

Leading the Way Toward Great Schools

A Year Two Progress Report on
Race to the Top in Rhode Island
August 2012





Race to the Top in Rhode Island

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Rhode Island **\$75 million** to help us raise **student achievement**.

During the past two years, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and local districts and schools have been **working together** to develop and roll out new **supports for educators and students**.

Race to the Top is a four-year grant. This report shares what Rhode Island achieved* in **Year Two**, between September 2011 and September 2012.

*This report highlights Rhode Island's major accomplishments in Year Two but is not intended to include every activity that is part of Race to the Top. A comprehensive view of Race to the Top in Rhode Island is found in the state's [scope of work](#).



Dear Friends of Education,

We were deeply honored two years ago when the U.S. Department of Education awarded Rhode Island a \$75-million Race to the Top grant to aid us in our quest to make our state's schools the best in the country. As we reach the midway point in our four-year grant, we are proud to join with you to look back on our accomplishments to date and to look ahead at the challenges before us in the next year of our Race to the Top initiative.

As you can see from the Year Two Progress Update on Race to the Top in Rhode Island, we have invested these federal funds wisely to further improve the quality of education in our state. Using Race to the Top funds, we have:

- begun an induction program for all new teachers;
- trained nearly 5,000 educators for transition to the new Common Core State Standards;
- implemented educator evaluations in all schools and districts;
- launched a system that makes evaluation tools, guidance, and data accessible in one location;
- developed virtual-learning instruction in mathematics to help struggling students; and
- provided support to help turn around low-achieving schools.

In the coming school year, we look forward to rolling out our Academy for Transformative Leadership, which will prepare aspiring principals to take on leadership roles in our lowest-achieving schools, and to launching an online system for educators that will bring together our data on students, curriculum, assessments, and professional development.

As we approach this important milestone, we want to thank all Rhode Island school leaders, teachers, students, and parents for their effort and enthusiasm over the past two years. Race to the Top has provided Rhode Island with an unprecedented opportunity to improve teaching and learning, and we are confident that, working together, we can continue leading the way toward making our schools America's best!

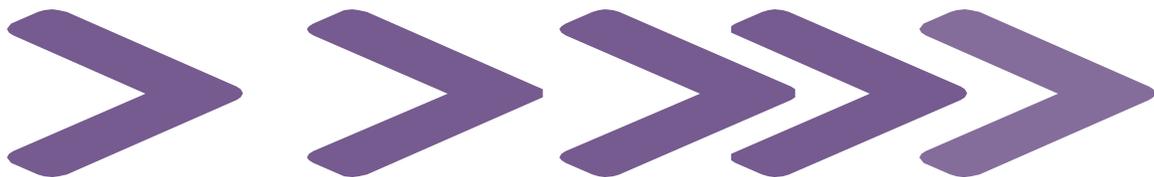
Sincerely,

Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor

Deborah A. Gist, Education Commissioner

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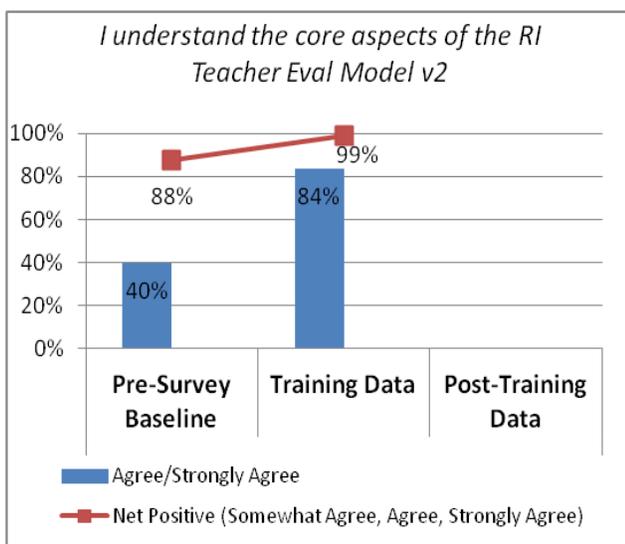
Educator Evaluation

In Year Two, Rhode Island school districts began to implement teacher and administrator evaluations using version 1.0 of the new Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System. RIDE approved two additional evaluation models for teachers, including Coventry's district-designed model and the Innovation Model, developed by a consortium of six districts in collaboration with the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals. All districts that implemented the process during this past year are submitting summative final evaluation ratings for both teachers and building administrators. Approximately 650 evaluators received training on the Rhode Island Model throughout the 2011-12 school year.

