

CONGRESSMAN JARED POLIS

2nd District, Colorado | 1433 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2161 | polis.house.gov

RACE TO THE TOP ACT OF 2013

The Race to the Top Act authorizes the continuation of President Obama's highly successful Race to the Top (RTT) competitive grants to states and school districts that demonstrate a strong commitment to bold educational reforms to close achievement gaps and improve academic outcomes for all students, such as increasing graduation rates and college access and success.

Since RTT has begun, all states have initiated education reform, and because Race to the Top has incentivized states to adopt high standards, improve teacher quality, turn around chronically failing schools, and create a positive climate for public charter schools, states have enacted more education reform legislation in one year than they had in the previous decade.

Proven Performance of Race to the Top

- 37 states and D.C. have specifically committed to comprehensive statewide reform.
- 45 states and D.C. have adopted high college- and career-ready standards.
- 38 states and D.C. have committed to improving teacher quality, including alternative certification and stronger effectiveness and evaluation systems.

Since the awarding of three rounds of Race to the Top K-12 competitions and two rounds of Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge competitions, teachers and principals have increased skills to turn around low-performing schools and implement new updated standards and assessments; there are more data coaches to assist teachers and administrators with student academic data; and more state educator evaluation systems are fair and meaningful. Now, RTT funds are being awarded to school districts directly. Most of these recent grants were awarded to districts located in states that have yet to receive state grants. This bill continues direct grants to school districts.

The Race to the Top Act:

- Encourages and rewards the implementation of comprehensive reforms and innovative strategies that close achievement gaps and remove barriers to innovation through four-year competitive grants;
- Supports increased teacher and principal effectiveness and efforts to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to be taught by effective educators;
- Strengthens the use of high-quality data to improve instruction and student outcomes;
- Incentivizes the adoption of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards that prepare students for success in a global economy;
- Opens the competition to school districts in addition to states;
- Promotes early learning programs to ensure that students are prepared to learn when they enter the public school system;
- Holds states and districts accountable by making funds conditional to progress toward performance goals, and requires annual reporting;
- Directs the Secretary of Education to ensure that the evaluation of applications is transparent, fair and objective;
- Ensures a priority for rural and high-poverty districts; and,
- Authorizes such sums as are necessary for 2014, and for the succeeding four years.