RACE
TO THE
TOP

Delaware 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.

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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 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.

Executive Summary

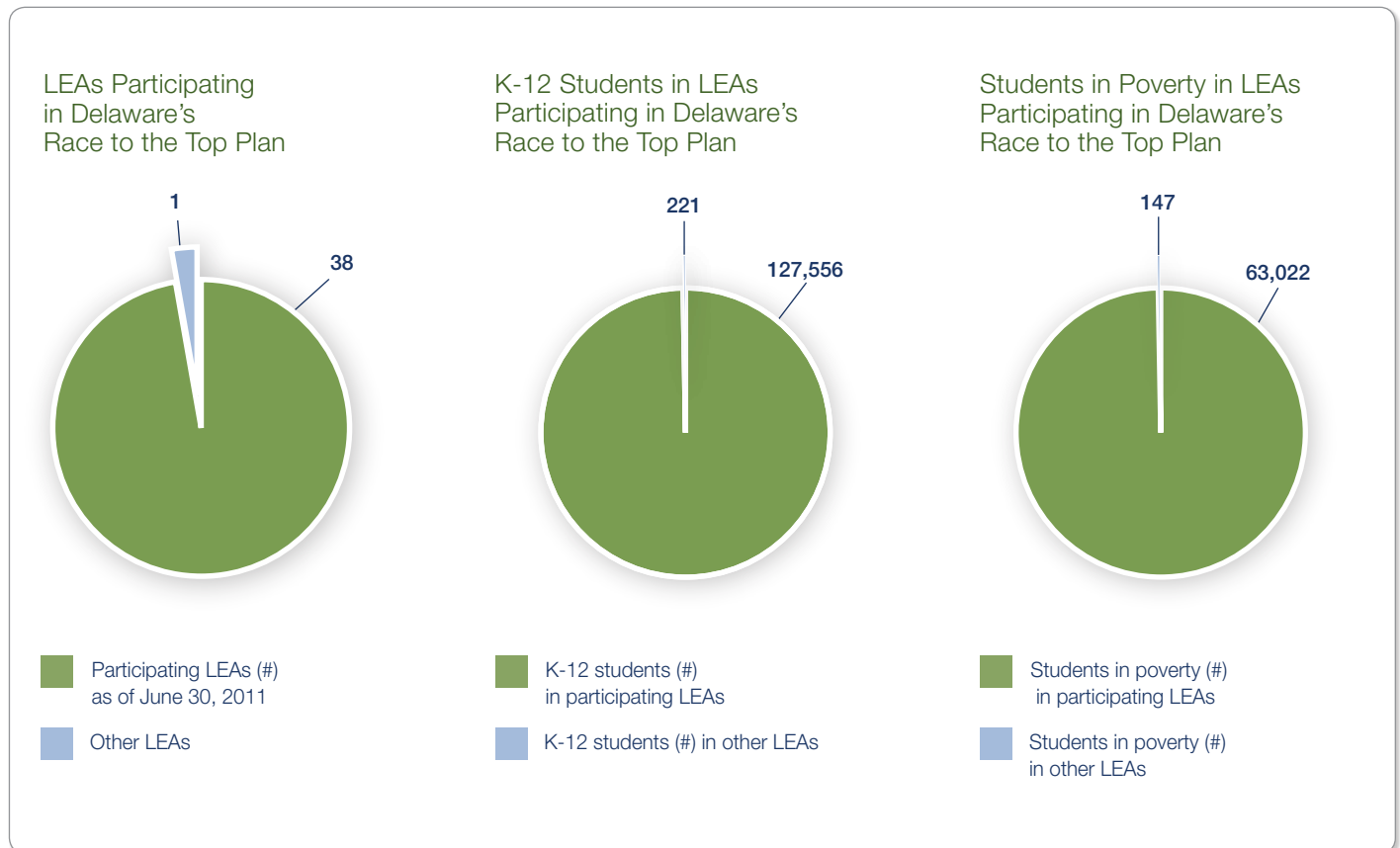## Delaware's education reform agenda

Delaware's 2009 strategic plan, created with input from more than 150 educators, parents, community members, funders, and supporters, is the State's blueprint for improving classroom instruction and ensuring that every student will graduate college- and career-ready. The State's Race to the Top plan builds off of this blueprint and leverages the funding to catalyze and accelerate implementation of the strategic plan.

As reported in Delaware's APR, as of June 30, 2011, 38 LEAs (19 LEAs and 19 independent charter school LEAs) serving approximately 130,000 students are participating in the reform efforts that Delaware outlined in its Race to the Top plan. Delaware is receiving $119,122,128 in Race to the Top funds. As required by law, the State will distribute 50 percent of the funds to LEAs and divide the remaining funds among various statewide projects.

Delaware's broad goals under Race to the Top include establishing new organizational structures within the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE); training teachers on the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS); improving access to, and use of, the State's robust longitudinal data system; providing effective support to teachers and leaders; and launching the Partnership Zone (PZ) to turn around the lowest-achieving schools. Delaware was one of the first two States to receive a Race to the Top grant in July 2010. Despite facing some challenges during the first year of the grant, Delaware has made significant strides toward accomplishing its Race to the Top goals.

Local educational agency participation

As depicted in the graphs below, Delaware reported 38 participating LEAs in its Year 1 APR. When Delaware applied for Race to the Top funding, this represented 100 percent LEA participation. As reported in Delaware's APR, as of June 30, 2011, this represents over 99.8 percent of the State's K–12 students and over 99.8 percent of its students in poverty.[4]

LEAs Participating in Delaware's Race to the Top Plan

1

38

- Participating LEAs (#) as of June 30, 2011
- Other LEAs

K-12 Students in LEAs Participating in Delaware's Race to the Top Plan

221

127,556

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

Students in Poverty in LEAs Participating in Delaware's Race to the Top Plan

147

63,022

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

[4] Participating LEAs include all LEAs and charters in the State with the exception of charters opened after the   school year.

State Year 1 summary

Accomplishments

Delaware created new structures at the State level to support both State and LEA Race to the Top work. The State is providing ongoing assistance to LEAs via the LEA Support Program, working with LEAs in an iterative and intensive fashion to ensure that their Years 2–4 plans align with the State's strategic education reform plan and will lead to improvements in teaching and learning. This work includes a thorough review of, and ongoing feedback on, these plans as LEAs develop them. Delaware is holding LEAs accountable for the commitments they made in their Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the State.

Delaware has begun to implement programs across reform areas. For example, the State provided training for school staff on the CCSS and is developing resources to support teachers in implementing them in classrooms. Also, the State is developing a system to provide single sign-on access to stakeholders based on their specific roles, allowing them to retrieve an array of data via a single source. Delaware is implementing teacher and leader projects that include data coaches; a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) residency program; Teach for America (TFA); a Delaware Teaching Fellows program; and the Delaware Leadership Project. The State is also supporting the four low-achieving schools in the State's PZ as they plan to fully implement their selected school reform model during the 2011–2012 school year.