Based on educator feedback, Rhode Island developed version 2.0 of the Rhode Island Model and provided guidebooks and intensive training to evaluators on the revised model in summer 2012. The state also developed a new data system for educator evaluation, the Educator Performance and Support System, which will streamline the evaluation process by making all evaluation tools, guidance, and data accessible in a single location. Educators will begin to access the system in fall 2012.

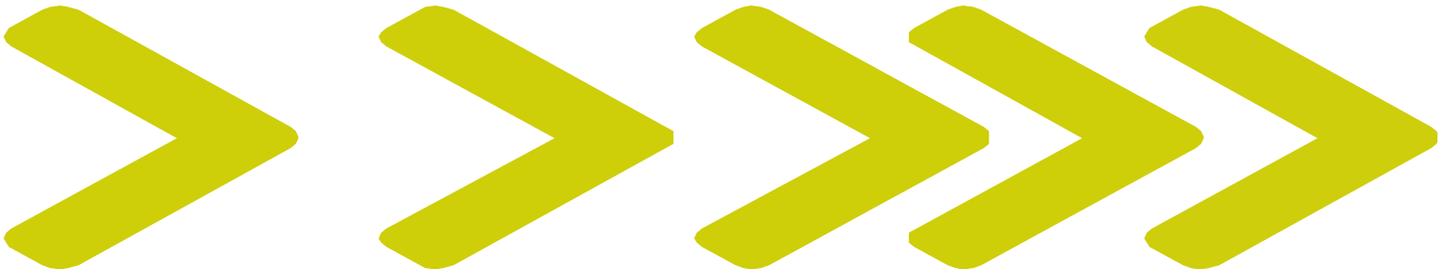
The Board of Regents approved revised regulations on educator certification that will link certification with evaluations.

The graph below displays data from summer 2012 training participants.



What's ahead

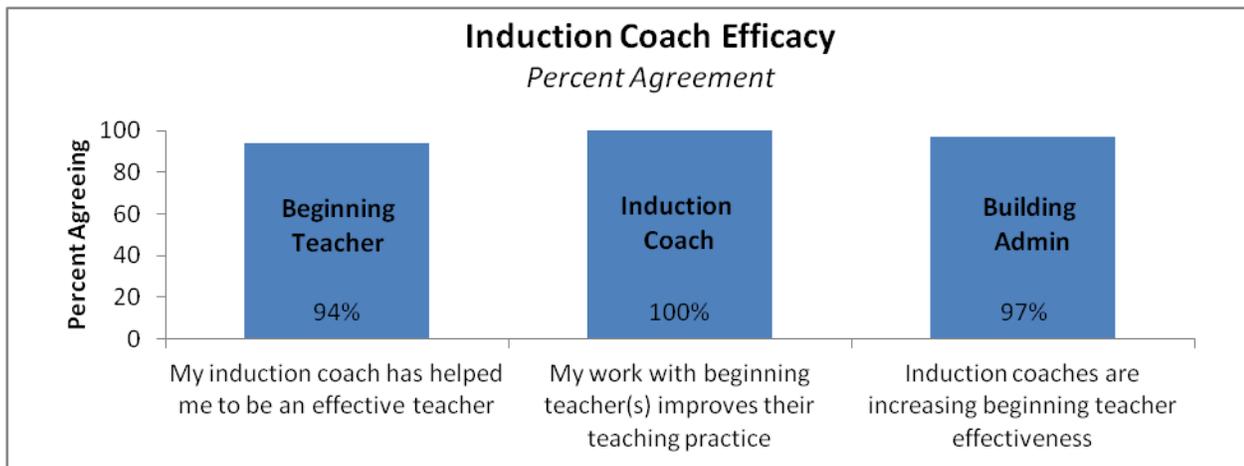
All districts will fully implement educator evaluations in school year 2012-13. In addition to the completed summer training, evaluators will complete 10 hours of observation calibration training in fall 2012. The Educator Performance and Support System, as well as the new data system that will support Rhode Island's educator certification system, eCERT, will go live in fall 2012.



