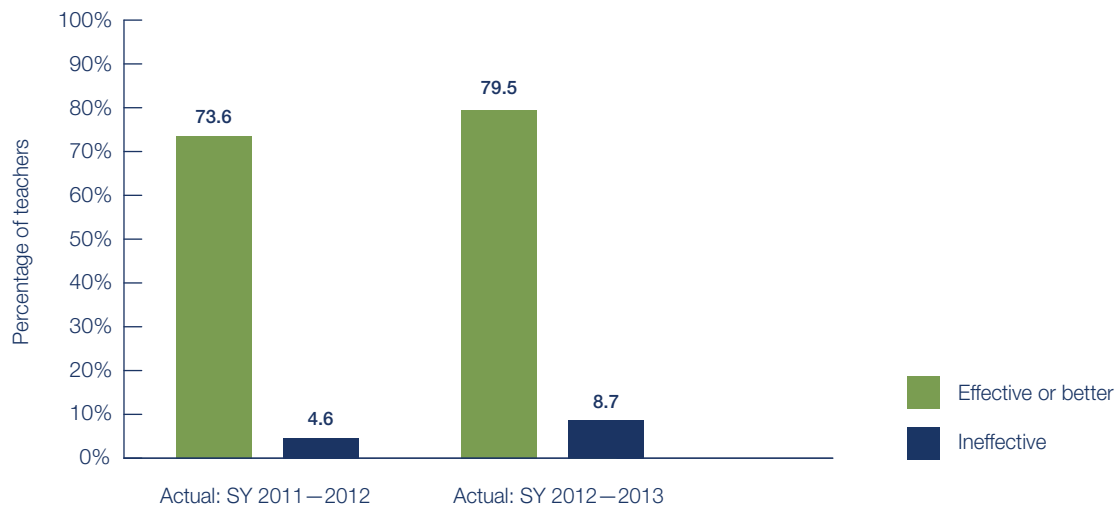
Percentage of principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better or ineffective in the prior academic year

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

Great Teachers and Leaders

In SY 2012-2013, the State also expanded the options available to provide individual growth scores for teachers who traditionally do not have value-added information available. Peer-review portfolios and Stanford 10 assessments piloted in Year 2 were approved as options for LEAs to use in Year 3 to calculate individual value-added scores for fine arts and grades one through three.

In Year 3, Tennessee continued participating in the RSN's Quality Evaluation Rollout Work Group, made up of Race to the Top grantees fully implementing their teacher evaluation systems. At a June 2013 Work Group meeting regarding continuous improvement based on SY 2012- 2013 implementation, the RSN asked Tennessee to share lessons learned on communicating with stakeholders about new teacher evaluation results. The June 2013 convening also focused on building SEA's capacity to continuously improve the accuracy of teacher and leader effectiveness ratings over time and to expand principal capacity to successfully implement teacher evaluation systems.

Alternative compensation models[13]

In SY 2012-2013, 13 LEAs implemented projects through funding from the third round of the Competitive Supplemental Fund (CSF), a competition for LEAs with the smallest Race to the Top allocations to propose one-year implementation plans to support strategic compensation plan development or implementation, job embedded professional development, or turning around Focus Schools. Additionally, through two Innovation Acceleration Fund (IAF) competitions, the State awarded multi-year grants to five grantee LEAs to design and implement alternative compensation systems that shift away from compensating educators for solely their years of experience and toward rewarding educators for raising student achievement.[14] After initial implementation in SY 2011-2012 of both a new educator evaluation system and alternative salary schedules, four grantees made payouts based on performance and analyzed results to continuously improve in Year 3. For example, after reconvening their planning and design committees to analyze results, some LEA next steps included improving data and financial systems to better automate payouts and building capacity to improve implementation of teacher observations, including delivering feedback. The State also took steps to gather and share lessons learned from the IAF grantees' planning, model development, and initial implementation to inform other LEAs in development of alternative compensation models including issuing the first TN CRED report on strategic compensation programs and holding a conference for IAF, CSF, and Teacher Incentive Fund grantees. Among the key considerations in TN CRED's initial report are the importance of engaging a variety of stakeholders through the development and maintenance of communication plans and building a fiscally sustainable compensation model as part of a broader improvement effort. Based on State policy passed in spring 2013 that will require all LEAs to submit and gain State approval of a differentiated pay plan by the beginning of SY 2014- 2015, the State identified a need for broadening supports to LEAs to implement alternative salary schedules in Year 4.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

