RACE
TO THE
TOP

Tennessee Report

Year 1: School Year 2010–2011

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

January 10, 2012

Race to the Top overview

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Race to the Top program review

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

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

State-specific summary report

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

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

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

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

Tennessee's education reform agenda

In January 2010, Tennessee passed the First to the Top (FTTT) Act. Supported by the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), the Act laid the foundation for broad-based education reform. Among other provisions, the Act: (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 restrictions on the use of value-added data for promotion, retention, tenure, and compensation decisions; (3) enabled State 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 and policies with 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 the FTTT Act. Tennessee's plan aims to narrow the academic achievement gap while raising overall student performance. In particular, Tennessee is committed to building capacity at the State level to support LEAs and drive dramatic gains in student performance through focused efforts in Race to the Top's four core education reform areas.

Local educational agency participation

As depicted in the table below, Tennessee reported in its APR that, as of June 30, 2011, all 140 LEAs in the State are participating in Race to the Top.

LEAs Participating in Tennessee's Race to the Top Plan

Category	Statewide (#)	Participating LEAs (#) as of June 30, 2011
LEAs	140	140
Schools	1,739	1,739
Principals[4]	3,344	3,344
Teachers[5]	62,653	62,653
Students	958,635	958,635
Students in Poverty	542,985	542,985

----

[4] According to Tennessee's APR, principals are defined as staff members whose activities are concerned with directing and managing the operation of a particular school.

[5] According to the Tennessee APR, teacher is defined as any educator or school services personnel who is employed by any local board of education, for service in public, elementary and secondary schools in the State, supported in whole or in part by State or federal funds.

State Year 1 summary

Accomplishments

Tennessee received its Race to the Top grant in July 2010 as part of the first round of the competition. Since receiving the award, the State has made progress implementing several initiatives, including integrating the FTTT Act goals and objectives into daily operations, aiding the LEAs' transition to new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and designing and implementing a new educator evaluation system.

The State is supporting LEAs in their transition to the CCSS by providing trainings, a crosswalk between the existing State standards and the CCSS, and pacing guides to help connect the new standards to professional growth. Over the past year, TDOE provided introductory training to more than 4,000 educators statewide on the CCSS. Additionally, most of the State's LEAs are voluntarily implementing the CCSS standards in kindergarten through second grade in school year (SY) 2011–2012.

To help ensure full implementation of the new educator evaluation system in SY 2011–2012, Tennessee created a Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC) to make recommendations about the use of evaluations; developed an evaluation framework that uses student growth, student achievement, and observations of educator practice; and trained more than 6,000 educators on the new observation instrument.

Challenges

Tennessee encountered some impediments to the implementation of its Race to the Top plan during the first year of the grant. After winning its Race to the Top award, Tennessee elected a new Governor who then appointed a new Commissioner of Education. Although the new Governor collaborated with TDOE staff prior to taking office, and both he and his new Commissioner are committed to education reform, the transition to new leadership was not seamless. The time required to fill key leadership positions impacted both TDOE's project timelines and its capacity to support LEAs. TDOE also experienced turnover within the assessment, data systems, and educator evaluation offices. During the summer of 2011, the Commissioner engaged in a strategic planning process and is considering how to fill vacancies and hire additional staff at TDOE in alignment with the agency's key priorities needed to drive student achievement at the classroom level.

Strategies for moving forward

As it moves into Year 2 of the grant, Tennessee is planning strategies for building on its accomplishments and addressing its challenges from Year 1. The State is rethinking implementation plans in several reform areas and intends to submit amendments to the Department for review. In addition, TDOE is committed to changing the dynamic between the State and its LEAs from a compliance monitoring role to a more collaborative role to help LEAs implement their Race to the Top Scopes of Work aligned to statewide goals for student performance. For example, during review of the LEAs' Year 2 Scopes of Work, TDOE leadership worked collaboratively with LEAs that missed student achievement targets to consider how to modify their Scopes of Work and direct resources to improve student outcomes. In addition, to best meet the needs of Tennessee's diverse group of LEAs, TDOE is considering ways to improve its Field Service Centers, which have historically provided LEAs and schools support in the areas of special education, career and technical education, Title I and federal programs, technology, assessment and testing, and school improvement planning.

Building capacity to support LEAs

During Year 1, Tennessee accomplished several key objectives to build the foundation for the successful implementation of its Race to the Top plan. Despite the transition to new State leadership, the State maintained the participation of every LEA in the State in its Race to the Top program. Furthermore, TDOE and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) are collaborating on several projects, including the creation of a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Network, implementing the CCSS, and preparing educators to use data to improve instruction. In addition, the State has contracted with the Tennessee Consortium of Research, Evaluation, and Development (TNCRED) to carry out an independent evaluation of the implementation of the State's Race to the Top plan. The evaluation results will guide implementation and, if necessary, allow the State to make mid-course corrections.

Performance management

Tennessee's FTTT office, which oversees the State's Race to the Top initiatives, moved to TDOE from the Governor's office in April 2011. As seen in the chart below, the Commissioner of Education manages the FTTT office's daily operations, which maintains a direct line with the Governor and the FTTT Advisory Council on education policy. The FTTT office consists of a director, deputy director, policy advisor, and program analyst and is responsible for coordinating the reform areas and providing support to stakeholders, including LEAs; other participating State agencies; and collaborative networks that provide implementation support. To further increase efficacy and capacity, Tennessee partnered with a contractor to create an Education Delivery Unit (EDU). The EDU, consisting of a director and three performance advisors, supports TDOE and LEAs by engaging in strategic planning, driving and monitoring performance, analyzing leading indicators, and problem solving.

To help organize the work of TDOE, the FTTT office, and the EDU, Tennessee created a Project Management Oversight Committee (PMOC). The TDOE PMOC manages Race to the Top initiatives, including tracking key deliverables, coordinating across related projects and activities, and prioritizing areas for improvement. The committee, which meets weekly to discuss specific projects and initiatives, comprises senior leadership from TDOE, FTTT staff, THEC, and representatives from the EDU and TNCRED. During its weekly discussions, the PMOC monitors project implementation and considers opportunities for coordinating across initiatives.