Challenges

Although Delaware has fully staffed its Race to the Top team, including the management team and teams across reform areas, securing highly qualified staff took longer than expected. Also, because the State implements many of its reforms at the local level, the State has to reconcile LEA perceptions regarding their needs, capacity, and level of participation in Race to the Top projects with their needs and capacity as assessed by the State. In addition, the State encountered a challenge in implementing a teacher and leader evaluation system due to the complexity, time, and effort required to identify or develop the student growth measures for teachers in grades and subjects not already tested by the assessments required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (hereafter referred to as non-tested grades and subjects). The State is working to address this challenge, but had to delay by one year the use of the evaluation system to inform certain personnel decisions.

Strategies for moving forward

Delaware is implementing a plan to identify or build assessments that can be used as part of the required evaluation components for non-tested grades and subjects. The State is integrating Race to the Top with other education programs at the federal, State, and LEA levels to maximize the impact on teaching and learning.

Building capacity to support LEAs

Delaware has built structures to support Race to the Top implementation at the State and LEA levels. It has integrated its existing strategic plan and the work in its approved Race to the Top plan to create one statewide education strategic plan.

Performance management

In Year 1, Delaware established and fully staffed a Delivery Unit (DU), Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU), and School Turnaround Unit (STU). The DU includes the Race to the Top project manager who oversees progress across all reform areas as well as acts as a liaison, in conjunction with the Race to the Top Lead, between Delaware and the Department. The TLEU oversees all projects that deal with great teachers and leaders, including work on teacher and leader evaluation systems, in conjunction with other DDOE branches. The STU oversees all projects that relate to turning around the lowest-achieving schools. The DU, TLEU, and STU staff members are a diverse group of qualified individuals who come from DDOE, State LEAs, LEAs outside of Delaware, education nonprofits, and the private sector. The leaders of the new teams have individual monthly meetings with the State's Secretary of Education and the Deputy Secretary of Education to provide status updates against their goals (see organizational chart below).[5]

LEA implementation and accountability

After the State approved the first year of its LEAs' Scopes of Work, it provided only the first year of funding to LEAs. Funding will be approved year by year based on LEA performance, which the State believes will ensure that LEAs are implementing effective plans. Based on feedback from the LEAs about the original Scope of Work template created by the State, the State revised the template so that the required Race to the Top elements are incorporated into an existing LEA planning tool, the Success Plan. Therefore, each year LEAs only need to submit a single Success Plan that describes goals, objectives, strategies, and activities, including activities related to and funded by Race to the Top.

The State worked with LEAs throughout Year 1 as they developed and refined their Years 2-4 Success Plans, reviewing drafts and providing written feedback. The State maintained a high bar regarding approval of LEA Years 2-4 plans with the goal of maximizing the impact of Race to the Top on teaching and learning. LEAs have flexibility in their use of the funds (so long as the activities align with the State's Race to the Top Scope of Work), but the State is holding each LEA accountable for the activities to which it commits. LEAs' Years 2-4 Success Plans were due June 1, 2011. The State received and approved all plans and posted them to the State's website (http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/dist_planning.shtm). The State made LEAs aware that it can and will withhold Race to the Top funding in the event that an LEA does not meet its commitments.

To the extent that it can, the State differentiates the support it provides to LEAs so that those that demonstrate or report limited capacity receive a greater share of support. In addition, the State initiated an LEA Support Program that focuses on building the knowledge and skills that LEAs and their stakeholders need to truly reform their LEAs. The State hopes, through ongoing surveys and discussions with LEAs, to gauge LEA capacity to implement the reforms in their plans and support them accordingly. Further, the State intends to continuously improve its implementation of Race to the Top projects to strategically address the needs of its LEAs and schools.

Delaware State Department of Education Organizational Chart
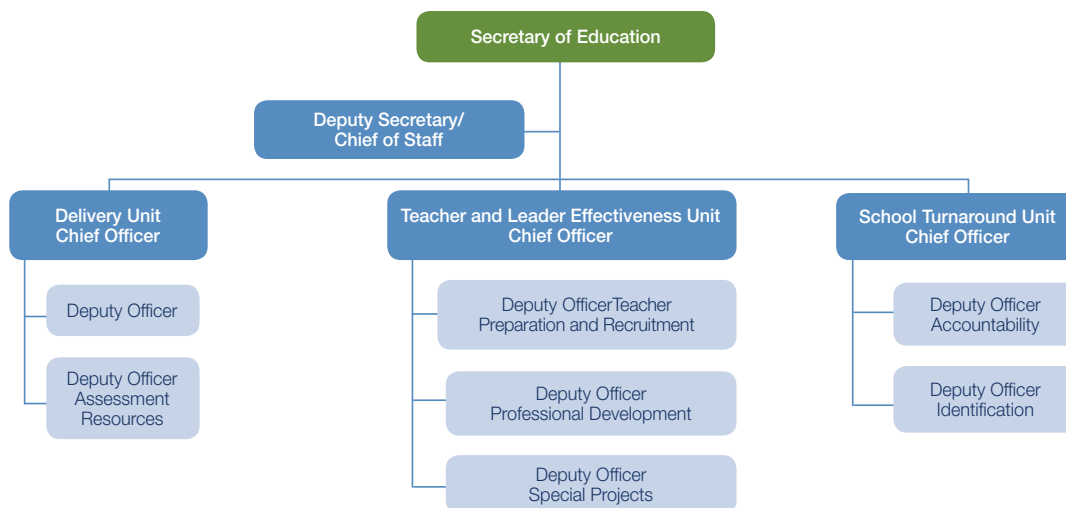
Effective Date: October 26, 2010

[5] This organization chart reflects new teams that make up the Race to the Top Project management office (this is not the entire organizational chart of the DDOE).

Stakeholder engagement

Key activities and stakeholders

Delaware has a stable, engaged leadership team that includes the Governor, the Secretary of Education, and union leadership, all of whom support and are deeply knowledgeable about the State's Race to the Top plan. Further, other key stakeholders, including leaders of the Rodel Foundation and the State's institutions of higher education (IHEs), are engaged in the reform efforts.

According to the State, communication with all stakeholders is the key to carrying out Delaware's Race to the Top plan. The Governor's Education "Road Show" consisted of 11 forums in schools across Delaware to discuss the State's Race to the Top plan. The State hired a new Public Information Officer (PIO) to create daily media summaries and provide training to LEAs' PIOs. The State is providing LEAs with additional resources to accelerate engagement at the local level. The State also began monthly meetings with the leadership of the Delaware State Education Association, the Delaware School Boards Association, and the Delaware Business Roundtable.

DDOE regularly gathers feedback and information from stakeholders by surveying the field. As of June 2011, the State reported that, in a survey of superintendents and other LEA leadership, at least 87 percent of respondents agreed that they understand and support the State's Race to the Top plan and that their own LEA plan aligns to the State plan, represents an improvement over what they have done before, and will dramatically improve student achievement.

Since approval of the State's Race to the Top plan, Delaware established an LEA Support Program to help all LEAs further develop their Scopes of Work and build the capacity to successfully implement them. The program provides technical assistance to support LEAs in developing their Race to the Top plans, including identifying a dedicated liaison from the State educational agency (SEA) to each LEA, holding monthly workshops, planning visits to high-performing schools, creating an online portal for resources, providing detailed feedback on plan drafts, and holding regular meetings between the State's Secretary of Education and each LEA. As with projects across reform areas, the State surveyed LEAs on the utility of this program and refined it accordingly. The State reports maintaining a "Support Program Tracker" (for internal use only) to chart LEA progress on key dimensions in LEA plans and to collect and analyze LEA feedback on the LEA Support Program resources.