In SY 2012-2013, the State exceeded its goal for the percentage of teachers who are highly effective in high-poverty, high-minority schools by 17 percent.

As part of its Race to the Top plan, Tennessee planned to expand a program used by one LEA to recruit professionals in technical fields to teach hard-to-staff high school content areas. After multiple delays and lack of progress with several approaches to address problems including challenges with recruiting candidates, the State cancelled the contract for this project.

Instead of the initial design, the State plans to continue to make progress in ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals through other initiatives within its plan. For example, given data from two years of fully implementing TEAM and launching an online jobs database, LEAs now have mechanisms and tools to make informed hiring and assignment decisions. To further support equitable distribution of highly effective teachers, in May 2013 the State announced a recruitment and retention program. Through federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, LEAs will be able to provide incentives for highly effective teachers to come to or stay in the State's lowest-performing schools. The State is also recruiting educators in Reward Schools identified for high proficiency and growth scores and training them to deliver support to schools and LEAs in their regions (See "Supporting low-performing schools"). Additionally, the State expects the expanded development of alternative compensation models to support its goals related to equitable distribution (see "Support and accountability for LEAs," "Providing effective support to teachers and principals," and "Supporting low-performing schools" for more detail).

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

In fall 2012 the State publicly released teacher preparation program report cards that included TVAAS effectiveness ratings of graduates based on SY 2011-2012 results and narratives explaining the data presented for all teacher preparation programs in Tennessee.[15] Based on recently passed legislation, the State is working with THEC and the SAS Institute, the vendor that calculates the value-added component of TEAM, to provide additional data to teacher preparation programs on their program completers, including an analysis of how program completers perform relative to other programs. TDOE and THEC also collaborated in Year 3 to prepare for the release of SY 2012-2013 teacher preparation program report cards in fall 2013. While the State expected to include data on program graduate's overall composite evaluation score in addition to the value-added score in the reports cards, it determined that additional time was needed to develop a methodology to enable comparisons across LEAs using TEAM

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[13] See http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/Repository/RE/Alternative%20Salary%20Schedules.pdf for more information.

[14] Metro Nashville Public Schools was funded through IAF for planning the design of its alternative compensation system.

[15] The Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-5-108 statutorily requires a report to measure the effectiveness of programs through retention and placement rates of teacher preparation program graduates, Praxis II pass rates, and teacher effectiveness on the basis of TVASS.

or other approved alternative observation models (*e.g.*, Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER), Project Coach, Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM)).

The State received input from stakeholders on the design of an expanded school leader study to capture information on program graduates in Year 2. In Year 3, the State addressed data reliability challenges (*i.e.*, identifying principals) and took additional steps to ensure alignment between the school leader study and the vision for school leadership, as articulated in the now approved revised leadership standards (see "Support for principals"). Currently, the State is still on track to meet its commitment to release a report including effectiveness of school leader preparation program graduates by the end of Year 4. TDOE indicated that it is considering revisions to program approval for institutions based on school leadership standards and educator licensure policy revisions passed in Year 3.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

In spring 2013, the State conducted its second Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Survey to gather information on providing effective supports to educators across the State. In comparison to a 77 percent response rate in Year 1, the State had an 82 percent response rate that included more than 61,000 educators statewide. As compared to the initial administration of the TELL Tennessee Survey in 2011, 13 percent more of educators surveyed agreed that they had access to State assessment data in time to improve instructional practice. Educators surveyed in 2013 were also more likely to agree that they had access to other resources, including local assessment data and professional development opportunities differentiated for their need, in time to improve instructional practice. Additionally, 86 percent of educators reported this year that have more time available to collaborate at the school level as compared to 80 percent in 2011.