Tennessee State Department of Education Organizational Chart

First to the Top Oversight Statewide
Focus as of October 11, 2011
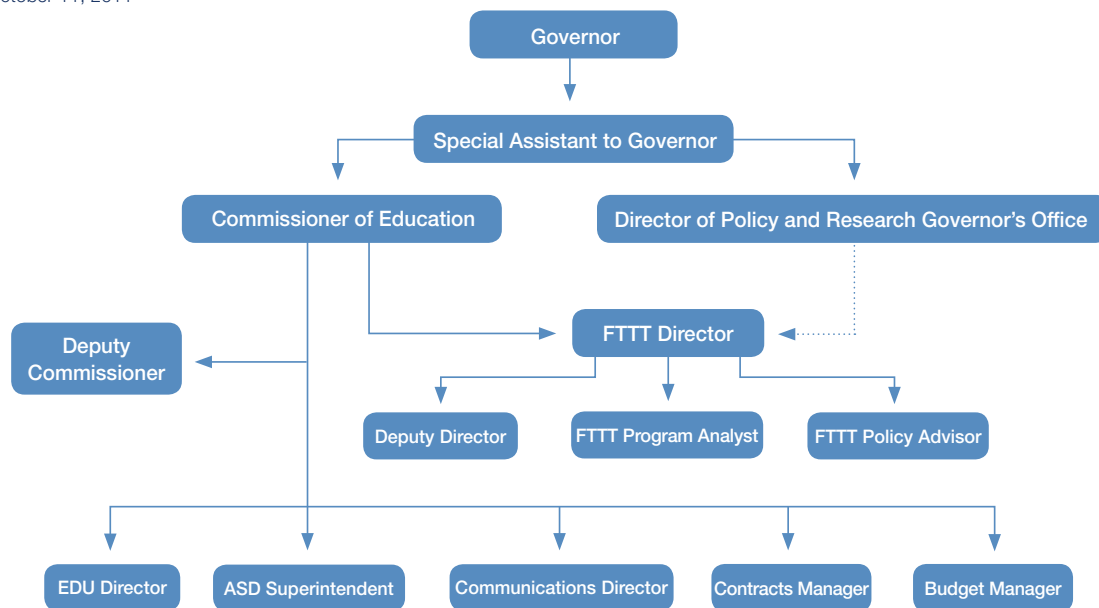
[6] More information on the FTTT Advisory Council and its membership is available at http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/about-council.html.

LEA implementation and accountability

After the State approved its participating LEAs' Year 1 Scopes of Work, it provided only one year of funding to participating LEAs. The State plans to review and approve LEAs' activities and funding during each of the four years of the grant. This annual review process will enable TDOE to consider student achievement results from the prior year and work collaboratively with LEAs to revise their Scopes of Work activities and budget for the upcoming year to address any gaps in performance. In order to align with the availability of preliminary student achievement data from the prior year, the State requested and the Department approved an amendment shifting this annual review of the LEA Scopes of Work from May to July of each year. As of October 2011, TDOE had approved all LEAs' Year 2 Scopes of Work.

Stakeholder engagement

Key activities and stakeholders

During Year 1, Tennessee implemented a variety of communication and outreach initiatives to engage and inform educators about the new evaluation system. To ensure that stakeholders were included in the development of the evaluation system, the General Assembly created the TEAC to develop and recommend guidelines for the annual evaluation of educators. Per the legislation, the TEAC includes seven teachers, two principals, and six members from the General Assembly, TDOE, or other stakeholder groups.[7]

The State implemented several programs that familiarize educators with the new evaluation system and support their use of data-informed instruction. It established a FTTT evaluation website, trained educators on the CCSS and the State observation rubric (from the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP™)), hosted routine teleconferences with stakeholders, and hired approximately 30 regional value-added specialists.[8] The evaluation website, at www.team-tn.org, is a resource for teachers, principals, and administrators to obtain information on topics that range from strategies for preparing and supporting educators to strategies for explaining the educator evaluation ratings and outcomes. The value-added specialists help LEAs develop an understanding of the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), support teacher and principal data usage, and train district-level value-added specialists (see *Data Systems to Support Instruction* and *Great Teachers and Leaders* for more detail).

Lessons learned

Tennessee learned valuable lessons during the first year of Race to the Top that will inform TDOE as it continues to foster supportive relationships with LEAs and schools. In Year 1, the State offered guidance, trainings, and in-person support to LEAs and schools on several Race to the Top initiatives, including TVAAS, the CCSS, and the TAP observation rubric. The guidance and resources provided by the State built stronger relationships with LEAs to ensure successful implementation of many foundational Race to the Top initiatives in Year 1.

Looking ahead to Year 2

TDOE plans to continue to transition away from a compliance monitoring role to one that is more supportive of Tennessee's diverse group of LEAs. As a consequence, the State will continue to communicate and create feedback loops with educators about its Race to the Top initiatives. For example, the State will provide annual training on the TAP observation rubric to ensure educator evaluations are conducted consistently and with fidelity across all LEAs. In addition, the regional value-added specialists will work with LEAs to help educators develop a clear understanding of the student achievement data results used in the new evaluation system. In an effort to foster greater stakeholder engagement, the State will work to develop clear roles for the FTTT Advisory Council, the Early Warning Data System (EWDS) Advisory Committee, and the STEM Advisory Council. In addition, the State will continue to encourage stakeholder feedback on the new evaluation system and the CCSS and will strive to rejuvenate its effort to communicate with and engage all stakeholders around using data to improve instruction and turn around its low-achieving schools. The State also plans to emphasize the importance of aligning State and local initiatives with a strong strategic plan by considering how to reorganize TDOE's operations around an ambitious set of student achievement goals.

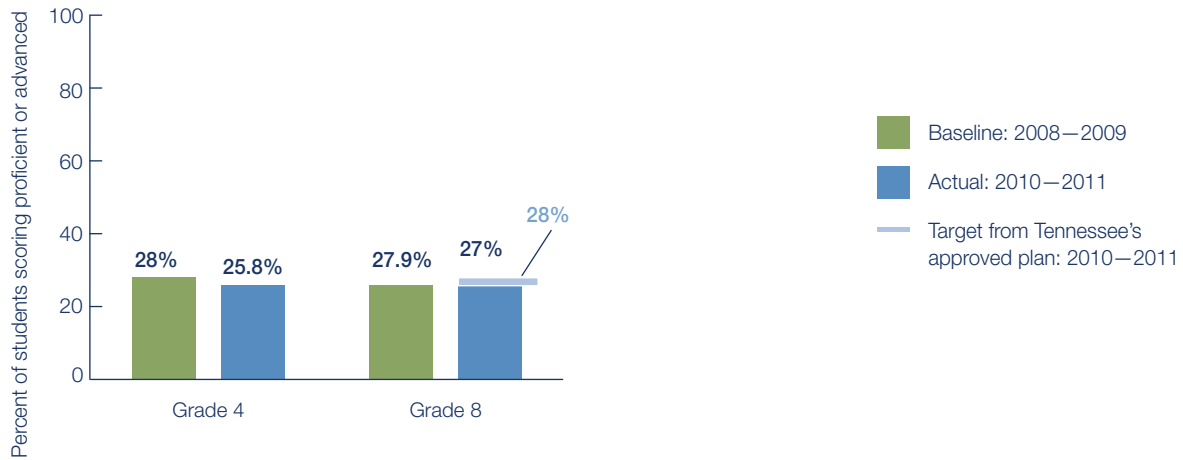[7] For a full list of TEAC members see http://www.tn.gov/education/doc/TEACCommitteeMembers.pdf.

