



## Highlander Charter School Race to the Top Implementation Update: Years 1 and 2

The Annual Stocktaking provides both the state and the Local Education Agency with an opportunity to review LEA accomplishments and challenges over the course of the Race to the Top (RTT) grant implementation period (i.e., from September 2010 to date). In this summary, RIDE has included relevant LEA-reported data as well as other evidence sources (e.g. training participation) for the purposes of reviewing programmatic successes. This report also identifies areas (if any) in which LEAs are struggling with their ability to meet the Race to the Top commitments and may need assistance and support to meet their goals. We have also included suggestions, based on the LEA’s accomplishments and upcoming implementation activities, where we believe other districts would benefit from hearing their implementation strategies.

### Stocktaking Overview

The table below shows the self-reported status against the year 2 Race to the Top projects for Highlander. During year 2, Highlander has fully participated in the following projects: Study of the Standards, Model Curriculum and Intensive Curriculum Alignment, Educator Evaluation, Recruitment Platform, and New Teacher Induction.

In addition, Highlander has begun planning for the implementation of the following Year 3 projects: ‘Data Use’ Professional Development, Formative Assessment Professional Development Modules, and the Instructional Management System (IMS).

LEA	STUDY OF THE STANDARDS				MODEL CURRICULUM				EDUCATOR EVALUATION				RECRUITMENT (SchoolSpring)				INDUCTION			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Highlander	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN

<b>GREEN</b>	Implementation is on track and there is evidence that the work is taking hold at the district/school level
<b>YELLOW</b>	Implementation is delayed and more preparation or alternative strategies are needed for the work to take hold at the district/school level
<b>RED</b>	Implementation is at risk or off track; there are significant barriers to implementation that your district is facing in the short-term (3-6 mos)
<b>NA</b>	The district is not implementing this project, or the project implementation has not yet started.

### Summary of Performance Management Participation

As you know, participation in the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) process and the submission of the corresponding quarterly progress report is our method for monitoring LEA progress against implementing RTT. More importantly, though, we believe that the quality of RTT implementation is best supported through peer-to-peer sharing, and that the CLO meetings provide LEAs with an opportunity to learn from one another and to gain insights on how to address specific challenges of capacity and practice.

During the 2011-2012 year, Highlander met the bar for participation in all four quarterly CLO meetings. All quarterly progress reports were submitted on-time and Highlander sent consistent participants to the quarterly meetings, which helped build rapport within the CLO group. Additionally, the participants reflected appropriate levels of LEA leadership, were knowledgeable about Highlander’s RTT implementation activities and contributed fully in the peer-to-peer discussion. We also appreciated that Highlander shared a promising practice with the group during the quarter 3 meeting.

In the upcoming year, we are looking forward to having more meaningful conversations around the implementation accomplishments and challenges faced by each district. With that in mind, we would encourage you to continue sharing the tools and strategies you are using in your district and have made suggestions in this report around areas that we would appreciate hearing about in greater detail.

## System of Support 1: Standards and Curriculum

As of July 2012, Highlander Charter School is on-track against the System of Support 1 year 1 and year 2 commitments and tasks for Race to the Top, reflected in the tables below. Based on the quarterly progress reports submitted by Highlander Charter School, we have assessed the district as 'on track', 'delayed' or 'off track/at risk' on each task utilizing the criteria described on page 1 of this report.

Study of the Standards	Year 1:	Year 2:	
	SY10-11	SY11-12	
Identify educators to participate in the Study of the Standards	X*	X	X
Specify names and invite participants	X	X	X
Coordinate schedule with RIDE for all participants	X	X	X
Complete planned educator training	X	X	X

\*Please note: the 'x' in the above table represents the anticipated completion timeline set by RIDE, not when the district completed the task.

