



Reforms of the size and scale to which Race to the Top States have committed, require unprecedented planning, oversight and problem solving to implement. Although many factors influence the outcomes of these reform efforts, performance management is a key structural element in realizing *sustainable reforms* that are durable and adaptive, and persistently focused on improved student growth in the face of changing conditions.

The Reform Support Network (RSN) has prepared a series of four briefs to examine how Race to the Top States are pursuing performance management of their key education reforms. At the RSN's request, leaders from four States—Delaware, Hawaii, Massachusetts and Tennessee—agreed to describe early, promising work that embodies the basic elements of performance management. This brief—the second in the series—profiles how Hawaii and Tennessee are directing and redirecting resources toward priority efforts intended to produce results for their Race to the Top reforms.

### What is performance management?

Performance management is a systemic approach to ensure quality and progress toward organizational goals by aligning structures, processes and routines through a set of reinforcing activities that enable an agency to methodically and routinely monitor the connection between the work underway and the outcomes sought.

This brief addresses “alignment of resources,” the second of the four elements of performance management described in the *Sustainability Rubric*, created by the RSN to support State education agencies (SEAs) endeavoring to improve their performance management practices.<sup>1</sup> The rubric offers a template through which SEAs can identify key elements of sustainability and assess strengths and weaknesses to address in their sustainability planning.

<sup>1</sup>The rubric's three categories are system capacity, performance management, and context for sustaining reform. Within the category of performance management are four elements: clarity of outcomes and theory of action, alignment of resources, collection and use of data, and accountability for results.

*What is alignment of resources?* It means to direct or redirect resources (time, money, technology and people) to priority efforts that produce results and establish clear roles and responsibilities. Using the rubric, SEAs can gauge how well they are answering key questions related to clarifying expected outcomes for student improvement:

- Has the State made significant shifts in how it uses people, funds, time and technology to support the priorities it has identified?
- Are the vast majority of its resources consistently aligned to its strategies to implement priority reforms?
- Has the State assigned clear and accountable leadership for each of its priority goals and reforms?

This brief describes how two States, Hawaii and Tennessee, are aligning resources to the student improvement outcomes each has targeted.

## Hawaii Realigns Staff to Support Schools

The first step in Hawaii's new approach to alignment of resources occurred when State Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi and the State Board of Education jointly developed a **strategic plan** during the 2011–2012 school year. (Previously, the State agency and the State Board of Education had developed separate plans, which were not always aligned and at times featured conflicting priorities, making strategic management and resource allocation challenging.) The new strategic plan set out three goals—student success, staff success and successful systems of support. The Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) subsequently established **six strategies** to achieve the goals:

1. Academic review teams
2. Common Core
3. Comprehensive student support system
4. Formative instruction/data teams
5. Educator effectiveness evaluation
6. Induction and mentoring

## What is “alignment of resources”?

Directing or redirecting resources (time, money, technology and people) to priority efforts that produce results and establish clear roles and responsibilities.

When HIDOE first introduced the strategic plan, principals reacted with appreciation, but they were also “feeling a little overwhelmed,” said Alex Harris, a former portfolio manager in the Office of Strategic Reform. Because the strategic plan would place many new demands on schools and school leaders, HIDOE looked for ways to shift its resources to support educators and schools across the State. “We’re asking a lot of our leaders, so how we are resourcing what we’re mandating is a valid question,” Harris added.

To that end, the State superintendent undertook a major staff realignment, shifting more than 90 positions from the headquarters of HIDOE into its fifteen complex areas.<sup>2</sup> To redeploy so many people, HIDOE shifted both State and Federal funds in its biennial budget, including Race to the Top and Title II monies.

The purpose of the staff realignment was to provide each complex area with six additional staff members, one for each of the strategies set forth in the State's strategic plan. Under the new structure, the staff member assigned to a strategy is responsible for its day-to-day implementation. In addition, HIDOE assigned its deputy superintendent, housed in the headquarters, to be the chief academic officer, and to direct and supervise the 15 complex area superintendents. These administrators meet monthly.

“Because we fund these positions, it's more of an expectation that we can define the implementation,” Harris noted. HIDOE hopes to use this leverage to build the capacity of each complex area team to sustain their implementation of the strategic plan. Acknowledging the limited duration of some of the

<sup>2</sup>Complex areas are administrative units managed by an area superintendent and composed of two to four high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools.

funding, Harris explained that the reallocated positions “are meant to be a bridge and support, while the practices become embedded. The idea is that after two years you’ve built a culture around achieving these goals.”

Part of capacity building is for HIDOE to model for the complex areas the shifting role of education agencies, to move beyond monitoring and compliance toward providing support to schools for improving student achievement. “We deployed our [HIDOE] teams to the schools that asked for help,” Harris said. “Now, we’ve said [to the complex areas], ‘you deploy teams to the schools who we see in our data need help.’”

