

RACE TO THE TOP

Phase 3 Grantees

Arizona
Colorado
Illinois
Kentucky
Louisiana
New Jersey
Pennsylvania

Year 3

(December 2013 – December 2014)



U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

May 2016

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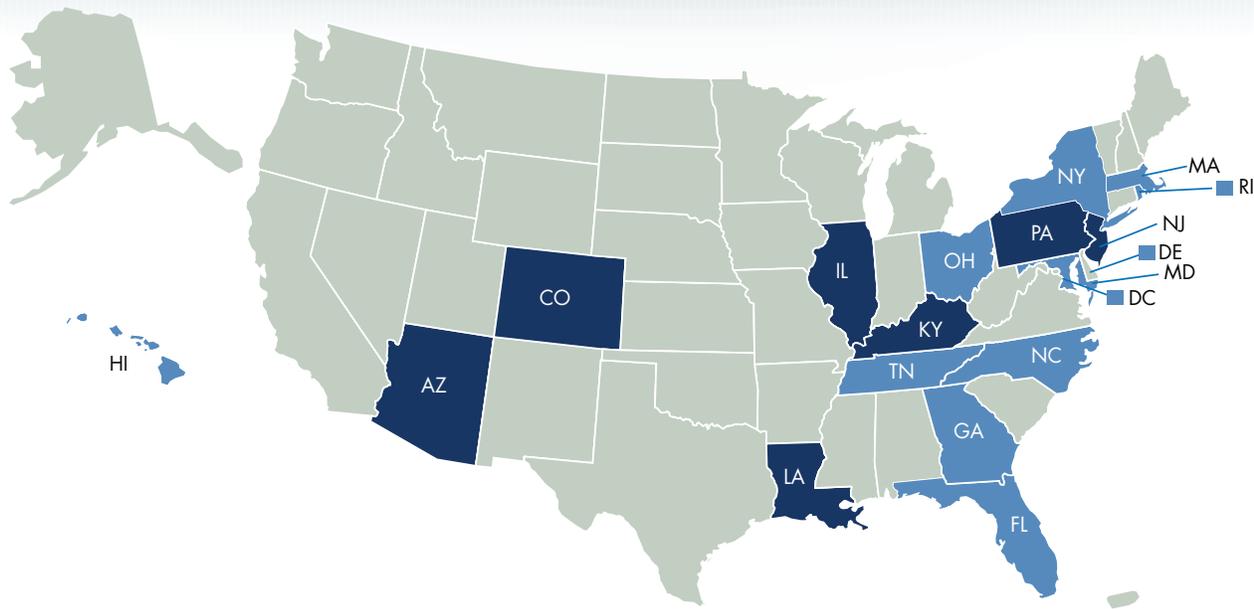
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Executive Summary



■ States with Phase 1 & 2 Race to the Top Grants ■ States with Phase 3 Race to the Top Grants

Race to the Top overview

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. ARRA provided \$4.35 billion for the Race to the Top fund, of which approximately \$4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.¹ In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) awarded Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia. The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers. Since the Race to the Top Phase 1 and 2 and Race to the Top Assessment competitions, the Department has made additional smaller grants under the Race to the Top Phase 3, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge,² and Race to the Top – District³ competitions.

In 2011, the Department awarded Phase 3 grants to seven more States that were finalists in the Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2

competitions. Race to the Top Phase 3 focuses on supporting efforts for comprehensive statewide reform, while also improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education.

The Race to the Top program is built on the framework of comprehensive reform in four education reform areas:

- Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals about how to improve their practices;
- Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and
- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Since education is a complex system, sustained and lasting instructional improvement in classrooms, schools, local educational agencies (LEAs), and States will not be achieved through change unless it is comprehensive and involves a variety of stakeholders. Race to the Top requires that States and LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan (participating LEAs)⁴ take into account their local context to design and implement the most effective and innovative approaches that meet the needs of their educators, students, and families.

¹ The remaining funds were awarded under the Race to the Top Assessment program. More information about the Race to the Top Assessment program is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment>.

² More information on Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html>.

³ More information on Race to the Top – District can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html>.