Lessons learned

After reviewing the initial LEA Scopes of Work (including plans and budgets for four years of work at the local level), the State decided to approve and fund only the first year of the participating LEAs' Scopes of Work. The State communicated to the LEAs that the remainder of the LEA funding would be based on Success Plans that the LEAs develop over the first year of the grant with support from DDOE. The State determined that the LEAs needed support and additional capacity to develop plans that would be transformative for students and that some LEAs had less capacity than others to complete this work. As a result, DDOE initiated its LEA Support Program, which provides knowledge and guidance to LEAs and stakeholders to help them develop and implement LEA reform efforts.
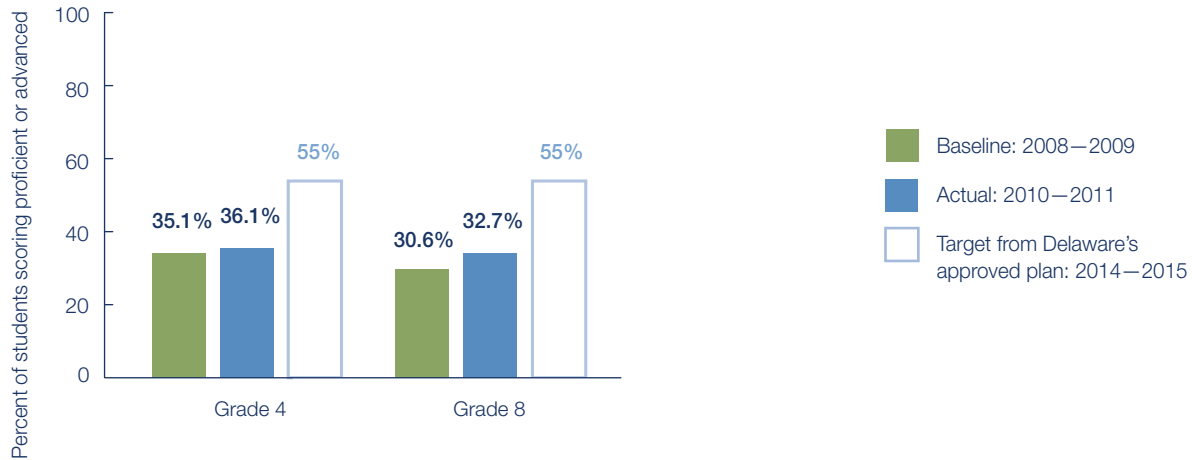
Looking ahead to Year 2

The State Secretary of Education and her core team will continue to work with educators to advance the State's strategic plan by working with stakeholders to fully implement projects, track their successes and challenges, and make adjustments accordingly. Furthermore, regarding the LEA Support Program, the State will shift its focus from plan development to implementation support in Year 2.
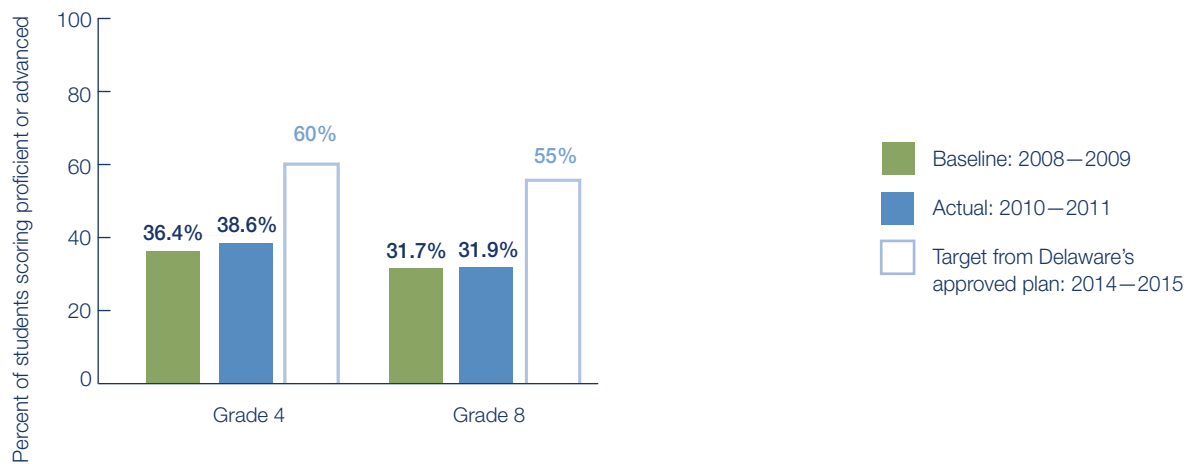
Student outcomes data

Student Proficiency, NAEP Reading 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Baseline: 2008—2009	35.1%	30.6%
Actual: 2010—2011	36.1%	32.7%
Target from Delaware's approved plan: 2014—2015	55%	55%

Baseline: 2008—2009

Actual: 2010—2011

Target from Delaware's approved plan: 2014—2015

The percentage of Delaware's grade 4 students who were at or above Proficient in reading in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.
The percentage of Delaware's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in reading in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.
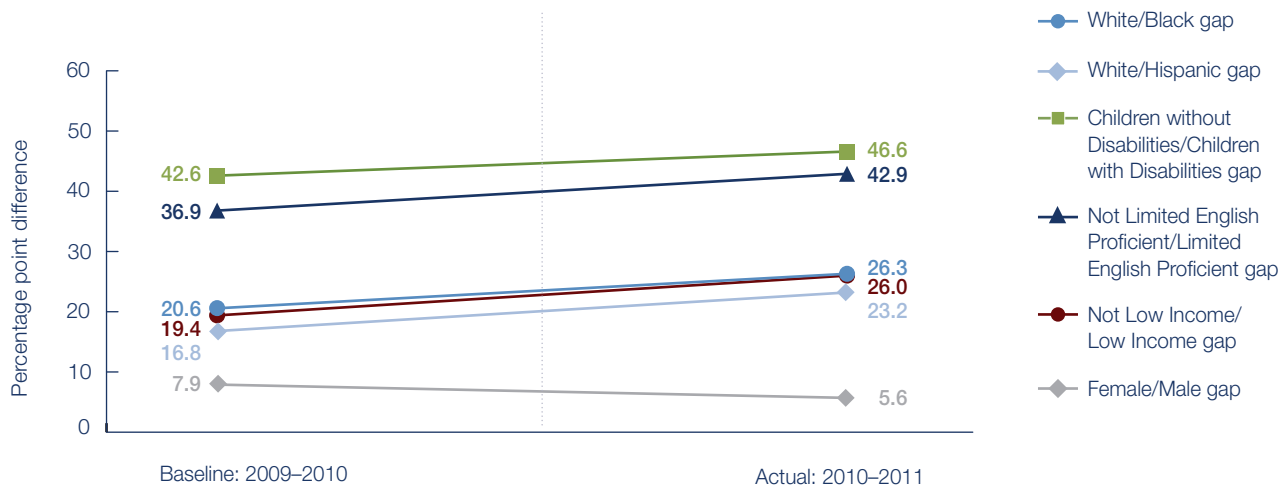
Student Proficiency, NAEP Mathematics 2011

