

Introduction

On January 19, 2010, Ohio submitted its application to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for the historic and highly competitive Race to the Top (RttT) initiative. This document serves as a summary of the comprehensive application Ohio submitted on Tuesday. Our theme, From Fifth to First, represents a bold vision of moving from fifth place in the Quality Counts annual rating system to first place in four years. Thus, you will continue to hear more about our “5-1-4” strategy in future communications and presentations. We hope all of Ohio will join in this significant undertaking! Ohio’s children deserve the best of all of our efforts and our laser-like focus on excellence for all!

5-1-4

From Fifth to First Ohio's Race to the Top Strategy *Executive Summary Document*

Overview

Ohio has a vibrant history of setting ambitious, but achievable goals in the face of daunting challenges. Ohio's Race to the Top (RttT) plan represents the State's next step forward in a long line of courageous endeavors. Improving student achievement across Ohio's 614 districts, 330 charter schools, and 1.9 million students is the State's most pressing social and economic imperative. Ohio's students must be fully equipped to flourish in an increasingly competitive and integrated global economy. There is a shared commitment among leaders of state government, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the State Board of Education, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), teachers, the Ohio Board of Regents and other stakeholders to providing a college and career-ready education to all of the state's children.

Current educational environment

Ohio is a national leader in education reform and innovation. Ohio takes pride in the state's history of leading national efforts to reform education systems and developing the innovative solutions needed to make reform a reality. The impact of two decades of reform is reflected in the state's rise from the middle of the pack to number five in the national Education Week Quality Counts ranking over the last ten years. Now Ohio strives to move from fifth to first.

With the recent passage of House Bill 1 (H.B. 1), Ohio embarked on a journey to reform education for the 21st century, including improving student achievement, increasing graduation rates and eliminating achievement gaps.

This comprehensive education reform law aligns with the four assurances of RttT and establishes the foundation for Ohio's RttT application.

Ohio's Plan for Race to the Top

Ohio is requesting \$409,563,455 in funding from Race to the Top (RttT), divided evenly between the state and participating LEAs. The reform plan articulated in our application is comprehensive and the aggressive goals we have set are achievable with the contemplated funding. These funds will complement the approximately \$300 million invested annually by philanthropic partners in the state of Ohio and the many state resources dedicated to education.

Ohio has broad support for its RttT efforts, receiving letters of support from Governor Ted Strickland, the State Board of Education, federal and state legislative leaders, education entities and business leaders throughout the state.

Local Education Agency Involvement

Ohio's Local Education Agencies (LEAs) responded to the call to participate in encouraging numbers. LEAs were required to submit a Memorandum of Understanding expressing their interest in participating in Ohio's RttT initiatives. A total of 479 LEAs submitted complete MOUs.

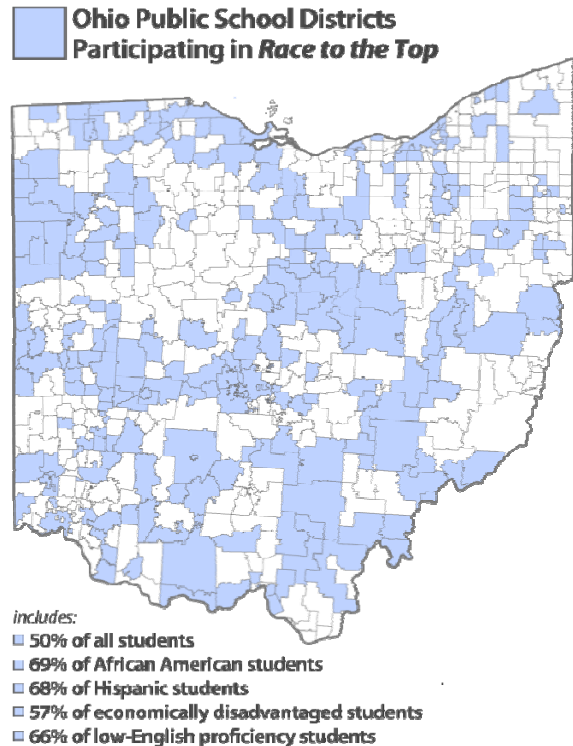
Our participating LEAs offer a demographic mix well-aligned with the RttT emphasis on reducing achievement gaps and turning around low-achieving schools. The participating LEAs include five of Ohio's six largest districts and encompass 53% of Ohio's public schools. These LEAs serve nearly half of Ohio's 1.9 million K-12 students.

Response to RttT Assurance Areas

The USDOE centers the RttT reform initiatives on four priority assurance areas: standards and assessments; data systems to support instruction; great teachers and leaders; and turning around the lowest-achieving schools. Each assurance is focused on deep and systemic reform.

- The **standards and assessments** assurance includes the adoption of internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace.
- The **data systems** assurance includes building a longitudinal data system that measures student success and informs teachers and principals how they can improve their practices in concert with analyzing student data.
- The **great teachers and leaders** assurance includes recruiting, developing, retaining and rewarding effective teachers and principals. Additionally, it calls for changes in teacher and principal preparation and training programs.
- The **lowest-achieving schools** assurance calls for aggressive action to be taken in turning around persistently underperforming schools.

The following outlines Ohio's plan to address these assurances in the RttT application.



This map represents districts that are participating in Race to the Top.