⁴ Participating local educational agencies (LEAs) are those LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's Memorandum of Understanding with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A receives a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Executive Summary

Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU was to provide assistance to States as they implemented unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, and identifies areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU worked with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helped States work with each other and experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offered collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose was to support Race to the Top grantees as they implemented reforms in education policy and practice, learned from each other, and built their capacity to sustain these reforms.⁵ At the end of Year 3 of the Race to the Top Phase 3 grant period, the Department created the Office of State Support (OSS) to continue to provide support to States across programs as they implement comprehensive reforms. OSS administers programs previously administered by the

ISU, in addition to many of the Department's other elementary and secondary education programs.

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review process help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top grantees, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR § 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).⁶

Race to the Top Phase 3 summary report

This report serves as an assessment of Phase 3 States' implementation of Race to the Top during Year 3. To report on each year of Race to the Top implementation, the Department has published summary reports using information the Department gathered during the review process (*e.g.*, through monthly calls, on-site reviews, and Annual Performance Reports (APRs)).⁷ For Phase 3 States in Years 1 and 2, the Department published individual State-specific summary reports.⁸ For Year 3, the Department is issuing one report that summarizes Race to the Top implementation across all Phase 3 States.

Race to the Top Phase 3 participation (7 States): SY 2013–2014

1,134 LEAs
9,665 principals
307,318 teachers
4,605,228 students

⁵ More information can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/index.html>.

⁶ More information about the Implementation and Support Unit's (ISU's) program review process and State Scopes of Work can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>.

⁷ Through the Annual Performance Report, Race to the Top States reported their progress in meeting Race to the Top goals.

⁸ See <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance.html#phase-3> to access previous Phase 3 State-specific reports.

Arizona

Arizona's participation in Race to the Top: SY 2013–2014



221 LEAs
1,200 principals
48,042 teachers
941,144 students

Arizona's education reform agenda

Arizona crafted its Race to the Top plan to serve as a roadmap to improve the State's education system and ensure that students are well prepared for the 21st century. After the Phase 2 Race to the Top competition, then-Arizona Governor Janice Brewer charged the P-20 Coordinating Council with determining how the major reform initiatives in Arizona's Phase 2 application could be implemented. Starting in fall 2010, the P-20 Coordinating Council's Work Group met for several months to transition the Race to the Top proposal into an Arizona education reform plan that would meet Race to the Top's benchmarks. The Work Group set the vision, goals, and initiatives based on the Phase 2 application and drafted a strategic plan for implementation.

Guiding the Work Group's efforts was an urgent need to prepare students to be leaders in a new economy that values advanced knowledge and skills, particularly in STEM subjects. The Arizona STEM Network was created to bring together leaders from across the State in education, business, and policy in order to create a common agenda for STEM to accelerate student outcomes and meet the demands of college and 21st-century careers. Information collected by the Network and used to create the Arizona STEM Network Business Plan formed the foundation for Arizona's Phase 3 plan.

Supporting the successful implementation of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS) is also central to the State's Race to the Top Phase 3 plan. In determining how to focus the grant, the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation led a group in evaluating progress, identifying gaps, targeting current needs, and agreeing upon priorities. During this process and over the course of the grant, the State outlined the following priorities:

- Providing Regional Centers with additional support so that they can help facilitate the transition to the State's college- and career-ready standards and assessments.

- Rolling out the AZCCRS, and ensuring that the rollout is well aligned with STEM activities already under development.
- Providing educators with assistance in understanding and adjusting instruction based on the student data provided.
- Supporting the transition to high-quality standards and assessments with resource-sharing tools.

The State received a \$25 million Race to the Top Phase 3 award to focus on transitioning to the AZCCRS and integrating STEM teaching and learning with AZCCRS, especially for rural and Native American students. The State provided support and assistance to participating LEAs, efficiently monitored LEA plan implementation, widely disseminated and replicated effective practices statewide, and intervened when necessary to achieve State goals. In school year (SY) 2013-2014, Arizona's Race to the Top grant included 221 participating LEAs composed of 48,042 teachers and 1,200 principals. Of the 941,144 participating students, 494,420 lived in poverty.

Arizona Years 1 and 2 summary

In Years 1 and 2, Arizona created and implemented organizational structures and planning documents to implement its Race to the Top Phase 3 grant. These structures included the five Regional Centers and the Collaborative Education Partners (CEP) group, which is composed of the leaders from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation, and the Regional Centers. Arizona's Regional Centers provide regionally based services, support, and technical assistance, particularly around the transition to the State's college- and career-ready standards and around the use of data systems to support the transition to AZCCRS.