Support for teachers

In addition to the Core Coaches, CORE specialists, and summer institutes, the State executed a contract with Nashville Public Television to develop customized learning objects (CLOs), short segments of educational programming posted online, to support CCSS implementation (see "Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments"). To ensure high-quality content, the State delayed its timeline to coordinate more closely with content experts in the development of the resources. As of September 2013, approximately 10 of the 100 total planned CLOs were fully developed and available to the field. The State expects to utilize these resources to continue to support the transition to CCSS and new assessments, including as a tool for the CCSS reading courses that it will deliver across the State in SY 2013-2014 to support literacy instruction.

The Strengthening Instruction in Tennessee Elementary Schools – Focus on Mathematics (SITES M) program extension completed its second year of mathematics professional development, serving a total of 155 teachers across 17 schools. Participating schools and teachers received support on mathematics instruction through summer training, bi-monthly professional learning communities, and observations from IHE faculty. Pre-service faculty also collaborated with participating middle and elementary schools to host mathematics challenges for students and to offer weekend professional development workshops for pre-service and in-service teachers focused on mathematics instructional strategies, including integrating technology as part of delivery. To analyze the impact of the program to inform sustainability plans, the State also began collecting qualitative and quantitative data on changes in teachers' knowledge and practices and student achievement outcomes through State assessment results, surveys and evaluations, interviews with participants, and observations.

Support for principals

During Year 2, the State refined its approach to improving and supporting school leadership. The State reexamined its State-level efforts to improve leadership pipelines and focused on transitioning from input- to outcomes-based determinations of leadership quality based on evolving leadership needs that arose during implementation of initiatives like TEAM and the CCSS. In addition to implementing Leadership Courses and providing continued support on TEAM implementation, the Tennessee State Board of Education adopted revised standards for school leaders, the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS), as well as a revised licensure structure that factors in performance that will become effective in August 2015.

In Year 3, the State expanded support to school leaders to recruit and select high-quality candidates with knowledge and skills aligned to TILS. The State established a "statewide talent marketplace," to enable LEAs to publicize positions to a broader audience and ultimately select high-quality candidates. As of July 2013, 63 LEAs were currently utilizing the system. The State also provided tools and resources to LEAs to support principals in the selection of assistant principals aligned to the skills and attributes included in the new TILS.

The State also made a competitive grant opportunity available for partnerships between LEAs or with LEAs and non-profits or IHEs to develop or replicate innovative programs to increase leader effectiveness and improve student outcomes. In May 2013, the State awarded eight LEA partnerships that will implement a variety of approaches to building the capacity of pre-service and current education programs, including university-based programs, a rural collaborative, and a multi-district partnership with top international principals.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

In Year 3, Tennessee made substantial progress in several Great Teachers and Leaders initiatives, including providing high-quality pathways and effective support to teachers and principals, and continuously improving its educator evaluation system. After delays in the Leadership Action Tank, the State also made progress in its revised approach to policy development and support for school leaders.

Great Teachers and Leaders

The State implemented teacher and leader pathway programs, including residency projects and UTeach with fidelity, demonstrated strong retention and placement rates, and implemented mechanisms for monitoring progress and challenges of each program and sharing best practices. During the remainder of the grant, TDOE will continue to address the challenge of collecting data to evaluate the impact of investments to inform sustaining, scaling, and continuously improving these approaches to the teacher and principal pipeline.