Assurance 1: Standards and Assessments

Developing and Adopting Common Standards

Ohio has joined the consortium of 51 states and territories in the Common Core Initiative, in partnership with the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, Achieve, ACT, and the College Board, to engage in a vital, comprehensive strategy to develop K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts that are internationally benchmarked and ensure students are successfully prepared for college and careers. Drafts of the college- and career-readiness standards were released for public review and feedback in July, 2009. The K-12 standards and learning progressions will be released in February 2010 for public feedback. For both sets of drafts, ODE provided state-level feedback to the writing teams. The final Common Core documents are expected to be released in early 2010.

Ohio's plan is to adopt and implement the Common Core by June 8, 2010, while building on the State's history of standards leadership by adopting and implementing new rigorous, internationally benchmarked, college and career readiness aligned Ohio standards for science and social studies, and contributing them to standards consortia for those subjects as they emerge. Should a Common Core set of standards for social studies and science be developed, Ohio will be well poised to join and inform that initiative.

Activities

- Finalization of relevant standards: Ohio will continue its ongoing participation in the Common Core Consortium to develop English and mathematics standards, with completion of those standards expected by May, 2010. The State will finalize the development of Ohio science and social studies standards on a concurrent basis, using criteria comparable to the Common Core. The Ohio standards will be completed by June, 2010.
- Public review and adoption: The ODE will sponsor regional meetings to collect public input on Common Core standards from February through March, 2010 (the public comment process for the new Ohio science and social studies standards has already been completed). The State Board of Education will make a public comment period available after announcing its intent to adopt the Common Core in April, 2010. The SBE will then adopt the Common Core and Ohio standards for science and social studies at its meeting on June 8, 2010, as mandated by Ohio law.
- Development and roll-out of aligned assessments and interim supports: New assessment systems, aligned to the new standards, will be developed and phased in over the next three years, or in accordance with the schedule developed by the common assessments consortia in which Ohio is participating. In the interim, the State will provide guidance and resources to school districts to assist them in the transition to the new standards.

Preconditions for Success

Ohio is well-positioned to achieve its plan for adopting and implementing a common set of K-12 standards, as the State has long been a leader in driving reform in standards and assessment development and translation into effective classroom practice. Ohio's participation in the Common Core continues the State's ongoing work to establish internationally benchmarked standards, building toward college and career readiness.

Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments

Ohio is part of three multi-state consortia that are jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments aligned with the Common Core set of K-12 standards. Since no single consortium has emerged to lead the migration toward high-quality assessments aligned with the Common Core, Ohio has elected to participate in multiple consortia until those groups consolidate or a single leader emerges. The State believes that this is the best strategy to ensure that its perspectives are incorporated into the Common Core assessment development process and that Ohio's development of assessments in support of its new science and social studies standards is consistent with the principles of that process.

Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments

Driving radical change in student outcomes requires not only the adoption of higher standards, but also corresponding changes in classroom practice. Ohio's plan to support the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments will ensure that, within three years, every educator in Ohio is teaching to the State's enhanced standards and has all the supports and resources needed to do so effectively.

Approach

As a local control state, Ohio must be mindful of the variations in needs and resources that exist at a local level and must develop a migration plan that reflects those differences. The two key elements of Ohio's standards and assessment migration plan are to (1) develop and distribute high-quality assessments and instructional supports aligned to the new standards and (2) provide every educator statewide with robust professional development in the use of the new standards and assessments that are tailored to local requirements at the LEA level.

- To ensure that educators are equipped not only with assessments and resources aligned to the new standards, but also with the skills needed to apply them effectively, Ohio will provide professional development to help every educator in the state translate new standards and aligned assessments into effective classroom practice.
- Finally, to ensure that the State's enhanced standards are appropriately integrated into a seamless P-20 system, Ohio will invest in expanding its Kindergarten Readiness Assessment literacy to include other measures of school readiness. Additionally, the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR), in collaboration with ODE's RttT implementation team, will mobilize the University System of Ohio, and as many private academic officers as possible, to ensure that all higher

education institutions in Ohio are thoroughly aligning their entry level curricula and training their entry level faculty to the new standards so that Ohioans truly move seamlessly from high school to college.

Assurance 2: Statewide Longitudinal Data System

Fully Implementing a Statewide Longitudinal Data System

Ohio's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) currently meets nine of the America COMPETES Act elements. The state has a plan in place, with funding proposals pending and all legislative preconditions satisfied, to meet the remaining three elements by 2012. Prior to the passage of House Bill 290 in December 2009, Ohio met 9 out of the 12 requirements in the America COMPETES Act. The language included in H.B. 290 will allow us to meet all 12 of these areas.

Accessing and using State data

Significantly improving student outcomes can only occur in a system that measures progress and makes data broadly available. A foundational theme of Ohio's reform plan is the system-wide use of data to personalize instruction, increase understanding of effective practice, and provide accountability at all levels. Ohio's plan to increase access to and use of State data will build on Ohio's continued leadership in the use of data will create a system in which data may be used to drive stakeholder engagement and inform the decision-making process.

Approach

Driving stakeholder engagement through data access requires that the relevant data sets exist, that appropriate means of access are provided, and that a communication and engagement strategy is in place to translate awareness into action. Ohio will address these requirements by completing its SLDS system with P-20 linkages and augmenting its robust set of data access tools. Ohio's plan will also significantly extend the State's existing commitment to use data for continuous improvement decision-making. In particular, the State will inform instructional improvement decisions through a Statewide roll-out of value-added data reporting at the classroom level, improve management and resource allocation by extending its Consolidated Continuous Improvement Planning (CCIP) tool, and augment data-driven policy research through its new Education Research Center.