Arizona

ADE leveraged partnerships at the State and Regional Center levels to execute its AZCCRS transition plan. ADE, in cooperation with the Regional Centers and other professional development providers, delivered professional development to Arizona's educators. With the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation, ADE carried out a consistent public awareness and messaging campaign and gathered a variety of survey data from the public, teachers, trainers, and principals to inform AZCCRS implementation.

ADE was delayed, however, in releasing a critical piece of the AZCCRS transition work — the instructional resource vetting process, designed to increase the number of high-quality instructional resources available for the field. With ADE delayed in rolling out the instructional resource vetting process, LEAs were then delayed in completing their task of creating instructional resources. In addition, ADE relied on a legacy electronic platform to share resources with LEAs because of development delays with the new system; however, the legacy system was not user-friendly and did not provide the same functionality that ADE planned with the new system.

During Years 1 and 2, ADE successfully worked with nearly 600 LEAs through the student-teacher-course connection data upload process. In completing this process, ADE effectively created the foundation for greater data use from the classroom to the State level. ADE, in collaboration with the Regional Centers and student information system vendors, worked to build local capacity to gather and share student-teacher-course connection data using common course catalogs that linked existing course names and local course codes to a common statewide course framework. As a result, the State educational agency (SEA) infrastructure enabled LEAs to report data and have access to better information on student learning progress.

Arizona Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, Arizona continued to build statewide capacity to sustain reforms. Overall, implementation of the ADE administration and oversight project helped ADE to coordinate all Race to the Top grant project activities in Year 3. ADE continued to develop its oversight and coordination capacity and advance the work of the State's education reform agenda through the Regional Centers and the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation.

Arizona's Regional Centers provided both oversight and support to LEAs, schools, teachers, and school leaders. The Centers' oversight improved as the result of a newly adopted monitoring process. The new progress monitoring protocol informed internal and external monthly progress updates, as well as local and State policymakers. The desk and on-site monitoring process of participating LEAs continued to provide comprehensive assessments of project implementation in the LEAs. Each LEA reported that ADE

provided high-quality technical service related to the fiscal and administrative functions of the Race to the Top grant.

Arizona continued to align the processes, routines, and policies of the Regional Centers with ADE's strategic initiatives. This process, which began in Year 2, continued in Year 3. The Centers continued to develop services in response to local needs, most of which were related to the transition to new college- and career-ready standards. In Year 3, the Centers provided more LEA-specific services and resources around standards and around STEM integration. Additional support included the deployment of ADE-created instructional resources.

As in previous years, the CEP group continued to provide guidance during monthly meetings to ensure that projects aligned with ADE strategic goals. As mentioned earlier, the CEP group is composed of leaders from ADE, the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation, and the Regional Centers. The inclusion of county superintendents and Regional Implementation Support Team leads at CEP group meetings, a practice introduced in Year 2 and continued in Year 3, remained an integral aspect of ADE's strategy for maintaining Regional Center staff accountability to ADE strategic goals. In addition to involvement with the CEP group, Regional Centers assisted the State with its continuous improvement of Race to the Top implementation by continuing in Year 3 to be responsible for 90-day tactical plans that track survey results, data collections, and fiscal and performance management obligations.

ADE information resources related to AZCCRS contributed to public and educator support of standards implementation. ADE continued to collect relevant data on AZCCRS implementation performance metrics, including the percentage of LEAs implementing AZCCRS; feedback from LEAs on ADE trainings; and the number of instructional resources made available to LEAs. ADE continued to provide support for the State's transition to its college- and career-ready standards. By the end of SY 2013-2014, a cumulative total of 37,025 educators had participated in ADE and Regional Center trainings on AZCCRS, up from 15,651 educators at the end of the previous school year. Educators, on average, rated ADE AZCCRS trainings a 4.35 and rated the Regional Center trainings a 4.63 on a 5-point Likert scale.

