



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

---

## NEWS RELEASE

---

Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications - (401) 222-8471  
Embargo until: Immediate release - Monday, April 12, 2010

### **Commissioner Gist Schedules Public Meetings, Forums on Race to the Top Commissioner Will Solicit Feedback, Build Support for Round 2 Application**

Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist will hold a series of public meetings and forums over the next five weeks to solicit feedback and build support for the Rhode Island application for Race to the Top Round 2.

Rhode Island will apply for \$75 million in education funding (over four years) in the Round 2 application, which is due at the U.S. Department of Education by June 1. Only two states received funding in Round 1 of Race to the Top. Rhode Island placed 8<sup>th</sup> among the 41 states that applied for funding in Round 1.

“We are in a great position for Round 2,” Gist said. “The ‘Great Teachers and Leaders’ section of our application (worth the most points) received the 2<sup>nd</sup>-highest score in the country. Additionally, we received almost perfect scores for our state standards, our assessment system, our interventions in the lowest-achieving schools, and our new educator-evaluation standards that are based on evidence of student performance.

“Although our application fared well in Round 1, we cannot afford to stand still,” Gist added. “We need to gain points in the sections where we were weak in Round 1, and maintain or add points in the sections where we were strong. Round 2 will be extremely competitive!”

Gist has scheduled meetings in April with the Race to the Top Steering Committee, a 24-member group that advised the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) on the Round 1 application. (Gist is adding new members to the committee for Round 2.) She has also scheduled meetings with all superintendents, school-committee chairs, and local teachers’ union leaders. All of the meetings are open to the public.

After receiving feedback, RIDE will revise and improve the Round 2 application by the end of April. In May, Gist will hold four regional community forums to present the revised application to the public and to receive additional feedback.

Gist said that, between now and May 15, she will focus on securing letters of support from all districts and local teachers’ unions. Though all but one school district signed letters of support for Round 1, only two local teachers’ unions (Providence and Foster) did so.

“Gaining support from all districts and unions will surely help us in our Race to the Top,” Gist said.

A Race to the Top timeline for April and May is attached.

###

**Telephone** 401-222-4600 **Fax** 401-222-6178 **TTY** 800-745-5555 **Voice** 800-745-6575

The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex,  
sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability

## **Rhode Island Race to the Top Round 2 Application Timeline**

### **April 2010**

**Wednesday, April 14:** Steering Committee meeting, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Shepard Building (255 Westminster St./80 Washington St., Providence), Room 260. Open to public.

**Thursday, April 15:** Meeting with all superintendents, school committee chairs, and local teachers' union leaders, 4:30 – 8 p.m. Location TBD. Open to public.

**Monday, April 26:** RIDE posts revised application.

**Tuesday, April 27:** Steering Committee meeting. Details to come. Open to public.

**Wednesday, April 28:** Meeting with all superintendents, school committee chairs, and local teachers' union leaders. Details to come. Open to public.

### **May 2010**

**Week of May 3:** Two regional community forums will be held. Details to come. Open to public.

**Week of May 10:** Two regional community forums will be held. Details to come. Open to public.

**Friday, May 15:** Signed letters of support (Memorandums of Understanding) due from superintendents, school-committee chairs, and local teachers' union leaders.

**Wednesday, May 26:** RIDE makes technical edits and prepares application for submission.

**Thursday, May 27:** Commissioner Gist submits application.