Preconditions for Success and Related Evidence

Ohio is well-positioned for successful execution of its plan for data access and use because the State already has a strong SLDS with related tools, and because all legal obstacles to execution of this plan have been removed.

Performance Measures

Ohio is committed to personalizing instruction for every child in every classroom every day. To do so requires effective use of data by all stakeholders, including Ohio's

teachers, principals, administrators, and researchers. In partnership with LEAs and Information Technology Centers (Ohio's regional IT providers to LEAs), ODE will put the right tools in the right hands, with associated professional development and supports, to ensure that data is being used where the child is every day.

Approach

Ohio's RttT project, Personalize Learning Through Formative Instruction, will accelerate the use of data to improve instruction by providing an instructional improvement system and associated professional development, available to any LEA in the State. Formative instruction is instruction based on standards and formative assessments, with constant adjustments based on individual student progress.

A second component of Ohio's plan is to launch an Education Research Center (ERC) to orchestrate high accessibility and use of impactful research that enables stakeholders across Ohio to make the best, data-based decisions for Ohio's students. Ohio will prioritize the needs of the State's persistently low-achieving schools in rolling out these tools, both by addressing their unique needs and by assuring that these schools have instructional improvement systems and associated professional development focused on formative instruction before other schools.

Preconditions for Success

- Today, roughly 30% of Ohio's LEAs have instructional improvement systems in place and more than 2,300 teachers have gone through high-quality, formative assessment professional development. Best-practice tools and professional development exist in the State today, but they do not exist everywhere. ODE is committed to leveraging these best practices, so that every school and LEA has access to them.
- On the technology side, Ohio is positioned to execute quickly and with great success, because the State already has sophisticated longitudinal data tools, including teacher-level, value-added assessments and the Data Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement (D3A2) platform.
- With regard to professional development, Ohio is home to Battelle for Kids, a national non-profit organization focused on use of data to improve instruction. Battelle for Kids has established best practices to improve instruction through formative assessments and has delivered strategies to advance teacher effectiveness based on strong, empirical support.
- Ohio will be able to leverage the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN) in its efforts to personalize instruction through the use of data and technology. OSLN promotes a systems-engineering approach to teaching and learning that is embodied by the use of instructional improvement systems and the practice of formative instruction.

Assurance 3: Great Teachers and Leaders

Providing High-Quality Pathways for Aspiring Teachers and Principals

The RttT guidance calls for states to demonstrate their willingness to allow individuals with career experience to become educators. Ohio's alternative pathways are market-driven and designed to optimize the supply of high-quality teachers and principals in demand areas. Statewide data consistently show that Ohio needs an increased supply of teachers in the subject areas of mathematics, science, special education, foreign language and English language learner (ELL) programs, particularly in the state's low-achieving schools. Ohio understands the critical importance of offering alternative pathways and has legal, statutory, and regulatory provisions in place that allow alternative routes to certification/licensure.

Ohio has a *proven track record* in successfully implementing alternative pathways to licensure. The Credential Review Board allows candidates from Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and other out-of-state providers to become licensed in Ohio.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

Student success stems from great teachers and leaders. At the core of Ohio's reform plan is the fundamental belief that the quality of the teacher is the single most important school factor in determining student success. Through RttT, Ohio will improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, through a comprehensive human capital system.

Approach

Ohio's plan for improving teacher and principal effectiveness will ensure rigorous, fair, and transparent evaluation systems that incorporate measures of student growth. As a collective bargaining state, these evaluation systems will be memorialized in negotiated agreements between the participating LEA and the teachers' union. These comprehensive evaluation systems will provide constructive and timely feedback to teachers and principals and will serve as a guide to professional development and advanced opportunities for educators. Decisions regarding advanced licensure and removal of ineffective teachers and principals will also be based on the evaluation system.

Activities

The first RttT-funded project, Redesign Educator Performance Management Systems, focuses on designing and implementing a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system.

- Expanding Use of Value-Added Data: Reliable measures of student growth that are accepted as legitimate by educators are a fundamental precondition for achieving the long-term, structural changes to licensure and evaluation systems that Ohio is adopting. Ohio differentiates school and district performance using student growth measures as part of the existing accountability system. With the

support of RttT, Ohio will expand the implementation of the student-level, value-added reporting system so that every eligible educator in the state of Ohio receives a report every year.