As part of the transition to its new standards, Arizona also completed a new Content Management System, which houses online professional development courses and webinars. Although the system is complete, content will not be available through it until SY 2015-2016. Arizona built on its Year 2 work around the Educators Evaluating Quality Instruction Products rubric to increase the quantity and quality of standards-aligned instructional resources. In Year 3, ADE chose to use Regional Centers as the delivery mechanism for trainings that ADE anticipates will provide more timely access to key resources, as well as support to educators in their efforts to identify gaps and create aligned resources.

Arizona

Arizona worked to enhance data quality, access, and utility to support and inform educational decision making. After piloting the student-teacher-course connection in Year 1 and fully implementing it in Year 2, Arizona successfully utilized the collection of the student-teacher-course connection data in Year 3. Over 95 percent of LEAs reached the collection milestones. While ADE continued to provide technical assistance to LEAs when necessary, most LEAs reported no issues related to this project.

Arizona's new report cards engage stakeholders in education reform

In collaboration with the then-called Governor's Office of Education Innovation, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) dramatically overhauled the report cards that publicly display local educational agency goals and data.* The new Arizona Report Card has improved functionality and a more visually appealing interface. This public-facing tool allows parents, community members, and other stakeholders to see how Arizona is progressing on specific data points, which the State refers to as "data stories" (e.g., third-grade reading goals, eighth-grade National Assessment of Educational Progress mathematics goals, high school graduation goals). These data stories include data, graphs, analysis, implications, and actions to consider, and perspectives range from the classroom to the State level.

The site was launched in September 2014. The redesign has increased site traffic and use. In Year 3, there were 16,000 unique visitors to the website, surpassing the goal of 15,000. Arizona also reports increased use of the Report Card in State-level policymaking, and this has increased evidence-based decision making at all levels of the State's education system.

Throughout Year 3, ADE continued to improve the website, and in Year 4 the State plans to increase coordination with higher education institutions in Arizona. This coordination will increase the quantity of performance metrics available for parents, educators, and policymakers.

* The Arizona Report Card can be found at <https://www.azreportcards.org/>.

Challenges

Among the Regional Centers, the quality of trainings, online resource accessibility, and educator usage varied. For instance, although professional development participants continued to positively review trainings, data from the triannual survey showed that the average percentage of participating LEAs rating the effectiveness of the Regional Center model higher than a 4.0 on a 5-point Likert scale decreased slightly, from 85.2 percent in Year 2 to 81.6 percent in Year 3. Additionally, ADE did not release high-quality instructional resources aligned to the AZCCRS through Arizona's new eLearning Platform, referred to as the Content Management System, in Year 3 as it planned. Also, larger LEAs continued to use Regional Center resources at significantly lower rates than smaller and rural LEAs, as in previous years.

In SY 2013-2014, Arizona did not complete the "Educator Quality Instructional Products jury process" for vetting instructional materials aligned to the State's standards. The State also uploaded LEA-produced resources to its electronic delivery system well after the target release date.

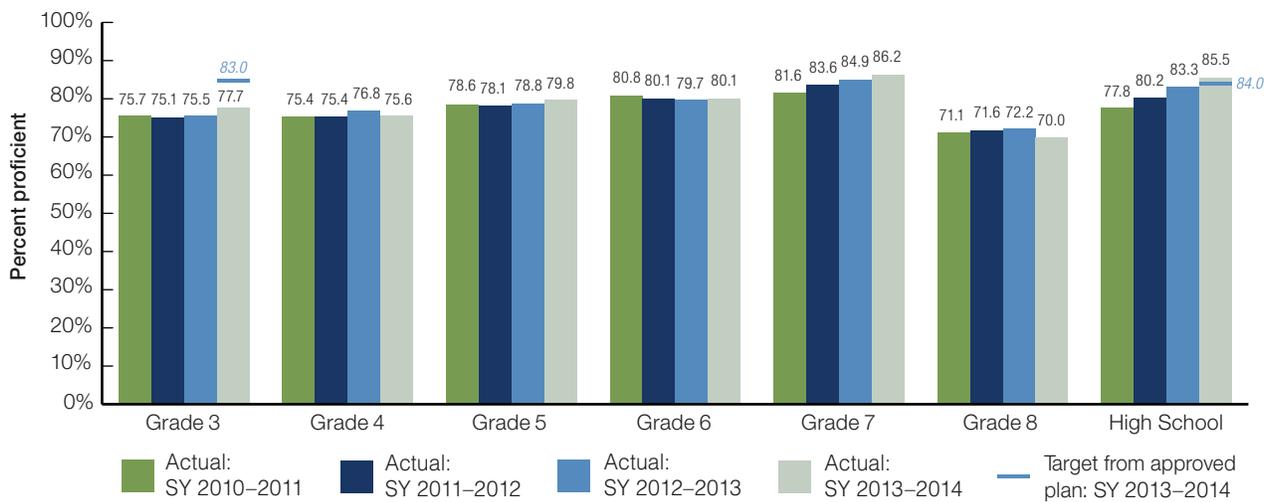
Arizona's strategy to use the statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) dashboard portal (AZDash) to encourage educators to use student data to inform instruction made progress but fell short in Year 3 of reaching all of the State's goals. ADE expected by the end of Year 3 to have 6,000 unique AZDash users from all LEAs and 200 LEAs utilizing the data system to inform practice, as determined by survey data. The State exceeded the AZDash user goal (there were 6,749 unique users) but fell short of its participating LEA goal, as only 53 of the 158 participating LEAs connected to AZDash and received specific training from the AZDash Team. A small percentage of the State's charter schools faced the challenge of compliance with the student-teacher-course connection mapping process; however, ADE took steps to mitigate this by coordinating with the Arizona Charter Schools Association to provide technical assistance.