The State revised its approach to Teach Tennessee in Years 3 and 4 to consider recruitment, training, and support of the recent college graduate program participants, known as Commissioner's Fellows, and career-change participants known as Governor's Fellows who have been supported through State funds. The State believes that planning training for these participants together as well as conducting an analysis on the alternative route model overall will inform recommendations for the future of this alternative route program.

In addition to the LEAs receiving IAF, CSF, and TIF support, based on a State requirement for LEAs to have differentiated pay plans by the beginning of SY 2014-2015, the State identified a need to expand its technical assistance to LEAs. The State now plans to develop and implement training sessions for all LEAs, work more closely with approximately 30 LEAs during SY 2013-2014 to prepare alternative compensation systems, and establish a Teacher Leader Council. The State believes this additional technical assistance and engagement will allow the State to exceed both the goals as revised in a January 2012 amendment and its initial four-year target of 20 percent of LEAs using the qualifying evaluation system to inform compensation of teachers and principals.

Nine of the CSF grants awarded for SY 2012-2013 implementation focused on expanding job-embedded professional development projects to additional grade levels and content areas. As the State fully transitions to CCSS in SY 2013-2014, CSF grantees will offer examples of how small LEAs can build capacity to provide ongoing instructional support to teachers and principals.

The State made refinements in its second full year of TEAM implementation and saw improvement in teacher perceptions of the system and impact from the State's efforts to target support to schools based on their initial implementation results. While surveys found less concern about biased evaluations among teachers, there is still a need for additional improvement given that approximately half of the teachers in the State report a level of dissatisfaction with the system. The State will need to continue to engage educators in understanding the value of the evaluation system for improving teaching practice and student learning and ensuring that teachers receive targeted, high-quality support to follow up on need areas identified during observations.

The State initially planned to release a report on the impact of the Learning Centered Leadership Policy as a precursor to an expanded report on school leader preparation programs in Year 3. However, due to the adoption of TILS as discussed above, the State decided to focus on revisions to program approval aligned to the new leadership standards.

The State made progress implementing a competitive grant opportunity for innovative approaches leadership development and empowering LEAs to build strong networks of instructional leaders through access to an online job portal. The State refined its approach to a human capital data system and now plans to focus development in Year 4 on applications to support educator evaluation and licensure.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Race to the Top States are supporting LEAs' implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of four school intervention models.[16]

Achievement School District (ASD)

As authorized by FTTT, the ASD is a State-run LEA that provides a structure for turning around the State's lowest-achieving schools through direct oversight and partnerships with nationally recognized non-profit organizations. After amending its timeline and approach in Year 1 due to delays and new leadership and building capacity in Central Office and school-based teams in Year 2, the ASD opened and operated six schools in SY 2012-2013, and it prepared to continue scaling up the district's portfolio of low-achieving schools and charter management partners.

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

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

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

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

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

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

The ASD enrolled a total of 1,616 students in pre-kindergarten to eighth grade in SY 2012-2013. Three schools were managed by the State as achievement schools and three were managed in partnership with charter schools through a rigorous request for proposals and school matching process. Based on the initial year of implementation, the ASD made progress toward its goal of moving the bottom five percent of schools in the State to the top 25 percent in five years. According to parent, teacher, and student surveys, the ASD provided a positive learning climate. For example, more than 90 percent of parents in ASD achievement schools graded their schools an 'A' or 'B' at the end of the school year, and 75 percent of ASD students described their schools as positive places to learn. The ASD's SY 2012-2013 proficiency results varied across subjects. ASD student proficiency gains were consistent with the State's positive growth trend in mathematics and higher for science. The ASD lagged in reading performance, however, with the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced slightly declining between SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013. The ASD plans to continue to support educators in reading instruction, including through participation in the State's CCSS reading courses in SY 2012-2013 (see "Support for teachers").