- **Developing Other Measures of Student Growth:** For teachers in non-tested grades and subject areas, other measures of student achievement gains will be used to determine levels of teacher effectiveness, such as gains on literacy levels, supplemental tests, and performance-based assessments. ODE will work with LEAs, teachers unions, and other stakeholders to develop these measures with the guidance of national experts. In addition, formative assessments and performance-based assessments developed in Ohio's other RttT-funded projects will be utilized as part of a series of measures to document student growth.
- **Evaluation System for Teachers:** ODE will collaborate with LEAs and teachers unions to develop a teacher evaluation model that includes annual evaluations, provides timely and constructive feedback, includes student growth as a significant factor, and differentiates effectiveness using multiple rating categories. The development of a model evaluation system for teachers is a core initiative that is already in process and is spearheaded by a team of Ohio's educators, including representatives from Ohio's teachers unions. The Educator Standards Board will recommend the evaluation system to the State Board of Education for Fall 2010 adoption.
- **Evaluator Training and Credentialing:** Using RttT funds, ODE and practicing educators from across the state will develop and implement an evaluator training and credentialing program that will be deployed by early summer 2011.
- **Principal Evaluation System:** Ohio has developed a model principal evaluation system that differentiates effectiveness using multiple measures of performance, including student growth.
- **Electronic Evaluation Software System:** ODE will implement a software system for teacher and principal evaluations which will facilitate educator effectiveness analysis and inform recommendations around continued employment, dismissal, promotion, tenure, and compensation of educators and to capture data for state-level analysis. In most districts, evaluations are currently completed in paper format. An electronic system will allow schools and districts to maintain complete and accurate records of educator performance and track their growth and development over time. As required in the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund II application, ODE will require the submission of summative data on educator evaluation data aggregated by school. ODE will provide technical assistance to help LEAs implement the system and will provide additional funding for training.
- **New State Licensure Requirements:** Ohio will recommend statewide teacher and principal licensure requirements under the guidance of H.B. 1 to the State Board of Education in Fall 2010 for adoption.
- **Evaluation Model for Teacher Residency Program:** H.B. 1 requires that starting in Fall 2011, beginning teachers must participate in the Four-Year Resident Educator Induction program. Beginning teachers, known as "resident educators," will undertake rigorous interim assessments three to four times per year against

Ohio's Educator Standards and will receive intensive support from mentors, especially in the first year.

The second RttT-funded project, Utilize Evaluation Results to Support Educators, ensures that evaluation system outcomes inform decisions about teacher and principal effectiveness.

- **Statewide Peer Assistance and Review Model:** H.B. 1 requires the State Board of Education to recommend a model Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program to assist teachers who need additional support. LEAs can implement this option as part of the intensive coaching support provided within the teacher evaluation model. RttT investments will support the training of evaluators on the usage of the program. RttT will accelerate LEA adoption of PAR programs and train evaluators statewide.
- **Teacher Residency Program:** This program includes a strong component of professional development in the form of feedback and coaching from mentors and evaluators. Mentors will provide coaching support that is informed by the teacher residency assessments.
- **Statewide Tenure Review Model:** Through H.B. 1, the tenure review period for teachers in Ohio has been extended from three to seven years (Ohio has no tenure law for principals). ODE will ensure this valuable structural change is paired with sound practices to elevate the rigor of tenure decisions. Through RttT and in collaboration with teachers' unions, school boards, and other stakeholders, the ODE will develop guidelines for rigorous tenure review, train LEAs to implement the guidelines, and provide financial support to LEAs implementing the model. ODE will analyze tenure data centrally to determine patterns and trends and will work towards publicly reporting aggregate data linking educator effectiveness and tenure decisions.
- **Compensation Reform:** LEAs opting to pursue compensation reform will work with ODE, national experts, and key stakeholders to assess existing compensation structures, explore other practices, and develop a plan and budget to implement a new compensation system. RttT funds will cover these development expenses.

Preconditions for Success

Ohio has a history of supporting legislation, effective partnerships, and innovations at the state and local levels that will enable successful implementation of this plan.

- In 2004, the legislature created the Educator Standards Board comprised of teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders and charged the board to create performance standards for teachers, principals, and superintendents. Ohio's standards for teachers and principals are unique in that they differentiate performance across multiple stages of development.
- In 2009, the legislature created a new, four-tiered licensure system for teachers and principals that bases advanced levels of licensure on multiple measures, including student growth.

- The legislature created a four-year residency program for new teachers, extended the tenure review period for teachers to seven years, and called for the collaborative creation of a model-evaluation system that is standards-based, differentiates teacher effectiveness using multiple rating categories, and incorporates student growth measures as a significant factor.
- Ohio already has created a model principal evaluation system that differentiates effectiveness and incorporates measures of student growth. This system is currently in 140 schools.
- Four of our major urban districts (Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo) have engaged in creating evaluation and compensation systems that incorporate student growth through a \$20 million Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant.
- Over 100 districts have participated with a national, non-profit organization to validate and use student growth metrics for teachers, and Ohio is well-positioned to expand this work to all districts statewide.
- Ohio has a long history of nationally recognized and well-established Peer Assistance and Review programs in Toledo, Cincinnati, and Columbus.

Ensuring Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals

Ohio's participating LEAs have committed to innovative strategies for placing highly effective teachers and principals in their high-poverty and high-minority schools. No longer will a student's zip code determine access to educator quality.

Approach

Through removal of seniority barriers, addressing teaching and learning conditions, and providing supports and incentives, Ohio's participating LEAs will place highly effective teachers and principals in their high-poverty and high-minority schools. Ohio also will train Turnaround School Leaders for low-achieving schools and will increase the number of effective teachers in mathematics, science, world languages, special education, and ELL programs.

Activities

Ohio will ensure equitable distribution and sufficient numbers of effective teachers and principals through the following projects and activities.

- **Ensure Equitable Distribution of Educators:** ODE will immediately update the 2006 Teacher Equity Plan to transition from a focus on highly *qualified* teachers to one on highly *effective* teachers and principals.

Ohio will provide data to LEAs statewide regarding the distribution of highly qualified teachers in 2010 and transition to data on effective and highly effective teachers and principals by 2012.