Percent of students scoring proficient or advanced

	Grade 4	Grade 8
Baseline: 2008—2009	36.4%	31.7%
Actual: 2010—2011	38.6%	31.9%
Target from Delaware's approved plan: 2014—2015	60%	55%

Baseline: 2008—2009

Actual: 2010—2011

Target from Delaware's approved plan: 2014—2015

The percentage of Delaware's grade 4 students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.
The percentage of Delaware's grade 8 students who were at or above Proficient in mathematics in 2011 was not significantly different than in 2009.
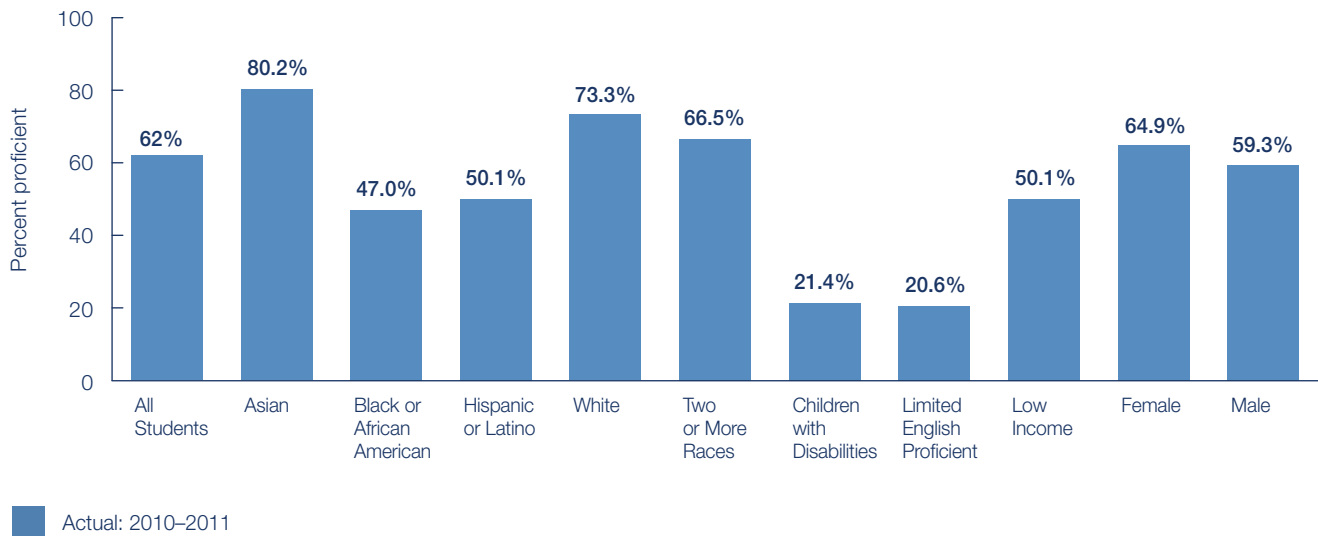
State Success Factors

Achievement Gap on Delaware's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percentage point difference

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

Baseline: 2009–2010 values: 42.6, 36.9, 20.6, 19.4, 16.8, 7.9

Actual: 2010–2011 values: 46.6, 42.9, 26.3, 26.0, 23.2, 5.6

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: December 1, 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 Delaware's ELA Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient

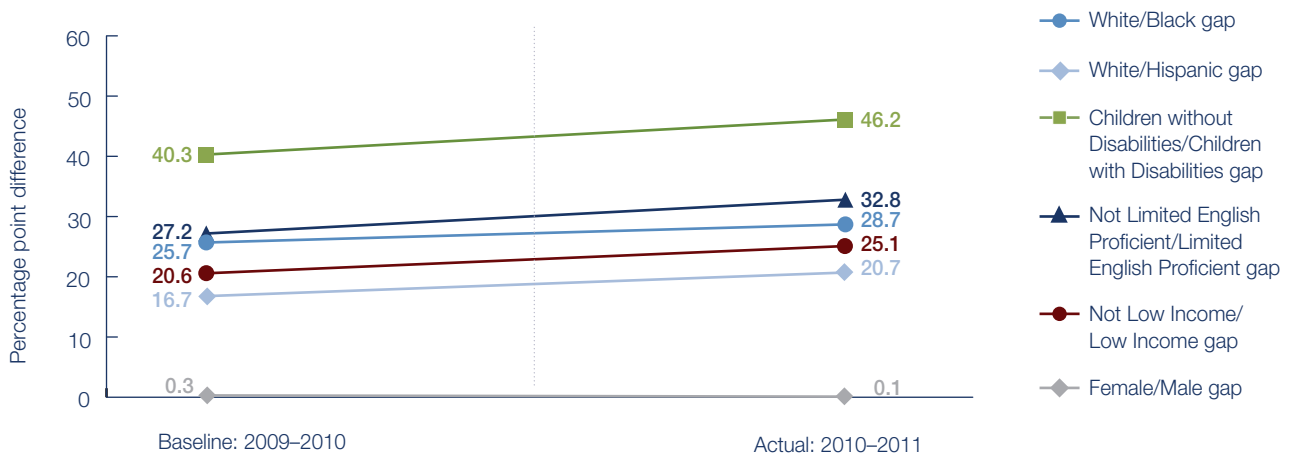| Group	Percent
All Students	62%
Asian	80.2%
Black or African American	47.0%
Hispanic or Latino	50.1%
White	73.3%
Two or More Races	66.5%
Children with Disabilities	21.4%
Limited English Proficient	20.6%
Low Income	50.1%
Female	64.9%
Male	59.3%

Actual: 2010–2011

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: December 1, 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.
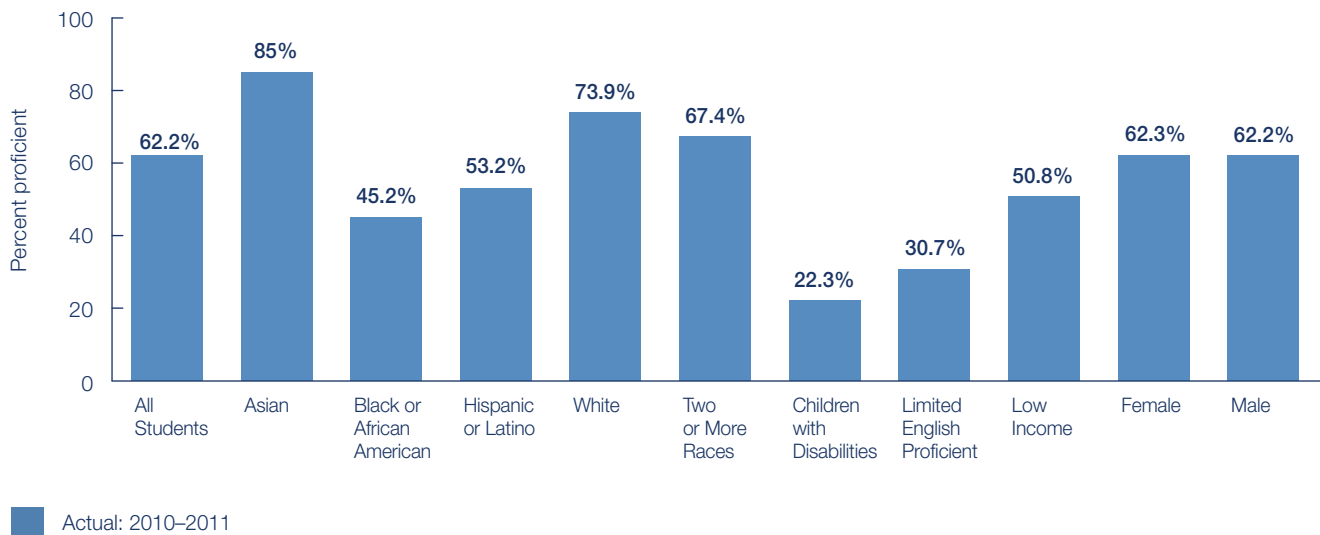
State Success Factors