Intensive Curriculum Alignment and Model Curriculum Development	Year 1:	Year 2:	
	SY10-11	SY11-12	
Develop and communicate a multi-year Transition Plan for the Common Core State Standards implementation, including clear expectations for school level transition benchmarks and a plan for developing a curriculum aligned to the CCSS in grades K-12	X	X	X
Identify opportunities for educators to work collaboratively to deepen understanding of CCSS (e.g. Common Planning Time, grade level team, department meetings, faculty meetings)		X	X
Conduct analyses of each core curricula to ensure that each is aligned to standards, guaranteed and viable	X		
Identify which, if any, curriculum development is needed as well as the method by which curriculum will be developed (i.e. Model Curriculum with the Charles A. Dana Center, through an LEA cohort, or individually)	X	X	
Create implementation plan, including the identification of aligned resources, to support roll out of new curricula		X	X
Develop curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards, including participation in Dana Center curriculum writing and leadership sessions (if applicable)		X	X

As noted in Highlander's quarterly progress reports, the school met their RTT goals (i.e. 4 per building) for sending educators to Study of the Standards professional development sessions. Highlander also distributed hard copies of the common core standards to all teachers at the start of the school year. Additionally, the district has attended supplemental professional development geared towards increasing readiness to transition through focusing on text complexity, developing text-dependent questions, and deepening understanding of the mathematics standards.

Highlander has made progress against implementing a guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned to the new common core state standards. During the 2011-2012 school year, Highlander aligned their mathematics curriculum to the common core and began to analyze their reading and writing curriculum. While the district had to postpone alignment of the science, social studies, reading, and writing curricula until summer 2012 this does not seem to have impacted your school-wide plan for creating and implementing an aligned curriculum in the necessary timeframe and RIDE is confident that Highlander will meet the RTT timeline expectations.

In their quarterly progress reports, Highlander noted that they have encountered the following challenges around this work:

- The small staff size has made complete alignment a time issue
- The lack of resources has made it difficult to align mathematics and reading simultaneously.

We are pleased to note that Highlander received grant funding from RIDE to develop a professional learning community (PLC) focused on increasing teacher understanding of technology usage in the classroom. In the upcoming CLO sessions, we look forward to hearing more about this PLC, and how it is supporting your work transitioning to the common core. We are also looking forward to learning more about the resources and tools you have developed to support this transition, and hope that you will take the opportunity to share the curriculum materials you are developing with your fellow CLO colleagues during upcoming meetings, or with all districts through the Instructional Improvement System (IMS).

## System of Support 2: Instructional Improvement Systems

As of July, 2012 Highlander Charter School is on-track against the System of Support 2 year 1 and 2 commitments and tasks for Race to the Top. Thus far, Highlander has confirmed that they plan to engage school data leadership teams in 'Data Use' professional development starting in August 2012 and running through the 2012-2013 school year, and have confirmed logistics with RIDE for the initial sessions. Highlander also plans to implement the formative assessment professional development modules, and has attended the RIDE facilitator orientation in preparation for implementation of these modules.

Additionally, Highlander has attended initial trainings on the Instructional Management System (IMS). They appointed an administrator for the project and identified the team that will serve as the LEA subject matter experts. Both the Rtl coordinator and administrator attended training sessions for the IMS program.

In the upcoming CLO sessions, we look forward to hearing about the successes and challenges that Highlander has encountered while implementing these systems, as well as the district's progress around building teacher engagement in the various IMS tools and resources. Additionally, for those participating in the 'Data Use' professional development, we would be interested in hearing some of the strategies that Highlander has learned around deepening collaboration around data and using data to change instructional outcomes.

	Year 1: SY10-11	Year 2: SY11-12	
<b>'Data Use' Professional Development</b>			
Complete a needs assessment survey indicating the use of and collaboration around data within schools and across the LEA			X
Based on RIDE implementation plan, determine the timing (i.e. Year 1, Year 2, or staggered across Year 1 and Year 2) of LEA participation in 'Data Use' Professional Development and provide RIDE with the schools that will participate in Year 1 and/or Year 2 training cohorts			X
In coordination with RIDE, select 'Data Use' training dates for each cohort of schools, as applicable			Year 1*
Identify and provide RIDE with the leadership team members from each school who will participate in the Year 1 and/or Year 2 training cohorts, as applicable			Year 1*

\* Please note that, for this project, 'year 1' refers to cohort 1 taking place during the 2012-2013 school year, and 'year 2' refers to cohort 2 taking place during the 2013-2014 school year.