[8] Though TAP is the State model, LEAs can opt to use alternative rubrics. See the *Great Teachers and Leaders* section for more on the alternative rubrics.
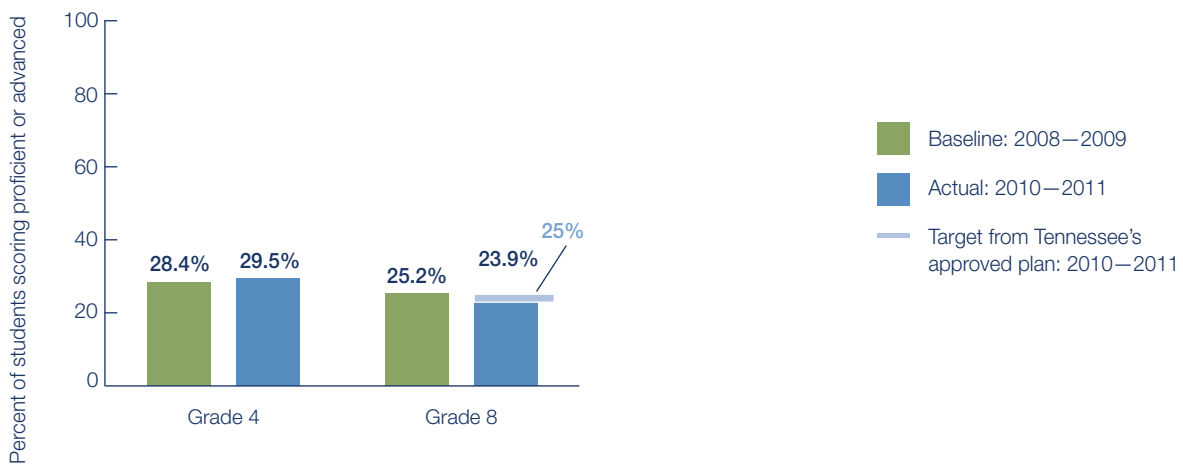
Student outcomes data

Student Proficiency, NAEP Reading 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

- **28%** Grade 4 (Baseline)
- **25.8%** Grade 4 (Actual)
- **27.9%** Grade 8 (Baseline)
- **27%** Grade 8 (Actual)
- **28%** Grade 8 (Target)

Legend:
- Baseline: 2008—2009
- Actual: 2010—2011
- Target from Tennessee's approved plan: 2010—2011

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

The percentage of Tennessee's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in reading in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.
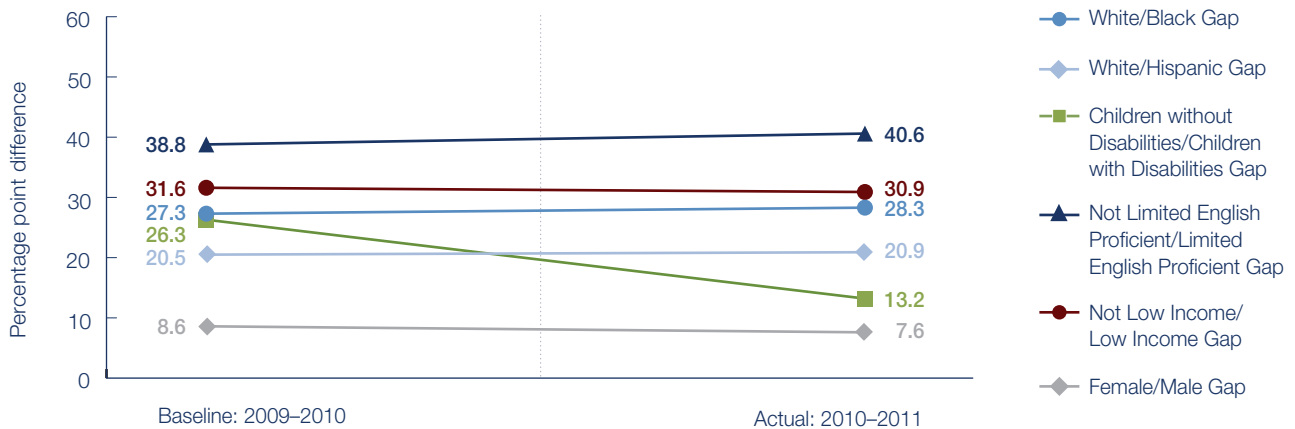
Student Proficiency, NAEP Mathematics 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

- **28.4%** Grade 4 (Baseline)
- **29.5%** Grade 4 (Actual)
- **25.2%** Grade 8 (Baseline)
- **23.9%** Grade 8 (Actual)
- **25%** Grade 8 (Target)

Legend:
- Baseline: 2008—2009
- Actual: 2010—2011
- Target from Tennessee's approved plan: 2010—2011

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

The percentage of Tennessee's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.