ODE will enhance the current *Teacher Distribution Data Analysis* tool to reflect improved multi-level definitions of educator effectiveness. Participating LEAs will use this tool to identify patterns of inequity. LEAs that show evidence of

inequitable distribution have committed to developing a district-specific equity plan in collaboration with their teachers union.

- **Expand Effective Educator Preparation Programs:** On January 6, 2010, President Obama announced the expansion of the Woodrow Wilson STEM Teacher Fellowship program to Ohio. The program will be implemented in four higher education institutions focused on preparing STEM educators for low-achieving schools. Through RttT funding, Ohio will expand the program to four more sites, including the Ohio Appalachian Educators Institute at Ohio University.

Participating LEAs, in partnership with higher education institutions, other providers, and the Ohio STEM Learning Network, will develop Teach Ohio programs to train mid-career professionals in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. The programs will be school-based and will prepare educators to work in low-achieving schools.

Through a public-private collaborative, Ohio will develop a cohort-based, statewide, turnaround leader program based on proven national models.

Preconditions for Success

- The ODE and the Education Trust completed a two-year research project gathering extensive district-level and school-level data regarding the experience and training of teachers.
- The Ohio Teacher Equity Plan, required by the USDOE, was approved in 2006 and was one of only three state plans to satisfy every required provision. Ohio not only won immediate and across-the-board approval, its plan was used by other states and by technical assistance providers in helping other states bring their plans up to standard.
- ODE created the Office of Educator Equity in 2006 to implement the Teacher Equity Plan and develop a tool for districts to conduct their own school-by-school analysis of teacher distribution.
- Ohio monitors and publicly reports the incidence of out-of-field teaching. Ohio also ended the temporary licensing of teachers, provided stipends to teachers for teaching hard-to-staff subject areas in high-needs schools, and created alternative licensure pathways.
- Ohio partnered with the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights to study the method in which teachers are assigned and to analyze teacher quality and student achievement in four small urban school districts in Ohio. The goal was to inform policies and initiatives that accelerate student progress, particularly by improving teaching.
- Major school districts, such as Toledo and Columbus, have created systems to incentivize effective teachers to work in challenging schools. Models and experiences from these and other districts will be shared with participating LEAs.

Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

Ohio's plan focuses on performance accountability for all levels, all the time, all across the state. It will, for the first time, hold teacher and principal preparation programs accountable for graduate success, based on student achievement and student growth. Such accountability for performance outcomes is an important component of a system designed to ensure effective classroom instruction and excellent student achievement.

Approach

To accomplish this outcome, Ohio will link K-12 student data to the students' teachers and principals, link this information to the Ohio institutions where those teachers and principals were prepared, and publicly report this data on an annual basis. The Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents is committed to linking funding, accreditation, and expansion of educator preparation programs in the University System of Ohio to these performance outcomes.

Activities

Through RttT funding, Ohio will:

- Develop a rigorous system of metrics for teacher and principal preparation programs that includes student achievement, student growth, employer satisfaction, and other measures.
- Provide student achievement and student growth data to Ohio educator preparation programs for graduates of those programs, using currently available value-added data and other measures of student growth as those are developed.
- Publicly report student achievement and student growth data of in-state teacher, principal, and superintendent graduates aggregated by institution and program.
- Develop a mechanism for linking state funding for colleges of education to the new system of metrics and make resource allocation decisions regarding effective and ineffective educator preparation programs.
- Expand educator preparation programs that demonstrate superior outcomes and create centers of distinction within those programs.

Preconditions for Success

The following factors enable Ohio to be successful.

- Ohio has all the necessary authority and mechanisms to implement this new accountability system for educator preparation programs.
- The Chancellor of the Board of Regents and the Superintendent of Public Instruction are deeply committed to heightening accountability for teacher and principal preparation programs. Finally, H.B. 1, passed in July 2009, charges the Chancellor and the Superintendent with jointly establishing such metrics for educator preparation programs.

Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals

World class student success demands state-of-the-art human capital systems. If principals and teachers are to help every child achieve success, they must have the benefit of a professional development system that is tailored to their needs and

designed to enhance their practice. Teachers can change students' lives, and the complexity of their work demands the best professional development possible. Ohio's goal is to provide such professional development to all teachers and principals.

Approach

Ohio will accelerate the transformation of professional development in Ohio schools and will ensure that principals and teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to support high levels of learning for all students. Ohio's plan will enable LEAs to provide data-informed professional development, induction support for new principals and teachers, coaching for veteran teachers who need assistance, and common planning and collaboration time. Throughout this entire plan, practicing educators are an integral part of designing and shaping professional development. In addition, all professional development will be evaluated to determine its effectiveness and impact on student learning.

Activities

Ohio's plan for professional development includes one project, Support Educators to Increase Student Growth. It has multiple dimensions and includes supports for new teachers and principals, with additional intensive supports for educators in low-achieving schools. Ohio's professional development plan also has a strong focus on standards-based instruction that is informed by formative assessments. Through collaboration with LEAs, unions, administrators' associations, and statewide networks (e.g., Ohio STEM Learning Network) Ohio will implement the following activities.