	Year 1: SY10-11	Year 2: SY11-12	
<b>Instructional Management System (IMS)</b>			
Designate an LEA data steward to support decision making around data collections and systems implementation and to provide input and feedback on data initiatives through designated representatives	Identify LEA Data Steward	X	X
Maintain data quality standards of local student information systems and upload local assessment data and program information as required by RIDE in a timely manner	X	X	X
Review the RIDE <i>IMS Training Plan</i> and develop a multiyear training and implementation plan to provide all educators with access and training on the system			X
Based on <i>IMS Training Plan</i> guidance, register and attend training for Administrative Users (i.e. users who will maintain and configure both the Primary IMS and Rtl Module) and LEA Trainers (i.e. staff to be trained as trainers)			X
Following RIDE training, LEA Administrative Users and LEA Trainers configure the IMS for educator use and to provide end users with access and training needed to utilize the IMS for daily activities			X

	Year 1: SY10-11	Year 2: SY11-12	
<b>Formative Assessment Online Professional Development Modules</b>			
Create multiyear plan for implementation of formative assessment PD modules, including the process and timelines by which all educators will participate in the formative assessment training modules			X
Identify facilitators who will support the implementation of formative assessment practices in daily instruction			X

Based on information provided to RIDE, we anticipate that Highlander will implement the interim assessments during school year 2013-2014. We look forward to hearing about Highlander's progress around developing protocols or expectations regarding the use of interim assessments in next year's quarterly progress update forms.

	Year 1: SY10-11	Year 2: SY11-12	
<b>Interim Assessments</b>			
Identify method by which all educators will have access to interim assessments			X
Develop timeline for training of all educators in the use of interim assessments utilizing train-the-trainer model			X
Develop protocols or expectations regarding the use of interim assessment to inform instruction including timelines for administration and process for scoring and reporting results			X*

\* As per the description on page 1, this task is 'N/A' for Year 2 (2011-2012 school year) because the district is not implementing this project until the 2013-2014 school year.

### System of Support 3: Educator Effectiveness

As of July, 2012 Highlander Charter School is on-track against the System of Support 3 year 1 and 2 commitments and tasks for Race to the Top.

Educator Evaluation	Year 1: SY10-11	Year 2: SY11-12	
Participate in educator evaluation model design, development and refinement feedback opportunities.	X	X	X
Identify District Evaluation Committee members, responsible for monitoring the implementation of the system and providing recommendations to LEA leadership teams.	X	X	X
Participate in field testing to support RI Model development	X		
Identify individuals who will serve as primary and, if applicable, secondary/complementary evaluators	X		X
Send all required evaluators to RIDE-provided evaluator training on model; Send evaluators and system administrators to training on the Educator Performance Support System (EPSS) data system	X	X	X
Examine LEA Policies and Contracts for Challenges; where applicable, consider memorandums of understanding or contract renewal language which will support district implementation of evaluations.	X	X	X
Create a plan for the appropriate use of funds to support implementation of educator evaluation system.	X		X
Complete required RI Model components of educators and building administrator evaluations.		X	X
Submit evaluation data and documentation (e.g. component and summative level ratings, verified rosters); provide other requested information to support RIDE research and system improvement.			X

Based on their quarterly progress reports, Highlander has implemented all components of the Rhode Island Model for teacher and building administrator evaluations and has submitted final summative evaluation ratings for all teachers to RIDE. Highlander created a District Evaluation Committee which has been submitted to RIDE.

To support teacher understanding of the evaluation process, Highlander started the year by creating a master calendar of all relevant timelines and dates, and also created binders of evaluation materials to support each teacher. The quarterly progress updates also indicated that Highlander conducted pre-conferences and established Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) with the help of their RIDE-trained Intermediary Service Provider (ISP). Throughout the year, Highlander evaluators reviewed the data and ratings with one another in order to ensure that the summative and component ratings were calibrated prior to the year-end conferences. The Board Committee had reviewed the Head of School's evaluation and also co-observed a lesson along with an evaluator and the RIDE ISP. Following the co-observation, they compared rubrics and notes in order to ensure that all parties were calibrated.

Highlander evaluators attended 2 of the 4 evaluation training modules offered by RIDE during the 2011-2012 school year. Currently, participants from the district are registered for the upcoming summer training. We want to remind the district that all personnel responsible for evaluating teachers and building administrators must attend Academy training during summer 2012, as well as two half-days of additional professional development taking place over the 2012-2013 school year and online observation practice; personnel responsible for evaluating both teachers and building administrators (e.g., a principal who evaluates teachers and an assistant principal) are only required to attend the *Academy for Personnel Evaluating Teachers*.