Achievement Gap on Delaware's Mathematics 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 values: 40.3, 27.2, 25.7, 20.6, 16.7, 0.3

Actual: 2010–2011 values: 46.2, 32.8, 28.7, 25.1, 20.7, 0.1

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: December 1, 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 Delaware's Mathematics Assessment SY 2010–2011

Percent proficient

Group	Percent
All Students	62.2%
Asian	85%
Black or African American	45.2%
Hispanic or Latino	53.2%
White	73.9%
Two or More Races	67.4%
Children with Disabilities	22.3%
Limited English Proficient	30.7%
Low Income	50.8%
Female	62.3%
Male	62.2%

Actual: 2010–2011

Preliminary SY 2010–2011 data reported as of: December 1, 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.

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

In August 2010, the Delaware Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

During Year 1, the State participated in both Race to the Top Assessment Consortia. However, in September 2011, the State chose to become a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and is no longer participating in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

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

After adopting the CCSS, Delaware embarked on building, revising, and implementing statewide standards to ensure a smooth and rapid transition to the CCSS.

Delaware commissioned a vendor to conduct an alignment study to compare the Delaware Content Standards to the CCSS in ELA/reading and mathematics in spring 2010. That alignment study found matches of 100 percent in ELA/reading and 79 percent in mathematics. Subsequently, the Delaware Board of Education formally adopted the CCSS to replace the previous Delaware Content Standards in ELA/reading and mathematics. DDOE, working in cooperation with its assessment vendor, undertook comprehensive item development plans with the goal of populating the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) item pool and all grades 3–10 tests in ELA/reading and mathematics with CCSS-aligned test items by the 2014–2015 school year.[6]

Delaware implemented an online, computer-adaptive DCAS at the beginning of SY 2010–2011, with assessments in grades 3-10 in ELA/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. The DCAS is administered three times each year. The State reports that the DCAS measures student progress in a timely and reliable manner to inform instruction. According to the State, the SY 2010–2011 administration of the online assessment was generally successful. Based on user feedback, the State developed plans to address administration issues. The State also released statewide scores, launched the DCAS website (http://de.portal.airast.org/) to provide aggregate information about student performance, and developed plans to field test items aligned with the CCSS in the SY 2011–2012 administration of the test.

As of October 2011, development and implementation of the DCAS-Alt, the alternate assessment for students with disabilities, is on schedule. The State completed the initial development of item pools, teacher training on administration, standards setting, and refinement from the initial year of test registration, administration, and reporting.

In January 2011, Delaware selected the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) as its statewide college-readiness exam and implemented a requirement that all 11th-grade public school students participate in the SAT assessment annually. The State administered the SAT during the regular school day at no cost to students in SY 2010–2011. In its June 30, 2011 APR, the State reported that it administered the SAT to 95 percent of students by the end of SY 2010–2011 (as compared to 36 percent participation in SY 2009–2010). By ensuring that more students take the SAT, the State intends to eliminate one barrier to applying for college. The State provided SAT summary reports for each LEA to the public and media and will work with its LEAs to determine any additional data that would be useful to report. Similarly, the State will hold the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) administration for all 10th-grade students starting in fall 2011.

To enhance advanced mathematics and science course offerings and other courses in which Delaware students have historically underperformed, Delaware invested in Advanced Placement (AP) Summer Institutes. The State designed the AP Summer Institutes to train teachers in core AP courses. More than 80 teachers attended one of two available institutes, which met in summer 2011. The goal of this initiative is to expand the pool of teachers qualified to teach AP coursework and the number of students taking high-quality AP courses.

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[6] The Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System is a Statewide summative assessment designed to measure what Delaware's students know and are able to do in reading and mathematics (grades 3–10), science (grades 5, 8, and 10), and social studies (grades 4 and 7). Each test question measures knowledge of the content standards and grade-level expectations.

Dissemination of resources and professional development

As with projects across the State's Race to the Top plan, Delaware continually surveys LEAs to elicit input with respect to LEA needs and capacity. After the Delaware Board of Education adopted the CCSS, Delaware launched plans for professional development in fall 2010 to assist LEA personnel and teachers in adjusting their curricula accordingly. The State conducted professional development through Component 1 (online modules) and Component 2 (discussion session) training. There were also train-the-trainer sessions for LEA-nominated curriculum specialists and lead teachers. As of June 30, 2011, Delaware reported that 79 percent of teachers across the State received training on the CCSS and the Delaware Prioritized Curriculum by the end of SY 2010–2011. Further, Delaware posted Common Core-aligned curricular and instructional resources, such as sample units and lesson plans, on its website for widespread access by LEA and school staff. Teachers across the State contributed to the development of these resources.

Challenges

The State reported challenges in providing supports for LEAs to implement the CCSS. The planned development of hundreds of concept organizers and learning progressions proved to be more time and resource intensive than the State anticipated.[7] Delaware is learning from this challenge and identifying opportunities to strengthen implementation of the CCSS. In addition, LEAs reported that they were not always clear on the policies and procedures regarding the new State assessments and that they would like clarification and guidance.

Looking ahead to Year 2

To increase the culture of preparing students for college- and career-readiness coursework in high school, the State will expand opportunities for rigorous coursework in middle schools. To assist LEAs in this endeavor, funding from Race to the Top supports LEAs in implementing research-based programs that have demonstrated increased scores on college- and career-readiness exams. Delaware requested and was approved by the Department to revise the timeline for the Middle School Preparation Program by approximately one year. The additional time allowed Delaware to complete a Request for Proposals (RFP) process with additional information about the needs of the LEAs that will use this service. The preparation programs will be implemented by LEAs by August 2012.

[7] Concept organizers and learning progressions are teachers' tools used to unpack the concepts in each CCSS.

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

Delaware's strategy involves building on the capacity of its current data system to allow access of data from multiple sources via a single sign-on that will be presented in more user-friendly formats. Delaware intends to improve its SLDS structure for State and federal reporting and the integration of data from pre-kindergarten through higher education (hereafter referred to as P–20). Based on continuous feedback from participating LEAs, as well as the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Forum, EdFacts, and the Data Quality Campaign, Delaware will focus on: (1) building a system with agency partners to match students between and among agencies to better serve them from preschool to adulthood; (2) making the system interoperable with other States, agencies, and systems; and (3) moving from separate data storage to a unified data warehouse that will create standard codes, definitions, programming skills, and ad hoc and programmed reports.