Consistent with the ASD's plans to expand annually to a total of approximately 35 low-achieving schools representing 40 percent of the State's Priority Schools (lowest 5 percent of schools) by 2015, much of the State's work in Year 3 related to preparing for SY 2013-2014 and beyond. The ASD refined its pipeline strategy, including focused recruitment of local teachers rated as effective or better and staffing leadership positions from residents who served in ASD schools in the prior school year. The ASD also held community meetings and facilitated the matching process between Priority Schools identified as eligible for inclusion in the ASD and charter management organizations (CMOs) approved to run ASD schools. In addition to the six school operators matched with schools for SY 2013-2014, the State also ran a Request for Qualifications process in Year 3 to identify additional charter operators as the ASD grows. Based on review of evidence of prior success and interviews with stakeholders, including Memphis community leaders and national experts, the State selected nine additional charter operators. The winners included a combination of national and local operators and are expected to contribute to expanding the ASD's student enrollment to more than 6,000 students by 2015.

Supporting low-performing schools

In September 2012, TDOE revised its accountability structure to align with its approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility request (ESEA flexibility request), which determines performance based on a combination of achievement targets and gap closure targets.[17] In this new structure, additional school-level accountability and State supports were identified for Tennessee's lowest-achieving schools

categorized as Focus and Priority Schools.[18] Further, the State included funding to support its schools with the highest proficiency scores and rate of growth, categorized as Reward Schools.[19] In Year 3, the State implemented competitive grant programs and other supports to build the capacity and recognize the strengths of districts and schools identified as Priority, Focus, and Reward in its new accountability system.

To support the 10 percent of schools identified with the largest achievement gaps, sub-group performance below a five percent proficiency threshold, or high schools with graduation rates below 60 percent (a total of approximately 170 schools), the State ran a grant competition and provided contractual support to address the specific school-based gaps. In October 2012, the State awarded 56 Focus School grants based on plans for individualized student support, high-quality job-embedded professional development, performance management and sustainability, or another area with evidence of identified school need. The State also made Tennessee Academic Specialists (TAS) available to each non-grantee Focus School to address performance gaps in these schools, including coaching school leaders, observing and providing feedback to educators, conducting staff development, and visiting exemplar schools. The State reported that on SY 2012-2013 State assessments, the 167 schools identified as Focus Schools based on significant achievement gaps in SY 2011- 2012 outperformed non-Focus Schools in the percentage gain in proficiency of economically disadvantaged students in all subjects and of the State's Black, Hispanic, Native American sub-group in all subjects except Algebra I.

The State also supported establishing LEA-run Innovation Zones, where LEAs are granted additional flexibility to turn around their lowest-achieving schools, and awarded additional School Improvement Grants (SIG). In summer 2013, the State established a Turnaround Principal Cohort to support the 17 principals leading the most recently identified SIG Priority Schools. This network aims to support school leaders in the design and implementation of research-based turnaround approaches through professional development sessions, observations and feedback, and exposure to promising practices through school visits. To further support human capital in Priority Schools, in May 2013, the State also announced a Priority Schools recruitment and retention program that provides $7,000 or $5,000 bonuses, for new or returning highly effective teachers, respectively.

To recognize schools with the highest proficiency and growth scores (categorized as Reward Schools) and spread effective practices to Focus Schools, the State recruited and selected 18 Reward School Ambassadors. In SY 2012-2013, the ambassadors participated in professional development on instructional coaching and delivered regional training workshops to prepare for their second year. In SY 2013-2014, the Reward School Ambassadors will be fully dedicated to field-based support and will deliver training and other site-based support based on needs identified in each CORE office.

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

[18] Focus Schools are defined as the ten percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps, sub-group performance below a 5 percent proficiency threshold, or high schools with graduation rates less than 60 percent; and Priority Schools are defined as schools in the bottom 5 percent of overall performance across tested grades and subjects.