- **Planning for Effective Professional Development.** ODE and other service providers, such as the state's Educational Service Centers, will collaborate with LEAs, principals, and teachers as they create relevant, contextually based professional development plans. The plans will be created and evaluated to ensure that the goals are clear and sufficiently challenging, address the context of change and the degree of alignment with the LEA's performance outcomes, assess the potential to meet the goals, and contain strategies for gathering evidence. Evaluation of professional development will occur at all stages of implementation – beginning at the planning stages and continuing through follow-up and impact in the classroom. Professional development will be examined through analysis of qualitative and quantitative indicators including participant reactions, participant learning, organizational changes, participants' effective application of new knowledge and skills, and increases in student learning outcomes. Ohio's professional development plan focuses on improving teacher content knowledge, methods of integrating content and assessment practices, and making connections across disciplines and real-world contexts.
- **Co-Teacher Model.** Beginning teachers in the lowest-achieving schools will be provided with additional mentor support. Beginning teachers at these schools will be placed with a highly effective teacher for their first year of teaching and provided with extensive opportunities to analyze and monitor student progress, modify instructional strategies based on student learning needs, and create a

learning environment that promotes high levels of learning and achievement for all students.

- **Beginning Principal Mentorship Program.** New principals in low-achieving schools will be supported through a two-year program modeled on the New Teacher Center Leadership Institute. Principals will receive intensive coaching from a trained and certified coach, who is selected based on a proven record of successful practice.
- **School Innovation Support Network.** Educators in the lowest-achieving schools will also have access to multiple professional development and technical-assistance opportunities.
- **Leadership Training for District Staff.** Building on the successful Ohio School Leadership Institute developed by the Buckeye Association of School Administrators in partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership, professional development will be provided to central office staff in districts that have low-achieving schools. This institute is designed to develop individual leadership skills, focus on systemic change, and develop strategies for working with turnaround schools.
- **Formative Instruction.** Web-based professional development modules will be developed in collaboration with university partners and regional content specialists. Each module will be organized around high-quality curricular units linked to standards and will provide teacher support, such as detailed developmental learning progressions and formative assessment strategies, especially for high-need students. With support of learning progressions, formative instruction helps teachers identify specific student needs along a continuum of learning, providing significant insights to inform subsequent instruction for individuals and groups of students.
- **Content-Focused Professional Development.** Ohio's transition to revised standards and new assessments will include a strong focus on depth of teaching and appropriate assessment strategies. Professional development will concentrate on improving teacher content knowledge, methods for integrating content and assessment practices, and making connections across disciplines and real-world contexts. Teachers will be collaboratively engaged in creating relevant, contextually-based instructional units incorporating the revised standards and strategies for assessing student learning.

Preconditions for Success

- Ohio is first in the nation to require a four-year induction program and extend the tenure decision to the seventh year of teaching. Building on our 15 years of experience in implementing Ohio's entry year program for new teachers and principals, the new four-year teacher residency program will provide unprecedented support and accountability for teachers in the early phases of their career.
- The career ladder embedded within Ohio's new, tiered licensure system will provide incentives and opportunities for teachers to assume new roles as they expand their expertise through excellent professional development.

- Ohio has extensive experience with training of mentors, providing induction support, professional learning communities, and Peer Assistance and Review programs, and will capitalize on those experiences to transform the way teachers and principals learn and grow.
- The new Evidence-Based Model for school funding provides for lead teachers in each school, and, as this model is phased in over the coming years, will provide a sustainability mechanism for continuation of the residency program after the RttT grant period.
- In the fall of 2009, The Ohio State University (OSU) was awarded a Teacher Quality Partnership Grant by the US Department of Education. Through the grant, OSU is partnering with Columbus City Schools to strengthen the teaching workforce in key identified areas of need, and is partnering with ODE in development of the new four-year teacher residency program.
- Ohio has also worked closely with the New Teacher Center in the design and development of the standards for teachers, principals, and professional development, and continues to partner with the Center in the design of the new teacher residency program.
- Over the past five years, LEAs have worked to align their professional development with the quality standards developed by Ohio's Educator Standards Board in 2005. These standards are consistent with those articulated in RttT – data-informed, job-embedded, ongoing professional development focused on instructional improvement. For three years, nearly 200 districts receiving Poverty-Based Assistance (PBA) Funds for professional development have submitted detailed plans aligning their districts' initiatives to the quality professional development standards. As a part of signing on to Race to the Top, LEAs committed to using Ohio's quality professional development standards as they design and implement professional development at the local level. As part of their final scope of work, LEAs will articulate how they will design professional development to meet these standards.

Assurance 4: Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools

Intervening in the Lowest-Achieving Schools and LEAs

Ohio law grants ODE extensive authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving LEAs, and require them to take corrective action in their persistently lowest-achieving schools as defined in the RttT notice.

The Ohio State Board of Education is authorized under O.R.C. 3301.16 to issue and revoke "the charter of any school district or school which fails to meet the standards for elementary and high schools as prescribed by the board." Additionally, the State is authorized to reconstitute, turn-over or close chronically low-achieving schools.

USDOE approved Ohio's plan to pilot the use of a differentiated accountability model in July 2008. This model of intervention was codified in state statute. O.R.C. 3302.041 (B)

states: “Beginning July 1, 2008, each school district that has been identified for improvement, or that contains a school building that has been identified for improvement, shall implement all corrective actions required by the model of differentiated accountability developed by the Ohio Department of Education and approved by the United States Department of Education. In any school year in which a district is subject to this division, the Ohio Department of Education shall notify the district, prior to the district’s opening date, of the corrective actions it is required to implement in that school year.”