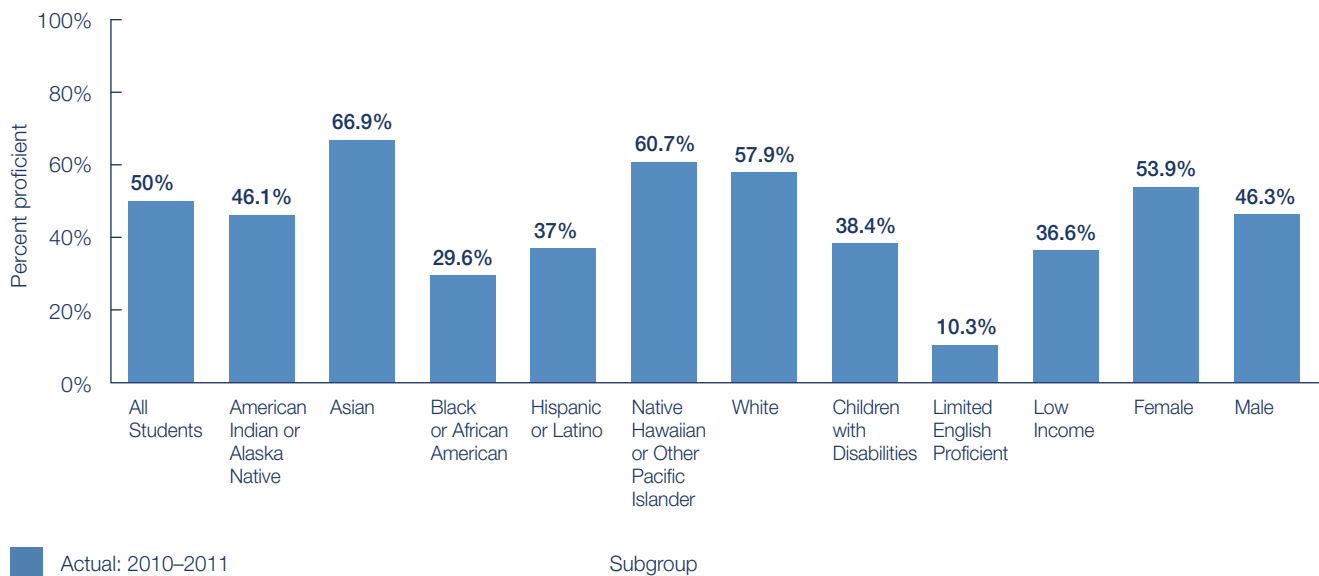## Achievement Gap on Tennessee's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percentage point difference

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

	Baseline: 2009–2010	Actual: 2010–2011
Not Limited English Proficient/Limited English Proficient Gap	38.8	40.6
Not Low Income/Low Income Gap	31.6	30.9
White/Black Gap	27.3	28.3
Children without Disabilities/Children with Disabilities Gap	26.3	13.2
White/Hispanic Gap	20.5	20.9
Female/Male Gap	8.6	7.6

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 7, 2011

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

Overall Proficiency on Tennessee's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient

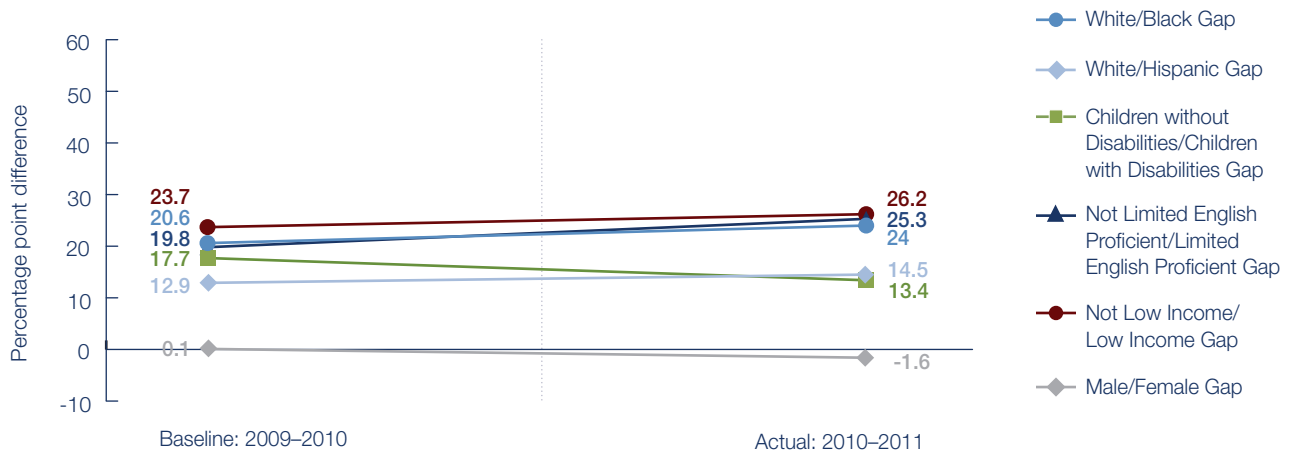| Subgroup	Percent proficient
All Students	50%
American Indian or Alaska Native	46.1%
Asian	66.9%
Black or African American	29.6%
Hispanic or Latino	37%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	60.7%
White	57.9%
Children with Disabilities	38.4%
Limited English Proficient	10.3%
Low Income	36.6%
Female	53.9%
Male	46.3%

■ Actual: 2010–2011   Subgroup

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 7, 2011

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

Achievement Gap on Tennessee's Mathematics Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percentage point difference

Baseline: 2009–2010	Actual: 2010–2011
23.7	26.2
20.6	25.3
19.8	24
17.7	14.5
12.9	13.4
0.1	-1.6

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

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 7, 2011

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

Overall Proficiency on Tennessee's Mathematics Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient

Subgroup	Percent
All Students	42.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	42%
Asian	66.7%
Black or African American	24.4%
Hispanic or Latino	33.9%
Native Hawaiian or Other Paciÿc Islander	51.2%
White	48.4%
Children with Disabilities	30.3%
Limited English Proficient	17.3%
Low Income	30.9%
Female	42.9%
Male	41.3%

■ Actual: 2010–2011

Subgroup

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: October 7, 2011

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

Standards and Assessments

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

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

Tennessee officially adopted the CCSS in July 2010. In addition, the State is a governing member of the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment consortium, which is developing new assessments aligned to CCSS standards.

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

In its first year of rolling out and building awareness around the CCSS, the State provided introductory training for more than 4,000 educators. The State facilitated the implementation of the CCSS by engaging a diverse array of stakeholders and making resources available to all teachers.

Tennessee is preparing to implement the CCSS. TDOE has encouraged educators to begin incorporating the CCSS into instruction during SY 2011–2012. Meanwhile, in anticipation of fully implementing the standards and new PARCC assessments by SY 2014–2015, the State will phase in implementation of the new standards in SY 2012–2013 and SY 2013–2014. During Year 1, Tennessee placed a special emphasis on encouraging kindergarten to grade 2 (K-2) teachers to adopt the standards ahead of their required implementation year, and though it is not required, according to the State, 96 percent of LEAs planned to implement the new standards in SY 2011–2012.