[19] Reward Schools are in the top 5 percent of overall performance and schools in the top 5 percent of fastest growth– a total of 10 percent of schools in all.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

The reorganization of the State's CORE offices created positions in each CORE office dedicated to supporting districts to address gaps in sub-group performance (see "Building state capacity to support LEAs"). The State also provided continuation grants for schools previously identified for Race to the Top grant support (based on their designations as Focus Schools or Renewal Schools in the State's prior accountability system) for those schools with demonstrated evidence of progress implementing targeted interventions or whole school reform.[20]

The State also partnered with the Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) to expand its postsecondary awareness programming and to provide grants to expand or create college access programs across the State. In Year 3, TCASN awarded a third round of grants to 12 LEAs to establish college summits. Based on a total of $1.6 million awarded since 2011 to expand, sustain, or start-up college access programs, the State expects to reach approximately 60,000 students and families.

The Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) aims to increase the number of high-quality charter seats available to students in Tennessee. As of spring 2013, the CSGF invested in three Nashville-based operators (LEAD Public Schools, Rocketship Education, and Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) Nashville) and two Memphis-based operators (Gestalt Community Schools and KIPP Memphis). Of these five investments, three of them are or will be running schools in the ASD portfolio by SY 2013-2014. Through Race to the Top, CSGF will establish four to six new CMOs and expand the number of charter schools in the State. CSGF appears on track to meet or exceed the goal of funding up to six qualified CMOs by the end of the Race to the Top grant period based on evidence provided on the number of executed planning contracts, contracts in process, and awarded charter incubator projects. The State's Charter School Fund project also includes investments in addition to the CSGF at KIPP Memphis and KIPP Nashville, both of which are on track to meet or exceed their goals for opening four new schools by SY 2013-2014.

As part of its work with the RSN, representatives from Tennessee's ASD presented its approach to recruiting and training turnaround leaders in a January 2013 during a webinar and call series on Leading Indicators of Turnaround Success: School-Level Indicators. Alongside staff from the Rhode Island Department of Education, ASD leaders shared how they have applied research on principles for selecting leading indicators and potential actions turnaround leaders can take in the first year that may enhance likelihood of success.

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

The State made progress on implementing several projects in this area during Year 3, including the major milestone of opening schools in the ASD after initial timeline delays and implementation of grant programs aligned to the State's new accountability system. The State made significant progress operating the ASD in SY 2012-2013

with promising growth on TVAAS and initial achievement gains. The State also prepared to continue expansion through SY 2014-2015. Continually assessing the quality of implementation across the portfolio based on student performance, classroom observations, and stakeholder feedback will be important as the number of students served through the district increases. Based on feedback from site-based staff, the ASD plans to offer more opportunities for collaboration between achievement schools and charter-managed schools in Year 4, including planning among principals and shared teacher professional development. In addition, the State must closely monitor the student growth and achievement of students in ASD schools, particularly in literacy, to inform continuous improvement as it works toward its ambitious proficiency goals in ASD schools. The State also saw success in identifying and targeting support to Focus Schools based on sub-group performance gaps through site-based consultants and funding to implement outcome-based improvement plans. The State will need to continue to oversee the impact of these targeted supports as well as the Reward School Ambassadors in Year 4.

Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN)

With support from Race to the Top, TCASN awarded a total of $1.6 million through 50 grants to LEAs, nonprofits, and IHEs across the State during Years 1-3 to expand or create college access programs in schools and communities that serve a population where at least 50 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch.

The State expects the grant projects to impact approximately 600,000 students and families in the State through a variety of approaches including hiring dedicated college counselors, conducting strategic planning for school districts, and helping students and families overcome barriers to college such as dual enrollment fees and application fees.

Some examples of the supported grants include:

- Cleveland State Community College and four rural counties conducted a pilot of the Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Supports (SAILS) program for pre-dual enrollment in mathematics. Of 199 students in the pilot, 135 completed the online course and 90 went on to additional modules that will allow them to take college-level courses during high school.