All identified districts and their buildings are required to implement the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP). If a school district or school does not implement the OIP or show improvement following implementation, the original sanctions under ESEA 2001 for school districts and school buildings, which include restructuring or corrective action, are reinstated. These sanctions can also be imposed on “High Support” districts by the State at any time deemed appropriate. Possible actions include restructuring and closure of buildings and districts. This is clarified for school districts and schools in Ohio Administrative Code section 3301-56-01. LEA implementation of the OIP is supported by Ohio’s unified State System of Support and the OIP.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Ohio believes that every child deserves the opportunity to participate in the academic and economic success that comes from attending a high-performing school and will take bold and courageous action to ensure this opportunity for all. In partnership with LEAs, ODE promises the citizens of Ohio that school transformation will be an absolute imperative and together we will dramatically increase the quality of education for the 37,051 students in the State’s 69 persistently lowest-achieving schools. Building this capacity is central to Ohio’s reform agenda and especially to the attainment of our aggressive achievement gap targets.

Approach

Ohio has a high quality plan to attack the problem of struggling schools that addresses persistently lowest-achieving schools comprehensively through the following strategies:

- Increase our use of available student achievement data to identify and respond to local school contexts.
- Establish a collaborative infrastructure that leverages the many partners with expertise with these issues.
- Provide directed supports of established promising practices wherever possible.

Throughout Ohio’s RttT application, we prioritize persistently lowest-achieving schools. These schools will be the first to gain access to the additional instructional supports, such as instructional improvement systems, formative instruction tools, value-added reports, professional development, and STEM education capabilities. The State’s plan centers on a collaborative approach that strengthens State and LEA connections and capacities and links up with a public-private partnership to accelerate the turnaround process, and will be the priority of our partner LEAs as they develop action plans.

Activities

Ohio's plan to turn around the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools is aligned with a broader approach to school improvement. Not only will the ODE and LEAs intervene directly in persistently lowest-achieving schools to turn them around with the intervention models outlined in this notice, but Ohio's stakeholders also will work collaboratively with schools that require additional supports to improve student achievement. Ohio's plan encompasses the following eight elements:

- Continue existing support structures that are funded by other means. Ohio has a variety of supports dedicated to addressing issues in low-performing schools that will continue to exist and will be complemented by Ohio's RttT investments. These include the nationally-recognized Differentiated Model of Accountability, the unified State System of Supports and the Ohio Improvement Process.
- Leverage the State's existing data and reporting mechanisms to identify and diagnose the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools such that every persistently lowest-achieving school in Ohio is aware of its status and trajectory. Identification is the first step in turning around the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools. ODE's existing SLDS and accountability system enables immediate identification and notification of these schools, which will continue to occur annually.
- Design and activate the School Innovation Support Network to enable dramatic turnaround in at least 20 persistently low-achieving schools annually. The turnaround effort requires significant financial resources, innovation, and local-level collaboration to ensure success. Ohio proposes an innovative management structure to achieve these needs: one that links the expertise of ODE with that of Ohio's strong district and non-profit partners and provides opportunities for business and other constituencies to participate in this critical work. Ohio's RttT plan calls for the creation of a public-private partnership, the School Innovation and Support Network (SISN) run by a non-profit partner with demonstrated success in turnaround contexts. The SISN governance structure would include leadership from ODE, the Governor's Office, LEA partners, and other important constituencies.
- Create and implement the School Turnaround Leader Program and produce 20 prepared leadership teams annually. Ohio needs more leaders and teachers who are fully prepared to overcome the unique challenges in persistently low-achieving schools, without whom success will not be achieved. Ohio's RttT plans calls for the purposeful recruitment, screening, and selection of high-potential licensed principals and teacher leaders (in teams) to participate in the year-long STLP preparation program.
- Extend Community Supports to all 69 school turnaround communities. Ohio believes that student learning is driven by two key elements: quality instruction and excellent learning conditions. As part of Ohio's effort to ensure excellent learning conditions in every school building, Ohio has established a comprehensive set of community supports for schools.

- Define a “portfolio” approach to school models in two large districts. Leveraging alternative school models is an essential dimension of moving past the comprehensive, high school model of the last century to a new approach to meeting the educational needs of all students. Using RttT funds, the State will support two large districts financially and technically to evaluate the need and chart a course for a “portfolio” approach to school models that includes a variety of models. This work will leverage external expertise and provide continued support to selected LEAs as they progress to implementation.
- Accelerate the Governor’s Closing the Achievement Gap Program to reach 8,000 educators. Ohio has demonstrated success with high-poverty students through the Governor’s Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) initiative and will use RttT funds to accelerate these efforts. The investment will support management oversight for the acceleration of cultural competency professional development programs to 2,000 educators annually.
- Support emerging innovation focused on low-performing schools. Ohio will make investments in emerging innovations that demonstrate promise in turnaround settings. Partners have demonstrated success with alternative school models, and serve as examples of the type of entity we would support directly with RttT funds. A small reserve has been established to support innovative practice in participating LEAs that would not be sufficiently covered by RttT LEA allocations.