In their quarterly progress report, Highlander noted that they have encountered the following challenges around this work:

- Finding time to finish all conferences while also doing short unannounced observations
- Form of midyear conference was deemed inefficient
- Lack of time and resources led to infrastructure challenges

We appreciate that, during the quarter 3 CLO meeting, Highlander shared the structures and processes they put in place to support the evaluation process. We hope that you continue to share the strategies and resources they are using to support their evaluation process during the upcoming CLO meetings.

### System of Support 4: Human Capital Development

As of July, 2012 Highlander Charter School is on-track against the relevant System of Support 3 year 1 and 2 commitments and tasks for Race to the Top. Highlander does not participate in the Beginning Teacher Induction program and, therefore, the SOW for that project has not been included.

<b>Recruitment (SchoolSpring)</b>	<b>Year 1: SY10-11</b>	<b>Year 2: SY11-12</b>	
Provide RIDE with feedback on the desired functionality of a state-wide recruitment platform	X		
Attend orientation sessions with selected vendor and train relevant personnel as needed	X	X	
Post open positions using the state-wide Recruitment Platform (SchoolSpring)		X	X

<b>Beginning Teacher Induction</b>	<b>Year 1: SY10-11</b>	<b>Year 2: SY11-12</b>	
Provide RIDE with feedback around the proposed design of the Induction Coach program	X		
If applicable, recommend potential Induction Coaches to RIDE	X		X
Review and revise hiring policies, timelines and processes in order to support appropriate and timely projections for anticipated hires requiring induction coach services	X		X
Provide RIDE with list of beginning teachers who will receive Induction Coach support in a timely manner in order to ensure that all beginning teachers have coaching	X		X
Participate in RIDE-provided information opportunities in order to learn about induction coach program	X	X	X

Highlander reported that they began to use the SchoolSpring platform in spring 2012 and posted a position for the upcoming school year. In their CLO meeting, Highlander noted that they use the tool along with their traditional recruitment methods and that, ultimately, they feel that hiring candidates who are familiar with the school has yielded better results but will continue to post open positions using SchoolSpring.

While Highlander chose not to participate in the Beginning Teacher Induction program during the 2011-2012 school year, they have identified a teacher from Highlander who will be trained by The New Teacher Center and will incorporate the induction coach practices into Highlander's existing mentorship program for the upcoming 2012-2013 school year.

Highlander has not yet noted any challenges in this area. In the upcoming school year, we anticipate that your peers will begin to think through how they can establish an LEA-sustained data-driven induction coach model. We would encourage you to share more about the existing mentorship program at Highlander, and how you incorporated learnings from the induction model into your refinement efforts for that program.

### Summary of Fiscal Spending To-Date (As of July 18, 2012)

The table below contains an overview of Highlander's fiscal spending through July 18, 2012 as well as the total funds available for reimbursement from years 1 and 2 and for the remaining grant period.

As we approach Year 3 of our Race to the Top implementation, RIDE will be revising all LEA allocations in AcceleGrants as necessary to align with the updated State Scope of Work and the revised budget that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education in April. Our Race to the Top revised budget allowed us to redistribute unspent funds and savings realized after the first year-and-a-half of the program. Savings were primarily due to less spent on personnel, lower costs for contracts than anticipated, and revisions to some program designs. These revisions affected LEA budgets as well as the state budget. Savings in contracts were passed along to LEAs.

Please note that, in the table below, the Total Years 1-4 remaining does not reflect the amended funding. As a result of the budget amendment, LEAs will likely see the funds increase or shift to SEA set asides. We will be sending out instructions to all LEA business managers on the shifts in LEA direct allocations and set-asides and on how to amend Race to the Top budgets for the remaining funding available. If you have any questions on the revised allocations, please contact Crystal Martin, at 222-8482 or at [crystal.martin@ride.ri.gov](mailto:crystal.martin@ride.ri.gov).

	Total Years 1-2 Allocation	Reimbursed through 6/30/12	Years 1-2 Funds Remaining	Total Years 1-4 Remaining
STANDARDS & CURRICULUM	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	\$600.00
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS*	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	\$4,700.00
EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS	\$10,550.00	\$0.00	\$10,550.00	\$11,350.00
HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION	NA	NA	NA	NA
NON-COMMITTED	\$69,906.00	\$0.00	\$69,906.00	\$69,906.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$81,856.01</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$81,856.01</b>	<b>\$86,556.00</b>

\* RIDE has allocated an additional \$575.00 in funds to Highlander Charter School for the support of the Teacher-Course-Student data collection.