

Transforming Education in Rhode Island



The Race to the Top Opportunity

Race to the Top Implementation Update – Key Accomplishments

Year Three, Quarter Two: December 1, 2012 – February 28, 2013

□ Administration and Progress Monitoring:

- On-site Performance Review from the U.S. Department of Education (ED): In December 2012 and January 2013 the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) compiled, reviewed, and submitted to ED all required program and fiscal information for the state's on-site performance review held on February 11-14, 2013. Project staff engaged in conversations with ED program officers to assess the progress being made in implementing the approved scope of work, the quality of implementation, and the challenges being faced. Three Local Education Agencies (LEA) participated in the on-site review as well.
- LEA Performance Monitoring: The second set of quarterly Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLOs) meetings were conducted. All 52 LEAs met in peer groups from January 2013 through February 2013. The CLO meeting discussions focused on examining problems of practice in implementation of user-friendly data systems, educator excellence, and/or world-class standards and assessments. LEAs shared strategies being used to implement Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), resources supporting transition to the Common Core, and experiences in launching the new data systems.
- Budgeting and Spending: RIDE has prepared a refreshed Race to the Top budget for Year 3 and Year 4 and submitted a budget amendment to ED on January 23, 2013, for approval. The RIDE finance team continues to work with all LEAs to submit budget amendments for allocating funds for Years 3 and 4. The majority of LEAs have submitted amendments, and more than half of the amendments have been approved.
- Engagement: The Race to the Top Steering Committee held its quarterly meeting on February 11, 2013, and engaged in a panel discussion with staff and LEA leaders on the "Data Use" professional development program being conducted with 134 schools and 592 participants. Further updates were provided on the results of the "I Pledge" campaign" (www.educationpledgeri.org), Year 2 spending to date, and progress being made in the implementation of the major project initiatives.

□ Year Three Projects:

- Standards and Curriculum: Curriculum-writing sessions in science, English language arts, and mathematics have been held with more than 600 educators over a total of 17 sessions. RIDE continues to support LEAs in their transition to the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments. 45 LEAs have taken advantage of content-specific training sessions on topics such as academic vocabulary, text complexity, and text-dependent questioning. Additional training geared toward deepening understanding of the mathematics standards has been developed and will be offered in the spring.
- Data Systems and Online Tools for Educators:
 - The *Instructional Management System (IMS)*, which encompasses curriculum, assessments, professional development, and Response to Intervention support has been used to varying degrees by 47 LEAs. Some LEAs have experienced technical challenges as they implement the system; RIDE continues to work closely with the vendor, Global Scholar, to resolve technical issues and to enhance basic functionality requirements needed by LEAs to ensure full utilization and access to the system.
 - As of January 2013, approximately 15 LEAs have accessed the *formative assessment online professional development modules* to some extent through the IMS. The first three modules have been launched on the IMS, and the remaining two modules are being finalized. RIDE continues to work with LEAs regarding technical support regarding enrollment, scheduling, and access to the professional development series.
 - At the end of the testing window for the *interim assessment* fixed-form tests, 11,160 tests were taken by students representing 17 LEAs and 52 schools; approximately 90 percent of the tests were administered in paper-based format, with the remaining 10 percent administered online. In January 2013, RIDE provided schools with access to progress reports from the first testing as well as with training on the scoring system for the test.
 - The *Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS)* continues to be used by LEAs to support evaluator and teacher communication regarding components of the evaluation, as well as for scheduling and entering notes on classroom observations. RIDE is encouraged by the level of use despite the capacity and technology challenges inherent in launching a number of statewide systems at the same time. RIDE continues to work with the vendor, My Learning Plan, to find solutions to issues raised by end-users.
 - All LEAs participating in *data use professional development* completed the four days of training, and the fifth day of on-site visits has been conducted. 22 out of 29 cohorts of school-data leadership teams have completed day six of training.
- Educator Evaluation: In various locations across the state RIDE conducted half-day, in-person training sessions from November 2012 through February 2013 for both personnel evaluating teachers and personnel evaluating building administrators. The trainings are highly interactive, and the training provides evaluators with opportunities to apply new learning and to collaborate with peers in preparation for mid-year conferences. Supporting high-quality implementation of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) continues to be a major focus of training during this quarter. RIDE developed additional SLO resources for the field,

including new SLO samples, a narrated PowerPoint for teachers, and new guidance for writing SLOs. In January 2013, a new “Meeting in a Box,” designed to help school and district leaders provide training for teachers about the mid-year conferences, was made available on the RIDE website. The mid-year conference “Meeting in a Box” is focused on helping teachers prepare for their mid-year conference, including a review of the criteria for potential revisions to Student Learning Objectives.

- **Beginning Teacher Induction:** Currently, the induction program supports 412 beginning teachers in 43 LEAs. All these beginning teachers, plus the 41 teachers in urban-core LEAs who receive a second year of service, have been matched with an Induction Coach. All Induction Coaches have participated in biweekly forums and the quarterly academy. RIDE staff members have shadowed all Induction Coaches to gain a greater understanding of what areas are going well and in what areas greater preparation is needed.
- **School Transformation:** RIDE staff members continue to work with the New York City Leadership Academy and LEAs with the identified Cohort I and Cohort II Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools to realign the supports needed by school leaders. The Turnaround Leadership Program principal-residency school-year training is ongoing. The recruitment for the eight remaining candidates for the Turnaround Leadership Program has begun.
- **Virtual Learning Math Modules:** RIDE launched eight virtual learning math modules (VLMMs) with embedded assessments in December 2012. 31 secondary schools across the state have attended VLMM training sessions, and site coordinators at 22 schools have begun to enroll students in VLMM.
- **High-Performing Charter Schools:** RIDE has awarded a second expansion grant to an existing successful charter public school: the International Charter School. The International Charter School will use the funding to expand from K-5 to a K-8 school, beginning in Fall 2013.