Beginning Teacher Induction

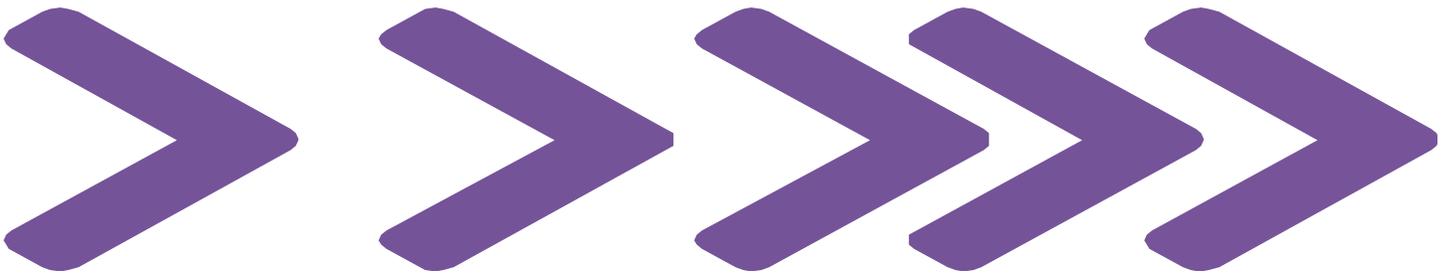
The Beginning Teacher Induction Program launched in Year Two, providing ongoing coaching and feedback to novice teachers in schools across the state. The objective of the program is to provide data-driven and instructionally focused coaching support to beginning teachers in order to improve student achievement and success. In Year Two, 265 beginning teachers received an average of 90 minutes of coaching per week.

Year-end feedback from beginning teachers, induction coaches, and building administrators reflects a perception that the induction coach program is valuable and is raising beginning teacher effectiveness.



What's ahead

All districts intend to participate in the upcoming year. Beginning teachers in urban districts will receive a second year of induction coach support. Additionally, the team anticipates that there will be a higher number of vacancies within districts and, as a result, a higher number of beginning teachers receiving support from induction coaches across the state.



Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments

Transition to the Common Core State Standards: By the end of Year Two, Rhode Island trained approximately 5,000 educators in *Study of the Standards* sessions, exceeding the initial goal for number of educators trained. A myriad of transition resources has been developed and distributed to educators.

Curriculum Alignment: Throughout the second year of Race to the Top, 11 districts were engaged in intensive curriculum work (nine in mathematics and two in English language arts). Rhode Island completed the development of an online Instructional Management System that brings student data, curriculum, assessments, and professional development together into one place for educators statewide. The system will go live in fall 2012.

Assessments: In Year Two, Rhode Island developed tests and strategies that teachers can use to gauge student progress and target their instruction throughout the year:

- A series of online modules on formative assessment, which include videos of Rhode Island educators using formative assessment practices;
- Interim assessments for use in grades 3-11; and
- Discussions with school leadership teams around how to effectively use student data to improve instruction and student achievement.

What's ahead

In fall 2012, the Instructional Management System will go live. Also this fall, test construction tool for the interim assessments will be available to educators, as will the formative assessment modules. Data-use training continues over the next year.



Transformation and Innovation

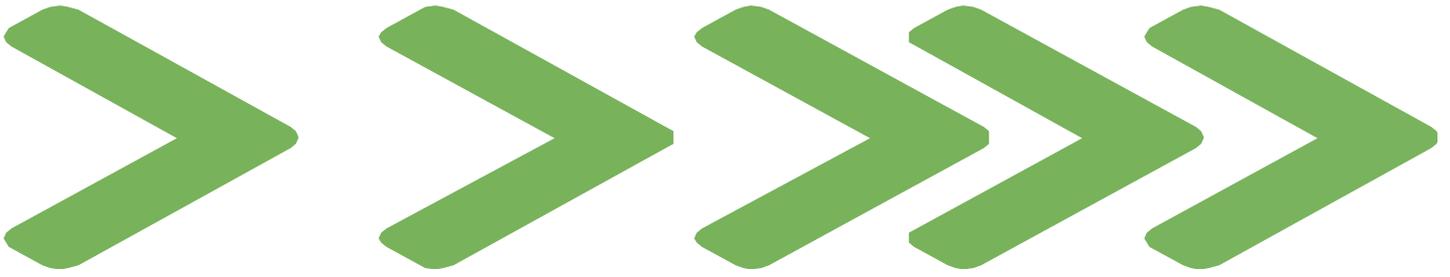
School Transformation: In Year Two, Rhode Island worked closely with those districts that have identified *persistently lowest-achieving schools* to revise and clarify the project plans and timelines for school transformation efforts. The U.S. Department of Education approved those plans, which solidified a course of action that best meets the needs of our districts. Since then, two sessions of intensive training were provided to persistently lowest-achieving schools in the spring and summer of 2012. Rhode Island also completed the development of the Turnaround Leadership Program. The first class of turnaround leaders began their residency with the program in August 2012.

Virtual Learning: This year, Rhode Island developed a series of virtual learning math modules, which schools may elect to use to provide additional support to students struggling in mathematics. The modules were piloted in five schools in the spring of 2012, rolled out to ten schools during the summer, and will roll out to 14 schools this fall. Schools are using the modules in different ways — some incorporated the modules into their summer programs, whereas others intend to use it during or after the school day this fall.