Preconditions For Success

Ohio is positioned to execute faster and with greater success because of the ongoing efforts of our LEA partners, and many existing supports already in place for low-achieving schools and LEAs in Ohio. These include the following:

- Ohio was selected by USDOE as one of a handful of states to lead the implementation of a new Model of Differentiated Accountability that helps the State accelerate support and better target resources, technical assistance, and interventions to the schools and districts that require the most assistance.
- Ohio’s unified State System of Support (SSOS) is designed to build capacity at all levels (i.e., state, regional, district, and school) to continuously improve instructional practices and student performance through the use of a structured four-stage process, the Ohio Improvement Process.
- The Ohio Improvement Process helps districts: (1) effectively use data to identify areas of greatest need; (2) develop a plan to address those areas of need that are anchored by a limited number of focused goals and strategies to significantly improve instructional practice and student performance; (3) implement the plan with integrity; and (4) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement process in changing instructional practices and impacting student performance.

The Governor’s education plan supports the successful Closing The Achievement Gap initiative, which works intensively with underserved, minority students to improve their academic performance and close the achievement gap. By raising expectations and believing in the potential of all students, CTAG empowers students with the skills necessary to assume control over their own learning and life.

H.B. 1 sets an unprecedented level of school district accountability and transparency to achieve results. New reforms incorporate the revision of school operating standards that include a focus on the elements that matter most for turning around schools: a focus on the personalized and individualized needs of each student; effective connections and relationships with families and others who provide support for the social and emotional needs of students; and guidelines for Family and Civic Engagement Teams. The revised Operating Standards for Ohio's schools, as prescribed in H.B. 1, require the establishment of a leadership team at each school to coordinate positive-behavior intervention supports, family and civic engagement services, positive-learning environments, thinking and learning systems, collaborative planning, planning time, student academic interventions, and student extended learning opportunities (O.R.C. 3301.07). By addressing non-academic barriers to success, such as mobility, poverty, and lack of enrichment experiences, Family and Civic Engagement teams are able to harness the support of community-based organizations. Thus, students become wrapped in a system of supports that focus on their social and emotional well-being as well as their academic success.

The State has an existing waiver process for innovative, education pilot programs (O.R.C. 3302.07), and these innovation zones create the foundation for eliminating many of the operational and regulatory barriers that preclude schools from pursuing innovative solutions and models. ODE will support the innovative implementation of new school models in both turnaround schools and other low-achieving schools in the State.

Over the last decade, third-party partners have demonstrated great success in turning around Ohio's lowest-achieving schools. Through the Ohio High School Transformation Initiative (OHSTI) (Appendix E.2.4), ODE and LEAs worked closely with USDOE, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, and other partners to transform Ohio's urban high schools. KnowledgeWorks established small-school models and instituted Early College High Schools (ECHS) to boost opportunity, choice, and relevance for all Ohio students, particularly those in struggling urban districts. During the course of seven years and nearly \$100MM in leveraged federal, State, local, and philanthropic investment, the Ohio-KnowledgeWorks partnership launched 73 redesigned high schools across 11 urban districts and nine Early College High Schools in eight districts in Ohio. Overall high school graduation rates in OHSTI schools increased by 32% from 2002 to 2008. The graduation gap between OHSTI high schools and all Ohio high schools closed dramatically between 2002 and 2008, by more than 73%, with 38% of sites now exceeding the State average graduation rate. These partners and others are poised to expand their efforts in Ohio by leveraging their successful work here and around the country to transform Ohio's persistently lowest-achieving schools with proven turnaround models.

Ohio will also capitalize on the work of the national leadership of the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN). OSLN helps low-achieving schools: (a) implement a rigorous course of study in STEM; (b) support teachers in inquiry-based applied learning

approaches; and, (c) increase student motivation, competence and persistence to pursue advanced STEM academics and careers. OSLN plays a key orchestration role in an emerging national network of state-level STEM education systems (Ohio, Texas, North Carolina, New York, California, Washington, and Tennessee). Most importantly, OSLN can assist all of Ohio's schools in gaining a deeper understanding of how rigor and relevance are best exercised through personalized instruction as demonstrated in the State's STEM schools.

Investment Strategy

Ohio is requesting \$409,563,455 in funding from Race to the Top (RttT). This high quality state plan is organized around three integrated investment strategies that accelerate our strengths, foster high leverage innovations and reinforce rapid local and state systemic change.

Acceleration Investments. Ohio will strengthen the investment in strong, established and broadly endorsed initiatives that accelerate the college and career readiness of every student. Projects designed to accelerate existing efforts are those for which the underlying initiatives are broadly endorsed as proven models and are being used to drive improved student outcomes right now. (47% of RttT resources)

Innovation Investments. Ohio will strengthen the investment in bold innovations that push the boundaries of the system and rapidly leverage our capacity to close achievement gaps. These are targeted at the most challenging problems and demonstrate promise but have yet to achieve widespread endorsement. (35% of RttT resources)

Reinforcement Investments. Ohio will strengthen the investment in local and state capacity to manage dynamic change for radical results in a compressed timeframe (e.g., information and communication technology, research and development capacities, network connectivity). These projects represent a commitment to capacity and systemic performance. (18% of RttT resources)

Next Steps

The federal RttT initiative comes at a critical moment, and Ohio's reform agenda has allowed us to develop and submit a competitive application for this historic investment in education. The USDOE is expected to announce the recipients of RttT funds in April 2010. If Ohio is one of the states selected for RttT funding in April, ODE will be working with participating LEAs and other stakeholders to move forward with the initiatives outlined in our RttT application.