Dissemination of resources and professional development

Tennessee's experience rolling out new State standards in SY 2009–2010 illustrated valuable lessons about the importance of stakeholder engagement. The State will continue to offer substantial support to assist educators as they transition to the CCSS and PARCC assessments. Although the transition plan and training offered to date have been generally well received, TDOE is still working to ensure that educators understand the content of the standards and are able to translate them into classroom practice. As part of TDOE's phased approach to implementation, the training delivered to more than 4,000 educators in summer 2011 varied by grade span. Kindergarten to grade 2 teachers received in-depth support on implementing the standards, while teachers in grade 3 through high school attended

awareness training and will begin in-depth professional development on mathematics standards in 2012 at the district and school levels. In addition to the trainings, the State organized Professional Learning Communities to assist educators with the transition to the CCSS. Tennessee also created K-12 online alignment tools and pacing guides to help teachers integrate the CCSS into their practice.[9] State university leaders are also helping the transition by incorporating the new standards into their curricula for pre-service teachers. For example, in Year 1, THEC interviewed deans from Colleges of Education to develop a list of best practices for integrating the standards into the curricula. Based on the evidence gleaned from the interviews, THEC created a general timeline and outline to guide Colleges of Education as they transition to teaching the CCSS.

Lessons learned

Although the State prepared many K-2 educators to implement the CCSS in SY 2011–2012, TDOE understands that it will require a major investment of time and resources to implement the new standards in all grades by SY 2014–2015. In order to accomplish its goal, the State must effectively support all core teachers to deliver instruction aligned with the new standards. Due to the complexity of the task, TDOE understands the importance of partnering with pre-service institutions to ensure that novice teachers are able to integrate the standards into practice prior to entering the classroom. The State will also continue to provide resources such as pacing guides and the alignment tool to help the development of local curricula aligned to the CCSS.

Looking ahead to Year 2

As part of its participation in PARCC, Tennessee committed to transitioning to computer-based assessments by SY 2014–2015. The State believes, however, that it will be challenging to procure and implement the necessary technology to make every standardized assessment computer-based by the deadline. To mitigate these challenges, the State is working with its LEAs and other PARCC States to develop a proactive plan to build the necessary technological capacity. In addition to the technological transition, some teachers have expressed concerns about the new assessments' impact on educator evaluation results. In Year 2, the State will continue to engage educators and other stakeholders to provide support and training on both the policy changes in standards and the evaluation. Augmenting TDOE's effort to support educators, THEC will continue to implement its plan for integrating the standards into pre-service curricula.

---

[9] See http://www.tncurriculumcenter.org/.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system

Tennessee was awarded a SLDS grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in 2006 and made great strides toward meeting all 12 of the America COMPETES Act elements prior to receiving a Race to the Top award.[10] In Year 1, the State contracted with two organizations that will help enhance the SLDS system to collect data on students through college and to identify at-risk students earlier in their academic career. After an extensive Request for Proposal process where the State identified clear deliverables and benchmarks, the University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research received Race to the Top funds to implement and manage the expansion of the current K-12 data system to include postsecondary data. The State also contracted with an outside entity to leverage the existing K-12 data system into an EWDS for teachers. TDOE worked in collaboration with teachers, principals, counselors, and administers to select indicators the EWDS will use to identify at-risk students.

Accessing and using State data

With the support of the SAS Institute and Battelle for Kids, Tennessee completed all planned Year 1 professional development activities related to building educators' access and ability to use student data. To accomplish its goals, the State developed a variety of forums, including online supports, face-to-face assistance, and data dashboards, to disseminate information designed to facilitate the use of data at the LEA and classroom levels. In Year 1, the State launched 33 online learning modules on the use of student achievement data to improve instruction for public or educator audiences. To date, the learning modules have received more than 2,900 views. The TVAAS modules, in particular, had high participation rates, although it is difficult to determine whether the high participation rates resulted in improved educator performance. The State also identified individuals across the State recognized for their ability to understand and use data and hired them as regional value-added specialists to build local-level capacity. This team of approximately 30 specialists provided in-person assistance and ongoing support to LEA-level teams on using data to inform instruction and decision making,

The data dashboards currently available to teachers contain TVAAS data. However, the State acknowledges that educators at all levels of the system need more information to identify at-risk students and target resources accordingly. Given the expressed demand from LEAs for data on college and career readiness and dropout prevention, with the EWDS not scheduled to be operational statewide until Year 3, TDOE provided internally generated reports for all high schools in September 2011.

The reports included ninth-grade student information on the types of attendance, behavior, course completion, and demographic indicators that will be part of the EWDS once it is operational.

Finally, in an effort to integrate TVAAS data training into pre-service curriculum, TDOE partnered with THEC and the SAS Institute to develop modules and assessments that prepare students in the State's teacher credentialing programs to use TVAAS data once they enter the classroom.

Lessons learned

In an effort to expedite the development of the EWDS, Tennessee issued separate contracts to develop the EWDS and to expand the SLDS to collect postsecondary data. The State realized, however, that the development of the EWDS would require input from a variety of stakeholders in order to ensure that the system is a useful tool for identifying at-risk students. Consequently, Tennessee established an EWDS Advisory Committee composed of members from key stakeholder groups to determine the indicators to include in the EWDS.

In addition to the development of the EWDS, the State worked diligently to ensure that all educators could access TVAAS data. While the system has the capacity for all teachers to access the data, a few LEAs did not submit the information necessary to create accounts for every teacher. To help teachers in those LEAs gain access to the system and use their data, the State posted TVAAS teacher licensure numbers on its website to allow educators to directly gain access to the system.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Tennessee possessed an advanced K-12 longitudinal data system prior to Race to the Top. In Year 1, the State executed contracts to carry out its vision to expand the existing system to collect postsecondary data and identify at-risk youth earlier in their academic careers. Moving into Year 2, the State has committed to building the technological infrastructure needed to ensure that data are usable at the classroom, school, and district levels. Part of the State's effort in this area will be to implement the EWDS by leveraging existing data to enhance the system, disseminating the data to educators, and training teachers and principals on using the data to drive instruction. In addition, the State recognizes that high turnover after the transition to new State leadership resulted in a significant loss of expertise around data systems and usage. Consequently, TDOE leadership plans to expand its capacity to support LEAs in these areas.

[10] See http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slds/factsheet.html for more information on the American COMPETES Act elements.

Great Teachers and Leaders

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

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals

Tennessee provides several high-quality alternative pathways for educators to enter the profession. Two programs receiving support through Race to the Top, UTeach and Teach Tennessee, provide alternative routes for college graduates to teach in hard-to-staff subjects, including STEM and foreign languages.