High-Performing Charter Schools: Rhode Island awarded an expansion grant to a local high-performing K-8 charter school to support its expansion into a K-12 school in the fall of 2012. An additional expansion grant will be awarded this fall, along with development grants to new high-performing charter schools.

What's ahead

This fall, the virtual learning math modules will roll out to additional schools. The first year of the Turnaround Leadership Program will be ongoing through Year Three.



Managing Race to the Top

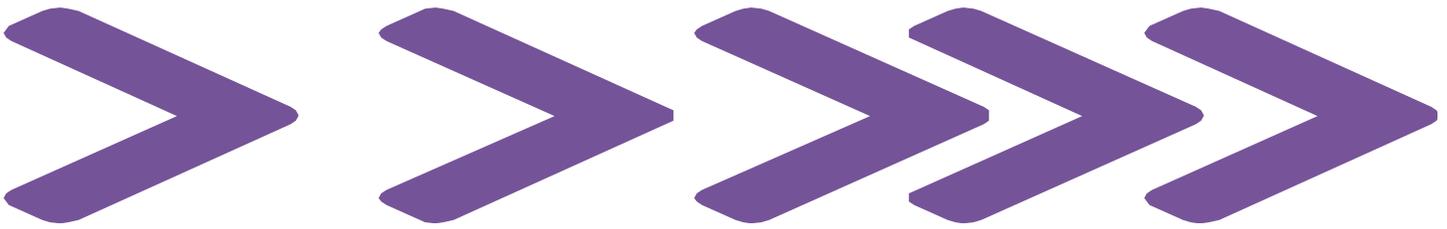
To manage the complex development, implementation, and integration of Race to the Top projects at the state and local levels, RIDE has invested significant time and attention in progress monitoring and quality assurance.

State Level: Rhode Island monitors the progress and quality of implementation of Race to the Top projects using a performance management system called EdStat. The U.S. Department of Education identified EdStat as a promising practice for monitoring performance. A team from the Department visited and video-taped the process and will be producing both a video and article on Rhode Island's approach to performance monitoring.

Local Level: Rhode Island monitors the progress and quality of implementation of Race to the Top projects using the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) process. All 50 Rhode Island districts, charter schools, and state schools are participating in Race to the Top. All of these entities attend CLO meetings, in which leadership teams from around the state share promising practices and challenges with one another. By the end of Year Two, 95 percent of CLO participants indicated that the sharing of practices has been valuable to them, and 93 percent of participants were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the meetings overall.

What's ahead

Rhode Island will continue using EdStat and Collaborative Learning for Outcomes to monitor state and local progress on Race to the Top projects in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years.



Investing Race to the Top

Race to the Top Investments through the End of Year Two (9.24.2010 - 9.30.2012)			
Budget Categories	Spending to Date (9.24.10 - 6.30.12)	Year-to-Date Projections (7.1.12 - 9.30.12)	Total
State Spending Only			
Study of the Standards and Curriculum Alignment	\$1,695,383	\$601,000	\$2,296,383
Student Growth Measures (for educator evaluation system)	281,629	300,000	581,629
Certification and Licensure System	414,631	26,100	440,731
Multiple Pathways (virtual learning and innovation)	68,258	200,000	268,258
Project Management and Collaborative Learning for Outcomes	916,227	130,852	1,047,079
Administration Expenses (such as travel, equipment, and supplies)	671,092	600,000	1,271,092
Legal Counsel	50,420	-	50,420
Personnel and Fringe Benefits	2,132,924	365,000	2,497,924
State and Local Spending			
Educator Evaluation System	1,838,366	1,600,000	3,438,366
Instructional Management System	3,834,768	3,000,000	6,834,768
Beginning Teacher Induction	1,360,464	450,000	1,810,464
Alternative Certification (for hard-to-staff subjects)	668,783	450,000	1,118,783
School Transformation	176,425	150,000	326,425
Local Spending Only			
Reimbursement to Districts for Work on Various Projects	1,873,866	4,000,000	5,873,866
Total Investments	\$15,983,236	\$11,872,952	\$27,856,188

What's ahead
Rhode Island is on track to use the full \$75 million over the four years of the grant.

Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor

Deborah A. Gist, Education Commissioner

August 2012

Many thanks to Rhode Island districts, schools, and educators for their dedication to students and willingness to work together to raise student achievement in our state.

Special thanks to the Race to the Top Steering Committee for its support and continued engagement in this important work.

For more information, please contact Nicole Shaffer at nicole.shaffer@ride.ri.gov.

The contents of this report were developed under a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