- The Oasis Resource Center at Nashville State Community College provided retention services and support to students who graduated from high-need high schools in Nashville. While more than 90 percent of the students served by the Oasis Resource Center require at least one remedial course, the Center's annual retention rate is 87 percent.

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[20] At the time of the submission of its Race to the Top application, the State defined Focus Schools as those schools in the first and second year of improvement status, and Renewal Schools as those in the third and fourth year of improvement status.

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

During the last three years, the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network established STEM Platform Schools and Regional STEM Innovation Hubs to promote and align STEM policies, practices, and partners across the State. STEM Platform Schools take unique approaches to offer elementary to high school students applied, in-depth STEM curricula while establishing models for other schools in the State to learn how to implement innovative STEM projects. The Regional STEM Innovation Hubs promote STEM communities based on local assets by sharing best practices, leveraging resources, and building relationships among business, IHEs, STEM Platform Schools, and other schools and stakeholders in their regions.

In Year 3, the State expanded STEM course offerings and student enrollment at the initial STEM Platform Schools in Nashville and Knoxville and began operating STEM Platform Schools in Chattanooga, Cookeville, and Kingsport. STEM Platform Schools had mixed results on the SY 2012-2013 State assessment and, overall, did not perform at the standard expected. The State plans to further analyze the results to target support and identify opportunities to replicate effective practices in SY 2013-2014.

The Regional STEM Innovation Hubs associated with the new Platform Schools – Southeast Tennessee STEM Innovation Hub, Upper Cumberland Rural STEM Initiative, and Eastern Tennessee State University Northeast STEM Innovation Hub – also became fully operational. Each of the five Regional STEM Innovation Hubs operating in SY 2012-2013 employed different strategies to build a presence and relationships among LEAs in the region. Strategies included hosting a STEM-Posium for community, business, and education partners; conducting individual LEA visits to determine assets and needs; engaging local businesses in fundraising efforts; launching marketing campaigns; and building the capacity of STEM educators through ongoing professional development and partnerships with local industries.

After additional technical assistance and collaboration, the State added to the Network by awarding a proposal from the western region. The West Tennessee STEM Collaboratory Hub launched in winter 2013 to bring together business, K-12, and IHE STEM resources in the Memphis community in anticipation of its associated STEM Platform School enrolling its first cohort of ninth graders in fall 2013.

To provide additional support to teachers of STEM subjects, the State held STEM Leadership Academies (Academies) in summer 2012 and 2013 in coordination with Oak Ridge Associated Universities and the Regional STEM Hubs. The Academies met the State's initial goal of building awareness of the Regional STEM Hubs and creating networking opportunities for STEM educators. However, the State made refinements to the recruitment of STEM Leadership Fellows for the 2013 Academy and the ongoing engagement plan, such as including more face-to-face engagements throughout the year, to better support STEM implementation at the school level.

The State also continued to implement STEM professional development grants to provide additional support to teachers of STEM subjects. More than 800 teachers (from early education to high school grades) received training in STEM content areas through grants awarded to IHEs to implement professional development with K-12 teachers during SYs 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The State is assessing quality of implementation through site visits as well as through the State's TN CRED evaluation.

TN CRED's analysis includes observations of teachers' classroom instruction, pre- and post-test results, as well as interviews and attitudinal surveys with teachers and students. Based on analysis of the data, by the end of Year 4, the State will determine what impact, if any, the various professional development projects had on teacher behavior and student achievement and apply those conclusions to inform potential replication through the Regional STEM Hubs or other statewide channels (*e.g.*, COREs).

Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

Tennessee expanded implementation of STEM Platform Schools and Regional STEM Hubs during Year 3 and, as of fall 2013, has a presence in the eastern, middle, and western regions of the State. While the State has met its target of establishing more than six STEM Platform Schools and associated Regional STEM Innovation Hubs, achievement across Platform Schools has been variable, as has the ability for Regional STEM Innovation Hubs to build local capacity around STEM. The State also has not implemented a virtual aspect in its approach to STEM initiatives as it included in its initial plan. The State's STEM Advisory Council continues to focus on analyzing the impact of various structures and supports provided through the Network to promote STEM education to determine how and what to scale and sustain after Year 4.