UTeach is a teacher preparation program that encourages students majoring in mathematics, science, and computer science to enter the classroom after graduation. The program requires students who matriculate to participate in the State's STEM initiatives. The State has implemented the UTeach program in four of its universities, and although a high attrition rate is expected (roughly 50 percent), the State anticipates that the program will annually produce 150 new secondary STEM teachers. In Year 1, UTeach participants had, on average, higher GPAs and ACT mathematics scores than their peers. Each UTeach campus in Tennessee plans to improve participation through efforts including awareness campaigns and community outreach events.

Teach Tennessee is a selective program aimed at recruiting highly motivated, capable professionals into the classroom. When selecting participants for the program, TDOE gives priority to applicants with five or more years of work experience in a field related to the hard-to-staff subject they are interested in teaching or a degree in a hard-to-staff subject such as mathematics, science, or foreign languages. Applicants are not required to have prior teaching experience or to have completed education coursework during their academic career. Once selected, participants with more than five years of work experience attain a teaching license by attending a 12-day institute. Participants with fewer than five years of work experience attend the 12- day institute and eight monthly Saturday sessions during their first year in the classroom. During the first year of Race to the Top, the State recruited and trained 29 Teach Tennessee fellows who will continue to be supported by mentors in Year 2.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Through the FTTT, the General Assembly tasked the TEAC with developing recommendations for the State Board of Education (SBE) on the annual evaluation of educators. The SBE approved TEAC's recommended policies in SY 2010–2011, creating the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM). The TEAM evaluates teachers and principals using student growth, student achievement, and frequent observations of educator practice. The model differentiates teacher and principal effectiveness using a 1 through 5 rating scale, where the State considers educators earning a 1 to be performing significantly below expectations and those earning a 5 to be performing significantly above expectations. The final evaluation rating is a composite of multiple measures, with observations of practice, student growth, and other locally determined student achievement measures accounting for 50 percent, 35 percent, and 15 percent of the final rating, respectively. Beginning in SY 2011–2012, all LEAs are to perform the evaluations annually and use the results to individualize the support and recognition of educators. In addition, the State will use the results, along with other factors, to assess and publish the effectiveness of pre-service institutions and curriculum in Teacher Preparation Program Report Cards.

The SBE selected a rubric designed by TAP to quantify the observation of teacher practice and ensure inter-rater agreement. Accounting for 50 percent of the final teacher evaluation score, evaluators will use the TAP rubric to assess teacher practice in four areas: planning, environment, professionalism, and instruction. Although TAP is the State model, LEAs have the option to adopt alternative SBE-approved rubrics. For example, Memphis City Schools uses the DC IMPACT model, and several other LEAs have decided to implement the Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER) rubric. Regardless of the rubric, SBE policy mandates that observation results account for 50 percent of teachers' final evaluation score and that apprentice teachers receive at least four observations each year—two each semester and at least half being unannounced. For LEAs using the TAP rubric, principals, assistant principals, and other instructional leaders will conduct the teacher observations after completing the State's training on the TAP rubric and passing a certification exam.

In addition to adopting the TAP model, the SBE approved a one-year plan to conduct two observations of principal and assistant principal practice using a rubric based on the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards. However, unlike the teacher evaluation, only 35 percent of a principal or assistant principal's final evaluation score will be contingent on his/her performance during the observations. The remaining 15 percent will be based on an evaluator's assessment of the fidelity of teacher observations conducted by the principal or assistant principal. Principals and assistant principals will receive two observations per year, and, after each observation, the evaluator will meet with the principal or assistant principal to review findings.

Student growth will account for 35 percent of principal, assistant principal, and teacher evaluations. In collaboration with a contractor, Tennessee will use the TVAAS to calculate student growth using at least three years of student performance data. Principal and assistant principal evaluations will use a school-level growth indicator, which is an aggregate measure of every student's performance in the school. Depending on each teacher's preference, evaluations of teachers in non-tested grades and subjects will use either a school-level or cohort-level growth indicator.[11] The school-level growth indicator is the same measure used in the principal and assistant principal evaluations. The cohort-level growth indicator measures only the aggregate performance of the students for whom the teacher is responsible. For teachers in tested grades and subjects, evaluations will use a classroom-level growth indicator that measures the performance of the students in a teacher's classroom.

In collaboration with their evaluator(s), principals, assistant principals, and teachers can choose a student achievement measure from a list of measures approved by the SBE. The approved list allows educators to select from a range of student achievement indicators, including State assessments or "off the shelf" assessments used widely throughout the State or nationally, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or National Industry Certification suites of assessments. Since the measure will account for 15 percent of the educator's total evaluation score, the evaluator will ensure that the measure aligns closely with the educator's responsibilities. Once educators select a measure, they cannot change it until the following school year. Educators scoring in the top three quintiles of the student growth measure can elect to use their growth scores in lieu of choosing another measure.

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Professional development

Tennessee implemented several professional development initiatives aimed at helping educators prepare for the rollout of the new evaluation system. During the summer of 2011, TDOE trained 6,000 evaluators on the TAP rubric in an effort to ensure the consistency and fairness of teacher observations. In addition to the training, participants were required to pass an exam on the rubric before the State allowed them to observe and assess teacher practice. As of August 2011, 96 percent of participants who took the exam passed.

In an effort to improve instructional practices based on evaluation results, TDOE also partnered with Battelle for Kids to provide online training on the use of formative assessment data. As of summer 2011, educators had participated in more than 215,000 courses through the Battelle for Kids portal. Of those courses, more than 43,000 were on the implementation of formative instructional practices.

Support for innovative LEA initiatives

Tennessee used Race to the Top funds to issue competitive grants to LEAs for innovative programs that address educator compensation reform and/or teacher recruitment and retention. TDOE awarded the grants in SY 2010–2011 so that LEAs could plan for comprehensive implementation in SY 2011–2012. The State awarded Innovation Acceleration Fund (IAF) grants to four LEAs that proposed to transition from the traditional educator salary schedule, which compensates educators based on their years of experience and level of education, to a schedule that rewards educators for their ability to increase student achievement. In SY 2010–2011, TDOE dispersed funds for a one-year planning period. Moving forward, it will continue to allocate funds over the three-year implementation period.

In Year 1, the State awarded Putnam County an Innovation Acceleration Fund grant to establish an alternative educator salary schedule that educators could opt into beginning in SY 2011-2012. Under the alternative schedule, teachers and principals can annually increase their base pay by up to three percent and two percent, respectively, by receiving an evaluation score of effective or highly effective (between a three and five). In addition, educators who are not eligible to receive increases to their base pay can earn bonuses for participating in activities such as additional professional development, earning an advanced degree, or taking on additional leadership duties.