Arizona

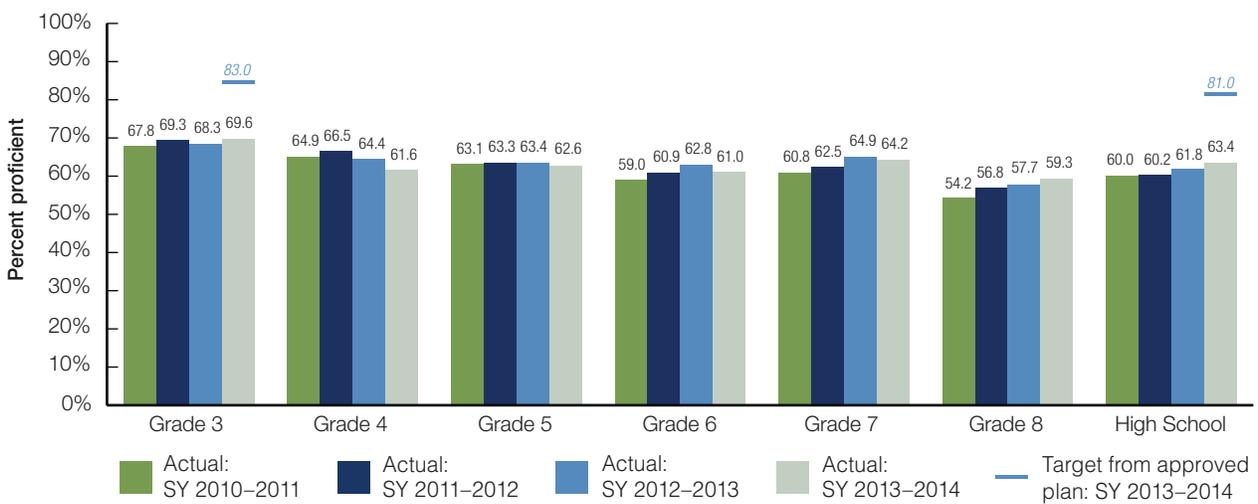
Arizona student outcomes data

At the end of Year 3, in November 2014, the Arizona State Board of Education voted to replace Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards assessment with a new test, Arizona’s Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching. Due to the timing, this decision did not impact Year 3 student outcomes data. Results from Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards assessment generally showed an increase in the student proficiency rate when comparing all grades in English language arts (ELA) from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014. Although ELA proficiency rates in grades six and eight decreased slightly from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014, the rates for all other grades increased. The proficiency rates in mathematics also generally increased from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014; however, the grade four rate decreased by more than 3 percentage points and grade five decreased by one half of a percentage point. Notably, the grade eight rate increased by more than 5 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014.