Accessing and using State data

In Year 1, Delaware began to build and extend its technology infrastructure to provide data from different sources in a more accessible and user-friendly way, such as through data dashboards.[8] To do this, Delaware hired a project manager to oversee the interconnected projects within this area. The project manager uses an integrated project management approach that identifies links between the different projects to ensure that projects are completed on time and within budget.

Upon determining the status of the State with respect to its technology infrastructure, Delaware requested, and the Department approved, timeline adjustments to allow the State to refine its RFPs to ensure that proposals submitted would match the State's needs. The State met the first milestone at the end of August 2011 with fully operational single sign-on capability and is addressing early technical challenges reported by LEAs.

Delaware changed its approach to State governance during Year 1 after conversations with stakeholders. The State's existing P–20 council, with representatives from all entities that will share data to populate Delaware's data system, will be responsible for data governance. The State faced a challenge when one IHE did not sign a MOU that would have required it to share data, and the State did not have authority to require the IHE to do so. In response, the State passed legislation in June 2011 requiring IHEs to share data and enter into MOUs with the State to this effect.

Using data to improve instruction

Delaware's approach to IIS involves, among other things, the implementation of 90-minute Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within schools. During this weekly collaborative planning time, all teachers focus on use of data to inform instruction, including data dashboards and other electronically accessible data that emerge from the State's technology-based projects. In Year 1, the State required LEAs to report on the elements of their IIS, including a school reform model. Based on State reports, most but not all LEAs have implemented 90-minute PLCs. The State will continue to support LEAs to meet this requirement. IIS will help maximize use of the data system to improve instruction. The State revised the timeline for this work slightly (under an amendment approved by the Department) due to the delay in the timeline for the related Data Coach project (discussed below).

To ensure that PLCs are results driven, the State entered into a contract with a vendor to provide data coaching services to LEAs. Data coaches both facilitate collaborative planning directly and provide training to instructional coaches with the goal of helping teachers develop the technical skills to analyze data and the pedagogical skills to adjust instruction based on data. The State piloted five coaches across seven LEAs over a four-month period in spring 2011. Based on the pilot, the State revised its approach and the timeline on this project to more strategically meet the needs of LEAs and schools. The State is on schedule for full implementation of this project in the 2011–2012 school year. In its APR, as of June 30, 2011, the State reported hiring 28 of 29 coaches. Coaches are Delaware-based and receive eight days of intensive training prior to embarking on their school engagements. During the Department's Year 1 review, staff at one LEA participating in the pilot for this program indicated that the services were beneficial and that the staff worked to develop a common understanding of the mission of the school regarding using data and providing services.

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[8] Dashboards are web pages that allow teachers to monitor student performance. The dashboards aggregate data from existing sources to show a comprehensive view of each student, as well as roll-up views of the data for classrooms, schools, and LEAs or charters.

Lessons learned

The State determined that in order to more strategically meet the needs of its LEAs, it would need to modify its approach to implementing the Data Coach project. Rather than the data coaches using only a direct facilitation method of supporting teachers, schools will now have access to data coaches through two methods: (1) direct facilitation of collaborative planning time and (2) data coaches working with existing LEA instructional and data coaches in a "train-the-trainer" model.

Looking ahead to Year 2

Delaware will continue to survey LEA and school staff on their needs regarding data to inform both the content and format of instruction. To facilitate this, staff overseeing work in this area will continue to conduct end-user focus groups in addition to regularly convening an LEA advisory group. In Year 2, the State will deploy 29 data coaches to all schools for the first year of full implementation of these services.

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.

Within its plan, Delaware has more projects related to Great Teachers and Leaders than in any other reform area. Delaware's Year 1 work in this area focused primarily on preparing for the full implementation in the 2011–2012 school year of projects that provide high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, and provide effective support to teachers and principals. This work entailed carefully crafting RFPs and Requests for Information, selecting vendors, negotiating and signing contracts, and identifying candidates and their placements.

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals

In Year 1, Delaware launched and expanded numerous alternative routes to certification programs for teachers and principals. The Delaware Leadership Project, which is modeled after the New York City Leadership Academy, is a new program launched in the 2011–2012 school year for principals seeking to lead high-need schools. The second alternative route is the Delaware Teaching Fellows program, which has partnered with Wilmington University. Delaware Teaching Fellows is operated by a national organization, The New Teacher Project, which focuses on teacher recruitment, selection, and pre-service training. The first-year cohort includes 22 aspiring teachers, 13 of whom have secured full-time positions

and will take courses at Wilmington University. Another program designed for alternative teacher certification is Teach for America (TFA). Delaware became an official TFA region in June 2011, and TFA hired a Delaware-based executive director. A cohort of 27 new corps members began teaching in the highest-need schools in New Castle County in fall 2011. Additionally, the State will use its Model Staffing Initiative to help schools that historically have had difficulty finding qualified staff to fill vacancies.[9]

DDOE has also proposed to the Delaware Board of Education substantive changes to the regulation that governs the "Approval of Educator Preparation Programs." The amended regulation will allow DDOE to initiate an RFP process that could create additional high-quality teacher certification pathways.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Delaware's teacher and principal evaluation system, the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II), has five components that identify separate areas of teacher practice and responsibility: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities, and Student Improvement. Effective practice within a component is characterized by evidence tied to criteria that highlight the essential knowledge and skills particular to each component. In turn, evidence of criterion performance can be broken out into

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[9] The Model Staffing Initiative is a program designed to support a small cohort of schools in the recruitment, selection, and placement of high-quality educators in their LEAs.

several elements. Each element is a specific and observable area of knowledge and skills that directly relates to a specific component criterion. DPAS II establishes four ratings for all teachers: "ineffective," "needs improvement," "effective," and "highly effective." The total of individual ratings of either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" on the five components that constitute the DPAS II determine which of these four ratings a teacher receives.

The student improvement component is based on academic achievement scores and consists of three parts. For Part I, the schoolwide assessment measure, DDOE will use the approved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculation that reflects the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) accountability scores in reading or mathematics (whichever shows the best result) with percentage proficient by grade and by content area. For Part II, the student cohort assessment measure, DDOE will use DCAS instructional scores as the basis for fall to spring improvement. Those grades 3–10 teachers whose assignments do not clearly fall in a DCAS reading or mathematics area will identify, with the agreement of the building administrator, a DCAS test area for a cohort of students. The cohort assessment could be specific to grade level, subject area, or student-based cohort within a test grade/subject area to include reading or mathematics. Part III, the teacher-specific assessment measure, ties this non-DCAS measure directly to the teacher's current teaching assignment. Further work in this area will continue to take place to identify or develop unique assessment measures for each subject area and/or grade level.

Delaware's originally approved Race to the Top application stated that a teacher who did not rate "satisfactory" on the student improvement component of the DPAS II system could not receive a rating of "effective" overall. Rather, such a teacher would receive either an "ineffective" or "needs improvement" rating. Under an amendment approved by the Department, Delaware will withhold negative consequences triggered by the student growth component alone for the 2011–2012 school year.[10]

Delaware requested this amendment because it was taking longer than anticipated to develop measures, particularly in non-tested grades and subjects, that contribute to the student improvement component of DPAS II, and the State's approved application, as well as Delaware regulations, requires all school staff to be rated in the same way (i.e., using the same components). The approval for this amendment was conditioned on the State submitting a detailed plan and timeline indicating milestones and processes ensuring that it will be able to fully implement DPAS II, including the ability to make decisions based on student improvement, in the 2012–2013 school year. In August 2011, the State submitted a comprehensive plan and process, and the Department fully approved the amendment.

Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

Delaware launched a STEM residency program at the University of Delaware, and the first eight residents graduated from the program in May 2011. The State recruited an additional 10 residents for the 2011–2012 school year. These residents will be placed in schools with a high need for STEM teachers. (For more information about this program, see *Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics*.)

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

During Year 1, the State hired vendors, selected recipients of the services, and began training in preparation for full implementation of programs to support teachers and principals.

To help principals focus their time on instructional leadership rather than administrative tasks, the State partnered with the Delaware Academy for School Leadership (DASL) to provide School Administration Managers (SAMs). The State identified 29 schools to receive SAM services starting in September 2011. Participating schools selected from two models for this service. One model allows for the hiring of a full-time position to take on operational responsibilities so that the principal can spend more time on instructional leadership activities. The other provides time-tracking software for the school and training for the building's existing administrative assistant, along with a stipend to this individual for taking on this time-management responsibility.

Delaware believes that new principals and principals in high-need schools face distinct challenges and, therefore, the State will use Race to the Top funds to invest in these principals' success by offering intensive research-based leadership training to meet their unique needs. In Year 1, Delaware completed the RFP process to select a partner to provide school leadership coaches to 40 novice principals and/or principals leading high-need schools.[11]

The State is also funding the Vision Network, a program that provides comprehensive professional development training and resources to more than 25 schools statewide. The University of Delaware hosts the Vision Network, which receives support from DDOE, participating LEAs, and the Delaware Business Roundtable.

DASL will also provide development coaches to support principals in implementing the State's evaluation system. The initiative will help improve the consistency and rigor of educator performance appraisals and will better link these

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[10] The negative consequences that will occur (if triggered by the student growth component alone) are (1) initiation of an improvement plan, (2) impact on progress toward receiving tenure, and (3) initiation of a pattern of ineffective teaching.

[11] Two 20-principal cohorts will receive the coaching services. These principals will receive two years of coaching services over a three-year period.

appraisals to feedback and professional development opportunities. DASL selected and trained nine development coaches in assessing performance, providing feedback on how to facilitate critical conversations, and identifying opportunities for teacher development. The nine development coaches will directly instruct 60 principals on how to effectively conduct educator evaluations and will provide coaching to assessors to improve the quality and accuracy of performance appraisals and, ultimately, instructional planning and delivery. Development coaches will not conduct performance appraisals themselves. Rather, they will support assessors as the State transitions in Year 2 to a more rigorous and transparent performance appraisal process. The initiative also will provide comprehensive training on aspects of the State's evaluation process to all principals and assistant principals.

Finally, the State is improving its existing Professional Development Certification System, a registration and reporting system for professional development activities. The goal of this system is to ensure that all professional development and supports are effective by measuring student and participant outcomes and continuously improving programs. In Year 1, the State completed an evaluation report, made recommendations for changes to the system, and revised several components of the system.

Lessons learned

Delaware spent much time and effort working through the details of its new evaluation system, particularly in addressing the challenge of measuring student growth in non-tested grades and subject areas. The State refined plans in critical projects to be more strategic in their implementation based on stakeholder input regarding LEA needs and capacity, as well as vendor capacity. The State indicated that it will continue to consider the appropriateness of the plans and refine them to continuously improve and build LEA capacity so that LEAs can sustain the progress they make.

In finalizing contracts and planning for full implementation in the 2011–2012 school year, Delaware worked with its LEAs to ensure that the State's Race to the Top projects in the teacher and leader area would meet their needs, not be duplicative, and advance the State's education reform plan in a way that maximizes impact. For example, Delaware has three projects intended to support principals (SAMs, Development Coaches, and School Leadership Coaches).

In order to maximize resources, the State identified the needs of principals, taking into account whether they are new and/or in high-need schools, to better match services provided to them. According to the State, all principals will receive some form of these services during the 2011–2012 school year. Further, the State sought to learn from best practices and relevant research in crafting its plans for projects in this and other areas.

Looking ahead to Year 2

The 2011–2012 school year will be the first year in which Delaware's new principal and teacher support projects are implemented statewide simultaneously, which will provide an opportunity to benchmark progress in providing effective assistance to teachers and principals.

Further, the State developed and will implement in Year 2 its plan to identify or develop growth measures for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. To accomplish this, the State embarked on a multi-stakeholder and multi-discipline initiative. Over 500 educators across the State participated in identifying, developing, and/or procuring assessments in every subject area and grade level that are technically sound, logistically viable, financially affordable, and in compliance with State regulations. The State is planning to build assessments in critical areas, such as grades K–2, grades 11–12, and career and technical education. Rubrics to ensure rigor and comparability of measures have been developed and approved for use.

In Year 2, Delaware also will continue work on its Talent Transfer Initiative and Talent Retention Bonus Program, projects that support the State's goals for equitable distribution of effective teachers. Beginning in fall 2012, highly effective teachers and principals can transfer to select high-need schools in return for a $5,000 signing bonus and increased professional development. In Year 2, as part of the Talent Retention Bonus Program, DDOE is determining the first cohort of eligible schools, the selection process, and the payment schedule for retention bonuses. Based on the outcome of the evaluations, the State will offer retention bonuses for highly effective teachers and leaders who continue to serve their high-need schools.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Howard High School of Technology is one of the first four PZ schools in Delaware. Part of the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, the State selected Howard primarily because of its low 10th-grade reading and mathematics State test scores. The district hired a new principal to lead the school in its reform efforts. During the first month of his tenure, the principal assessed the school and made a plan to improve student achievement. Through discussions with staff and a comprehensive review, the principal determined that the curriculum did not align to State standards or what the State test assessed. A review of test data revealed that course exams did not have the correct questions or right amount of questions to assess student learning. Students often guessed at the answers to exam questions. Through strategies such as professional learning communities (PLCs), data coaches, curriculum revisions, smaller learning communities, scheduling adjustments, and changes in staff, the school has experienced great improvement. The principal reports seeing a concentration on alignment to the standards and more consistency across classrooms. Teachers report working more collaboratively, using data to inform instruction, and having a common focus on student achievement. Staff have raised expectations for the students and have noticed that students are more motivated to achieve and have taken ownership of their learning. Both teachers and students have benefitted from the use of the online DCAS, as teachers can immediately use the data to inform their teaching, and students are excited by the feedback on their scores. Due to these efforts, staff have seen a positive change in the school culture and an increase in student achievement.

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]

Delaware based its intervention efforts in low-performing schools around its Partnership Zone (PZ). The PZ is composed of schools that the State identified as its lowest achieving. The State funds the PZ through a combination of Race to the Top funds, School Improvement Grants (SIG), and State funding. With the assistance of the State's new School Turnaround Unit (STU), PZ schools are required to implement one of four intervention models. The first four PZ schools are implementing the transformation model during the 2011–2012 school year (see text box for an example of such implementation).