---

[11] See the State's guidance on growth indicators at http://team-tn.org/assets/educator-resources/Non-Tested_Subjects_and_Grades_Summary.pdf.

The winning LEAs proposed comprehensive plans and will use the funds to address such priorities as ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the new salary schedule and recruiting and retaining effective educators. In addition, some of the smaller LEAs that won IAF grants also received Competitive Supplemental Fund grants through the State's Race to the Top plan that will help provide the additional resources necessary for transitioning to a sustainable alternative salary schedule.

In addition to the IAF grants, TDOE issued three teacher and principal residency (T&PR) grants to expand existing teacher residency programs and/or to provide mentoring for new teachers and principals. Two LEAs, Memphis City Schools and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, received a T&PR grant to use the extensive knowledge and skills of veteran teachers to serve as researchers, trainers, or experts in the field. Memphis won a T&PR grant to provide intensive mentoring support to new teachers and principals. TDOE will work with the winning LEAs of both T&PR grants to ensure they implement their plans with fidelity.

Lessons learned

The State engaged a variety of stakeholders, including teachers, principals, policymakers, and community leaders, in an effort to develop practical and fair policies and procedures for annually evaluating educators. Additionally, TDOE routinely communicated with all stakeholders during the design of the new educator evaluation system, and the State has been clear that there is a commitment to using stakeholder feedback to inform its development. The State will continue to refine its efforts to ensure that all stakeholders are informed throughout the implementation and ongoing improvement of the evaluation system. Additionally, TDOE partnered with THEC to initiate the UTeach and Teach Tennessee programs to recruit highly motivated individuals into STEM classrooms. According to the State, in Year 1, UTeach and Teach Tennessee both recruited high-quality participants. Tennessee recognized, however, that both programs must continue to recruit quality participants in order to effectively improve student achievement. Thus, the State will continue its efforts to bolster participation in both programs. Similarly, the State will continue to provide support to LEAs that are transitioning to an alternative salary schedule, with a particular focus on creating fiscally sustainable systems.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Tennessee anticipates that the logistical and financial challenges of creating a student growth measure for every grade and subject will be an ongoing issue for TEAM implementation. However, despite the challenges, the State implemented several educator-recommended measures in SY 2011–2012 and will continue to work with educators during Year 2 to develop student growth measures for the remaining non-tested grades and subjects. The State's evaluation of its Race to the Top Implementation conducted by TNCRED includes analyses of the components in the new evaluation system and LEA alternative compensation plans. The State will use the results from the annual evaluation to make any necessary mid-course corrections to the system. Additionally, in an effort to best meet its strategic goals, the State delayed implementing the Electronic Learning Center (ELC) and Leadership Action Tank in order to align the programs with key goals in other areas. According to the State, ultimately, the ELC will likely align to provide support to LEAs on a variety of Race to the Top initiatives, including the implementation of the CCSS.

In accordance with the State's approved Scope of Work, TDOE is collaborating with THEC and SBE to collect data and issue a formal report on the effectiveness of pre-service institutions and alternative certification programs. To date, these reports have provided the public with basic information on the State's pre-service institutions. However, through Race to the Top, the State plans to improve the quality and accessibility of publicly reported data and expand the pre-service programs included in the report to include alternative certification providers. Additionally, the enhanced reports will include effectiveness information based on aggregated educator evaluation results from each program's graduates. In Year 1, Tennessee developed a new platform for data collection (which is housed at THEC), and all institutions submitted data by August 2011 for the November 2011 release of the Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Report Card. Moving forward, the State plans to collaborate with THEC to use the data to provide individualized support to each institution for ongoing improvement.

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.[12]

Tennessee has developed an accountability continuum along which the lowest-achieving schools receive increasing levels of support. Though all schools are in the accountability continuum, Focus Schools are the first group of schools in the continuum to receive support from the State. The State designates Renewal Schools when their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status changes to "corrective action." The Achievement School District (ASD) is the most intensive stage in the continuum. As authorized by FTTT, the ASD is a new State-run LEA that provides a structure for turning around the State's lowest-achieving schools through direct oversight and partnerships with nationally recognized nonprofit organizations.[13] Together, this accountability continuum provides a range of support to improve the State's low-achieving schools.

Tennessee is phasing in a State-run ASD, which it plans to fully implement in SY 2012–2013. To prepare for the launch of the ASD as a newly established LEA run by the State, in SY 2011–2012, the State is working with LEA and school leadership to co-manage five of the State's lowest-achieving schools. In addition, it is carefully working to build relationships with additional low-achieving schools that are ASD-eligible. The State's efforts focus on implementing research-based best practices and leveraging relationships with existing charter networks and nonprofit organizations. In addition, although the current co-management setup still gives LEAs control over personnel decisions, the State anticipates that, in the absence of evidence indicating improvement in student achievement, it will have authority to assume full control over school operations before SY 2012–2013. In the summer of 2011, TDOE hired a superintendent for the ASD to help facilitate the State's role in turning around the lowest-performing schools. The superintendent is responsible for the operations and performance of the schools in the ASD.

In addition to creating the ASD, Tennessee awarded Focus and Renewal School grants to help low-performing schools improve student achievement. TDOE defines Focus Schools as those that just entered the accountability continuum, under School Improvement I or II. In Year 1, TDOE awarded $840,000 to 176 Focus Schools for professional development on proven practices for improving academic achievement in low-performing schools. Renewal schools are in Corrective Action or Restructuring I and have the potential to be included in the ASD in future years. With support from Race

to the Top, TDOE also awarded each Renewal School $300,000 per year to implement a proven, research-based model for improving school capacity and student achievement. In addition, some Renewal Schools received funds from the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, which will provide additional support for their intervention efforts. Although the Renewal School grants allow schools to remain in their home LEA, the award is contingent upon the LEA selecting a State-approved vendor to implement a comprehensive school intervention model.