Student proficiency on Arizona’s ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Arizona’s mathematics assessment



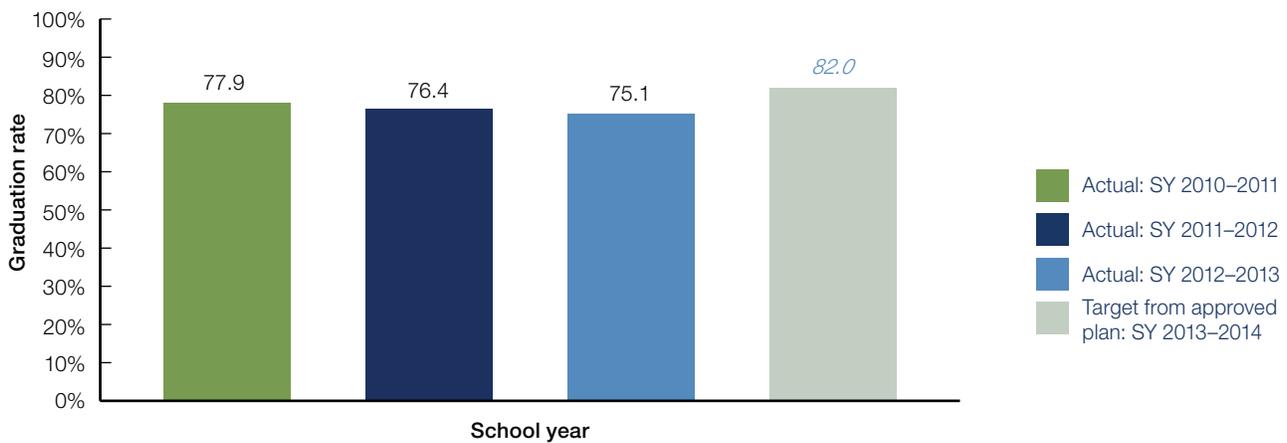
Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: September 25, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Arizona

The high school graduation rate for all students in Arizona declined slightly in SY 2012-2013 from the prior year. It fell by nearly 3 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.

Arizona high school graduation rate



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: November 17, 2014.

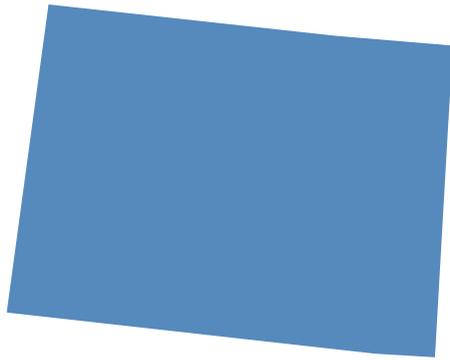
Looking ahead to Year 4

In SY 2014-2015, Arizona plans to make high-quality instructional resources aligned to the AZCCRS available through the Content Management System. ADE will also increase educator access to professional development through the Learning Management System (LMS), enabling educators to access professional development opportunities as needed. Regional Centers will continue to provide targeted technical assistance during the ongoing transition to the State's college- and career-ready standards.

Arizona also plans to increase coordination with higher education institutions in Arizona so that reporting on additional performance metrics is possible. ADE will increase the functionalities of its data system to merge these higher education data sets with kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) data sets. Merging these data sets will increase the functionality and use of the public-facing report cards, providing additional performance metrics around postsecondary education outcomes.

Colorado

Colorado's participation in Race to the Top: SY 2013–2014



161 LEAs
1,589 principals
51,174 teachers
808,417 students

Colorado's education reform agenda⁹

Colorado's State plan for education reform focuses on increasing student achievement and graduation rates so that all students are prepared for success in a competitive world that will demand higher-level skills in K-12. Colorado began implementing its reform agenda before receiving the Race to the Top grant and, with the help of key stakeholders, had already crafted a vision for the State's education system. Colorado's overarching goals for its Race to the Top grant are aligned to the key components of its reform agenda, focusing on advancing the following four high-leverage components:

1. Strong statewide capacity: leveraging and expanding the State's capacity to implement the grant's various reform initiatives and ensuring that the reforms are integrated and coordinated so that LEAs are supported in implementation and student achievement ultimately rises;
2. Transition to college- and career-ready standards: helping schools and LEAs transition to the State's new standards through the creation of Content Collaboratives (teams of talented educators and content experts from across the State) that create tools, resources, and trainings designed to deepen educators' assessment literacy, enhance educators' facility in implementing Colorado's new Academic Standards, and inform educator effectiveness;
3. Educator effectiveness: putting in place new, more robust evaluation systems to gauge the effectiveness of teachers and leaders by clearly articulating the standards of performance and assessing performance against those standards; and

4. STEM integration: infusing robust opportunities for students to develop STEM knowledge and skills across all content areas and connecting teachers to STEM resources outside their classrooms, and to each other, in order to ensure students are better prepared for college and careers in STEM-related areas.