Looking Ahead to Year 4

Tennessee's significant progress in Year 3 leaves it poised to strengthen and continuously improve implementation of its Race to the Top plan. In Year 4, Tennessee plans to continue to offer LEAs regional, content-based support through CORE offices. In Year 4, the State plans to bring greater focus to purposeful deployment of resources based on identified needs in LEAs and on measuring the impact of CORE office support on LEA and student outcomes. In addition, more than half the LEAs in the State committed to implement specific reform activities that the State believes can have an immediate impact on student outcomes. The State will also continue to gather formative and summative data on implementation of major initiatives through TN CRED's research efforts.

In follow-up to the large-scale training in summer 2013, the State is expecting to offer new and expanded courses for K-12 educators on literacy instruction and interventions and for school leaders on their role in supporting the CCSS transition. Throughout Year 4 the State will also continue to offer to make content materials and resources, including model units by subject and grade band, online video modules, and opportunities for students and educators to practice the skills and expectations of the new college- and career-ready assessments to be implemented in SY 2014-2015. The State plans to launch 15 additional pre-service K-12 instructional curriculum videos and provide regional trainings to support faculty to prepare pre-service candidates to implement the CCSS.

As part of its commitment in its plan, the State will need to launch upgraded EWDS dashboards as part of an enhanced P-12 data system in Year 4. Additionally, the State plans to expand publicly available data that links K-12, IHE, and workforce data through www.driveto55.org and other State websites. Pre-service programs across the State will also integrate TVAAS and CCSS modules into pre-service curriculum. During Year 4, the State intends to release its first report with data on school leader preparation program graduates.

The State has consistently communicated that TEAM is a work in progress and that continuous improvement based on stakeholder feedback is a key characteristic of the TEAM model. In Year 4, TDOE will also pilot student surveys in the ASD and several other LEAs that selected them as an activity to receive supplemental Scope of Work funding. The State will continue to use feedback from teachers and administrators and analyze implementation of TEAM throughout the State to focus support to LEAs and schools where data suggests a lack of fidelity in implementation. The State will also bring additional focus to refining the principal evaluation system, including piloting a revised rubric aligned with TILS and developing a comprehensive professional development plan to prepare for full implementation of updated principal evaluation tools statewide in SY 2014-2015. The State also plans to continue to identify and implement procedures for evaluating the impact and informing sustainability of its teacher and leader pathway programs. In SY 2013-2014, the State plans to continue to support LEAs already implementing alternative compensation models and will expand support to additional LEAs to develop unique plans tailored to local needs.

In 2014, the State expects to include data on teacher as well as school leader preparation program report cards that focus on institutions' abilities to train effective school leaders. Additionally, according to the State, conversations about linking teacher and leader preparation program report cards to performance-based funding models for institutions are expected to get underway. The State will need to work quickly to make progress in its plans to enhance data systems that support educator evaluation and licensure.

The ASD expects to grow to 16 schools in SY 2013-2014 with enrollment of nearly 4,500 students in pre-kindergarten to high school which nearly triples the SY 2012-2013 enrollment and makes progress toward the State's goal of operating 35 low-performing schools by 2015. The State will continue to expand charter-run campuses in the ASD, as well as in other LEAs in the State. Additionally, the State plans to continue to help Focus Schools address achievement gaps through competitive grants, TAS positions, as well as support from Reward School Ambassadors and interventionists in CORE offices. The STEM Hubs and Platform Schools will focus on gathering evidence of their local impact to inform sustainability plans.

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.

Alternative routes to certification: Pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English learners and students with disabilities): (1) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education (IHEs) and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (2) are selective in accepting candidates; (3) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (4) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (5) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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