School Intervention Models Initiated in Tennessee in SY 2010–2011

6 — 6

- Schools (#) initiating transformation model
- Schools (#) initiating turnaround model
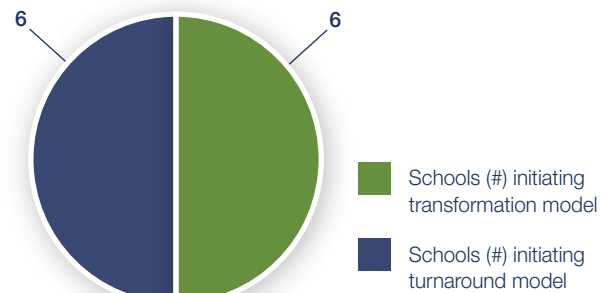
Lessons learned

Tennessee is refining its theory of action to best serve students in its lowest-performing schools. While the FTTT granted the authority for a State-run LEA, creating an operational ASD has not been as immediate as the State's initial commitment. To date, the State's activities have been oriented toward aligning the multiple programs in this education reform area and building TDOE's capacity to manage and sustain the ASD as an approach to serving the State's lowest-performing schools. In summer 2011, the State hired an ASD superintendent and began establishing partnerships with parents, the business community, and human capital providers. Legislation passed in Year 1 also granted the ASD authority to authorize charter schools, an approach that the State believes

---

[12] 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.

[13] See http://www.tn.gov/firsttothetop/programs-turnaround.html for more information on the ASD.

will provide a quality alternative for students attending a low-performing school. In addition, the State worked to engage the business community and parents in an effort to secure their support in the reform effort. Through programs, leadership opportunities, and parent-teacher conferences, the State encouraged LEAs to engage parents and make them a partner in the turnaround effort. The State also worked with the business community to develop strategies related to leadership, project management, planning and measurement, and corporate turnaround.

Looking ahead to Year 2

In Year 2, the State will help prepare ASD schools for the transition to full implementation of the ASD program by finalizing its list of direct-run and charter schools for SY 2012–2013 and launching a plan to drive staffing decisions in the ASD. The State will continue to communicate with stakeholders about how the co-management process will proceed during SY 2011–2012. In addition, the State is working with Battelle for Kids and the Tennessee College Access Success Network (TCASN) to provide resources to ASD schools. Battelle for Kids is providing data coaches for each of the co-managed schools. The TCASN plans to award grants to low-income or underserved schools to expand or create new college access and success programs.

Charter Schools

In June 2011, Tennessee's General Assembly passed Public Chapter 466, which opened enrollment in charter schools to all students in the jurisdiction of the authorizing local school board. The law also removed caps on charter schools, granted the ASD the power to authorize charter schools, and eased or eliminated other restrictions that previously made charter schools difficult to establish.

Tennessee's new charter school regulations coincide with the March 2011 announcement of a $40 million public-private charter school partnership. The fund, which includes $20 million in private funds and $14 million in Race to the Top funding, will support the growth of high-performing charter schools in the State.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Tennessee is supporting the improvement and expansion of STEM education through a wide variety of projects, most of which are in the early stages of implementation. The Governor has appointed a STEM Advisory Council, which first met in August 2010. The Council includes teachers, professors, representatives of STEM industries, the State Commissioners of Education and Community and Economic Development, and a representative from SBE. Tennessee tasked the council with overseeing the State's STEM projects and providing guidance on STEM investments.

One prominent program that will benefit from the STEM Council's oversight and guidance is the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network (TSIN), which the State operates in conjunction with the University of Tennessee and the Battelle Memorial Institute (which co-manages Oak Ridge National Laboratory). The network is a statewide collaboration between programs and schools, and its goal is to enhance teaching and learning in STEM disciplines. Through the TSIN, the State aims to bring together partners to share best practices, enhance new initiatives, and boost student achievement. Despite some initial contract-related issues, the TSIN has made progress since it formally began activities in February 2011.

The Metropolitan Nashville Stratford Academy of Science and Engineering launched in SY 2010–2011 as Tennessee's first STEM Platform School. The academy's curriculum allows students to experience real-world applications of STEM content through hands-on experiences. Vanderbilt University professors, including an interdisciplinary science and research course, teach some courses. The academy features state-of-the-art science and engineering labs, as well as a video conference system that grants students direct access to STEM professionals from Vanderbilt and other institutions. The academy is linked to a middle school and two elementary schools, each of which introduces students to project-based, interdisciplinary curricula that prepare students to attend Stratford.

The Network held outreach sessions with STEM stakeholders to aid in the planning and implementation of other STEM initiatives. Representatives of the network have also attended conferences and visited other States with STEM networks to gain perspective on how to make TSIN as effective as possible.

Tennessee's STEM Platform Schools will be the first sites of implementation for innovative, achievement-boosting STEM programs identified by the TSIN. Platform Schools offer their students applied, in-depth STEM curricula and serve as models for how to implement innovative STEM projects. A Regional STEM Innovation Hub will support each STEM Platform School. These regional hubs will work to identify and connect STEM assets, partners, and programs in their region in an effort to maximize their impact. Tennessee launched two STEM Platform Schools: Nashville's Stratford Academy of Science and Engineering in 2010–2011 and the Knoxville STEM Academy in 2011–2012. In Year 2, it will implement two Hubs to support the two existing Platform Schools. Tennessee is in the process of planning four additional STEM Platform Schools and four Hubs to launch over the course of the grant period. According to the State, these programs will continue to drive innovation in STEM education.

Lessons learned

The State initially planned to create Platform Schools first and then implement the Hubs. However, Tennessee determined that its STEM Platform Schools and Regional Innovation Hubs would be more effective if the State closely aligned their implementation. As a result, it is working to combine the proposal processes for the Platform Schools and Hubs and plans to read and score applications for the next set of Schools and Hubs simultaneously. This change reflects the importance of collaboration between these interdependent entities and will help the State build effective connections between STEM Platform Schools and other regional assets.

In Year 1, Tennessee identified two ways in which it could improve its STEM reforms through more effective stakeholder engagement. The State issued Request for Proposals (RFP) to fund the first two STEM Innovation Hubs at the beginning of summer 2011 but decided not to fund any of the submitted proposals right away. Instead, the State and its partners provided technical assistance to the applicants to improve each plan and now expects to award contracts in November 2011. The State also recognized a need to engage more deeply with the broader STEM community and intends to accomplish this by making more extensive use of the STEM Advisory Council in Year 2.

Looking ahead to Year 2

The State is close to implementing two additional STEM Innovation Hubs, one in East Tennessee and the other in Middle Tennessee, to support the existing STEM Platform Schools in Nashville and Knoxville. It expects to award contracts in November 2011 and will avoid future delays by working more closely to provide technical assistance to intended applicants prior to the proposal process. By the end of 2011, Tennessee will release an RFP for the next round of Platform Schools and Hubs, which are scheduled to open in SY 2012–2013.

Budget

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

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

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

America COMPETES Act elements are (as specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of that Act): (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to

students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student achievement means—

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

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

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

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