## Tennessee Reorganizes to Reflect Key Priorities

Soon after his arrival in 2011, Commissioner Kevin Huffman began reorganizing the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) to align with the key priorities in the department’s **strategic plan**:

1. Expand kids’ access to effective teachers and leaders
2. Expand families’ access to good schools
3. Expand educators’ access to resources and best practices
4. Expand public access to information and data

Restructuring leadership roles, staffing and departments would enable the commissioner to align TDOE’s resources to more purposefully and effectively carry out the strategic plan’s priorities and strategies, without adding to the agency budget’s bottom line. Placing the TDOE organizational chart alongside the strategic plan at the beginning of the restructuring made the misalignment obvious, noted Hanseul Kang, TDOE’s chief of staff.

The first of TDOE’s priorities is to “expand kids’ access to effective teachers and leaders.” Before 2011, however, the State was not well positioned to address teacher and leader effectiveness either comprehensively or strategically. TDOE had no division tasked specifically with talent development or human capital management. The staff members

responsible for licensure, professional development and educator evaluation were spread across the agency. To address this situation, Commissioner Huffman created a new teachers and leaders division under the direction of an assistant commissioner. Today, the division includes approximately 30 people overseeing educator licensure, preparation program approval, educator talent (recruitment, staffing, strategic compensation and recognition), evaluation and professional development. TDOE redeployed staff members from other offices and placed all work related to the strategic priority of expanding access to effective teachers and leaders under one leader. “It’s helped them think through existing functions in the framework of a new goal,” Kang observed. “The licensure office was just processing licenses, not thinking about the link between licensure and teacher quality.”

Another of Tennessee’s four strategic priorities is to expand public access to information and data, so the TDOE created a **division of data and research** to carry out its public access mission. The office posts many public reports on achievement and accountability to TDOE’s website. To support the strategic priority of expanded access for educators to resources and best practices, the three departments of curriculum support, special education, and career and technical education—each led by an assistant commissioner—now all report to the State’s deputy commissioner, to ensure both senior leadership and alignment for these areas.

Finally, a second wave of reorganization begun in 2013 has shifted the work of the TDOE regional field offices to align with the strategic priorities. About one-fourth of TDOE’s employees work in eight regional field offices outside of the Nashville headquarters. The strategic plan calls for a chief district support officer to lead the redefinition of the field office mission in terms of academic support to school districts, Kang said. As part of the reorganization, TDOE re-staffed the offices around the new mission, whenever possible drawing upon the experience and skills of existing employees and allowing them to apply for the newly created positions in the regions. Now called **Centers of Regional Excellence** (CORE), “their success depends on the success of the districts they

serve,” Kang explained. CORE offices work closely with district leaders on data-driven decision making, supporting districts in developing local curriculum, teacher and leader effectiveness, balanced assessment system and Response to Intervention and Instruction. In addition, staff from the different Federal program areas joined functional teams rather than being separated by funding source. The TDOE created an office of consolidated planning and monitoring that manages planning and monitoring functions for both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and is developing a new, results-based joint monitoring tool for both programs. It also established an office of the chief financial officer to oversee budgeting and accounting of all funds, regardless of the revenue source.

## Conclusion

This brief, the second in a series of four outlining the elements of performance management, has looked at how Hawaii and Tennessee have realigned resources—particularly staffing, leadership and funding—to support the priorities and implement the strategies embedded in their strategic plans. Like many other States engaged in comprehensive reforms, Hawaii and Tennessee began without sufficient resources directed at these reforms, but they chose to realign and redeploy resources in support of their strategic priorities and outcomes for student achievement, and in the process, exercised a fundamental principle of sound performance management.

Briefs one, three and four in this series look at the other elements of performance management—clarity of outcomes and theory of action, collection and use of data, and accountability for results—through the experiences of Delaware and Massachusetts, as well as Hawaii and Tennessee.

For Race to the Top States to produce sustainable improvement in student achievement, State education agencies and local educational agencies are making the commitment to improve student outcomes in ways that will live well beyond any single program or source of funding. In doing so, the education agency’s role is evolving from monitoring- and compliance-centric to include leadership in support of statewide goals for improved student outcomes.

Each State’s ability to drive change depends on the capacity of its performance management system to guide its work and measure progress. Effective performance management requires commitment to all four elements. In order to accept responsibility and accountability for results, schools, districts and individuals must have clarity about purposes and outcomes and the work needed to accomplish them, must have some autonomy to align resources in support of the work, and must have access to data about their performance and the time and space to analyze the data to make course corrections.

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