The STU works with PZ schools through extensive on-site planning and support. It has assisted the PZ schools in all aspects of reform implementation, including hiring, professional development, and scheduling changes. Beyond regular on-site collaboration, the STU supports PZ schools through structures such as PZ Council meetings, LEA PZ Advisory Board meetings, local board of education meetings, technical assistance, on-site monitoring, and regular data collection. These structures provide PZ schools with access to information and best practices as well as experts, mentors, and partners.

During the SY 2010–2011 school year, the STU staff worked extensively with the four PZ schools to develop detailed plans for implementing the transformation model and to assist in early implementation activities, such as identifying teaching staff and completing instructional time audits. Full implementation of the PZ began in the 2011–2012 school year. As part of the monitoring in the PZ schools that are implementing the transformation model in 2011–2012, an STU staff member will visit each school at least once per month. The State has selected six additional PZ schools for full implementation in the 2012–2013 school year.

The STU faced some initial challenges building relationships with PZ schools. The State responded to requests for additional contact and support and reports that it has built productive relationships. The STU has begun providing support and assistance to the SY 2012–2013 PZ cohort.

In addition to its work with the PZ schools, the State awarded two rounds of Academic Achievement Awards in Year 1. These awards, created by legislation spearheaded by the Lieutenant Governor and passed by the Delaware General Assembly in 2009, give five public schools $150,000 each year for significantly closing the achievement gap and/or meeting AYP for two or more consecutive years.

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[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.

The most recent General Assembly passed House Bill 205 in August 2011 to ensure successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools. The law increases accountability and improves oversight of charter schools by ensuring proper governance, more disclosure of financial information on an ongoing basis, and more authority for the State to respond once it identifies problems. If the State must close a school, the law allows a high-quality charter school operator to receive a charter to operate at the site in a shorter timeframe. A charter operator that has proven to be successful in serving its students would be able to begin operating in less than the 18 months currently required. This change will not affect or dilute the substantive review that the school must complete following submission of the charter application; instead, it reduces the amount of time between application submission and actual opening of the school.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Through Race to the Top, the State partnered with the University of Delaware in creating a STEM residency program. This initiative, an alternative certification pathway for aspiring teachers through the university's Graduate School of Education, includes the recruitment, selection, pre-service training, and one-year residency placements for an annual cohort of developing teachers. The program actively recruits candidates with strong content and/or professional backgrounds in STEM disciplines. Residents are trained through rigorous summer coursework and a one-year residency internship in a STEM classroom. Upon completing the program, residents work in traditionally hard-to-staff schools. Graduates receive a Masters of Arts in Teaching, and mentor teachers are paid a stipend for their participation. The first cohort of eight teachers completed their SY 2010–2011 residency year in the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District. Seven have secured full-time teaching placements in schools that have been traditionally hard to staff.

The STEM Council, a diverse group of stakeholders and educators that researches innovative projects and best practices in STEM teaching and learning, began meeting in March 2011. The Council is composed of representatives from technology companies, elected officials, school administrators, and educators. The Council will work with educators to consider a wide range of innovative projects, including providing students with hands-on experience, improving technological literacy, and assisting underrepresented groups in pursuing STEM careers. The State will disseminate the Council's findings to LEAs and schools and use the information to inform the State's Race to the Top work. The State's STEM reform plan focuses on underserved students and subgroups, as well as hard-to-staff schools.

Challenges

Delaware's major challenge in this area has been the organization of the STEM Council. Although members' outside obligations and the geographical isolation of some participants hampered the Council's timely establishment, it is now beginning to make progress on its agenda. The State reports that Council delays have not negatively affected the implementation of other programs.

Looking ahead to Year 2

The State selected 10 STEM residents for the 2011–2012 school year. These Cohort 2 residents received training during the summer of 2011 and were placed by DDOE in schools in fall 2011.

Innovations for improving early learning outcomes

The State completed a comprehensive revision of "The Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers" and "The Early Learning Foundations: Preschool," which are early learning guidelines for children ages birth to kindergarten entry. The State reported that the guidelines' revisions ensured two things: (1) that the learning indicators in the guidelines had research or an evidence base to support the learning targets and (2) that the foundations standards aligned with the kindergarten grade-level expectations and the CCSS. The State reported that a national early learning content expert completed a comprehensive analysis that demonstrated a high-level of alignment of the standards to later developmental expectations of kindergarten children. The alignment of the early learning standards with kindergarten expectations will enhance the likelihood that children will be able to transition smoothly from preschool to kindergarten.

The State reports that over the past three years it has invested substantial resources and effort in developing a quality rating and improvement system, known as Delaware Stars for Early Success. Delaware Stars is currently involved with more than 180 early care and education programs throughout the State, working with individually licensed sites to provide technical assistance and support to programs to strengthen the quality of services provided to young children and their families. The State reported that approximately 40 programs raised their level of quality within the past year. Beginning in July 2011, the Delaware General Assembly appropriated $13 million to support the implementation of a tiered reimbursement system linked to quality. This reflects a substantial investment by the State in the quality rating and improvement process and will enable the State to provide quality early learning experiences to approximately 5,000 additional children.

Expansion and adaptation of statewide longitudinal data systems

Expansion of Delaware's SLDS is a key component of Race to the Top and a prerequisite for developing its Educational Dashboard Portals. Through this initiative, Delaware is creating a single, integrated warehouse of longitudinal data intended to become a "birth to work" repository of information, which is engineered to answer questions related to policy, practice, and effectiveness and support data-driven decision-making in the classroom through a series of performance management dashboards. Phase I development of the warehouse was completed in July 2011, and Delaware is currently migrating the State's existing longitudinal data to the new warehouse structure. The first use of warehouse data will be to support a dashboard focused on the needs of teachers in the classroom. Expansion of the longitudinal data system warehouse to additional early learning, human service, and higher education data sets will occur in 2012 and 2013.

P–20 coordination, vertical and horizontal alignment

The Delaware P–20 Council established the Early Childhood Data Network (ECDN) with the goal of creating a cross-agency network of existing data systems. The ECDN will be able to track longitudinal data to determine whether children birth to age five are on track to succeed in school and beyond based on specific school readiness indicators that cover children from birth through third grade.

The Delaware General Assembly passed House Bill 213 on July 1, 2011, to provide for the development of regulations that govern data collection, analysis, use, and reporting across diverse State agencies and education sectors. The bill also provides for the expansion of the P–20 Council to be more representative of the preschool-through-career education pipeline in Delaware. New members of the P–20 Council include the Secretary of Labor; the Secretary of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families; the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services; the Chief of the Delaware Chief School Officers Association; the President of the Delaware State Education Association; and the President of the Delaware Charter School Network.

In taking responsibility for interagency data governance, the P–20 Council will be better equipped to focus on ensuring that agencies share longitudinal data to inform issues of vertical alignment and transition points throughout the State's education pipeline. As interagency datasets with student-level data are expected to be housed at DDOE, House Bill 213 allows DDOE to develop regulations that govern data collection, analysis, use, and reporting. These regulations will be developed in consultation with the P–20 Council and the Interagency Resource Management Committee, with the consent of the Delaware Board of Education. The regulations will be in compliance with applicable federal and State privacy laws. In addition, the legislation provides for agencies to develop MOUs to facilitate the sharing and use of education data.

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.

Glossary

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."