The success of Colorado's Race to the Top grant lies in the connection and integration of these four elements that are part of the State's overall reform initiatives. Colorado's \$18 million grant supports the State's vision of students ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century and an educator workforce that helps prepare them for success — all strengthened and enabled by enhanced State capacity and support. In SY 2013-2014, Colorado's Race to the Top grant included 161 participating LEAs composed of 51,174 teachers and 1,589 principals. Of the 808,417 participating students, 350,183 lived in poverty.

Colorado Years 1 and 2 summary

Over the first two years of Race to the Top implementation, Colorado developed and successfully implemented aspects of its Race to the Top plan but faced a few delays and setbacks that impeded progress in some areas. In Year 1, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) organized its Vision 2020 office to support implementation of Race to the Top activities that are aligned with Colorado's reform initiatives, filled all of its key positions, and developed systems to monitor implementation of Race to the Top projects at the LEA level. In Year 2, CDE continued to improve some of these monitoring systems. Specifically, CDE improved its project management plan by creating and implementing an internal District Dashboard (DISH) to aggregate and display comprehensive LEA information. Through

⁹ This section reflects counts of schools and students reported in Colorado's Phase 3 application.

Colorado

the use of this system, CDE has been able to identify LEA challenges and provide more targeted assistance to support LEAs. CDE also developed extensive communication resources and tools as part of its strategic communications plan supporting the Race to the Top projects and Colorado reform initiatives. However, despite these accomplishments in implementing Race to the Top, CDE struggled to scale up State-provided technical assistance to support LEA capacity. For example, one area in which LEAs needed more technical assistance was in the review of locally developed or purchased assessments to determine their utility in measuring students' learning and improving classroom instruction.

During Years 1 and 2, CDE developed and disseminated resources, and provided training for LEA staff to transition to the State's new college- and career-ready standards, the Colorado Academic Standards.¹⁰ In Year 1, CDE established and began working with the Content Collaboratives to provide high-quality resources and guidance to LEAs to assist them in implementing the Colorado Academic Standards and to respond to the need to identify assessments aligned to those standards. In Year 2, with the use of non-Race to the Top funds, CDE rolled out the Sample Curriculum Project, which made more than 700 sample curriculum units in all content areas available for LEAs to implement. CDE experienced functionality issues in the development of the Resource Bank housed in the Sample Curriculum Project, which is intended to serve as the main repository for tools and resources to implement activities related to Race to the Top grant initiatives. To address these issues, CDE hired a business analyst to assess the Resource Bank functionality and provide recommendations for moving forward with this project. By the end of Year 2, the Resource Bank included more than 600 vetted assessments that addressed all 10 content areas in the Colorado Academic Standards and 19 Career and Technical Education clusters.

In Years 1 and 2, the State made progress in developing its new teacher and principal evaluation systems. CDE developed model principal and teacher evaluation rubrics to be used to assess the professional practices component of the educator evaluation systems and created materials to support LEAs, should they choose to implement the State model. However, Colorado struggled to determine how to provide technical assistance as LEAs faced challenges with the educator evaluation system as they selected and weighed multiple measures to determine the student growth component. In Year 1, 27 LEAs piloted the principal and teacher evaluation rubrics,¹¹ and the rubrics were updated, based on the pilot data, for full educator evaluation system implementation in SY 2013-2014. In Year 2, CDE continued to develop resources and training to assist LEAs with implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. Specifically, CDE, in partnership with My Learning Plan, began developing *Elevate Colorado*, an online

¹⁰ The Colorado Academic Standards, which include 10 content areas, demonstrate the expectations of what Colorado students need to know and demonstrate at the end of each grade.

¹¹ The principal evaluation rubric was piloted in school year (SY) 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The teacher evaluation rubric was only piloted in SY 2012-2013.

resource designed to improve evaluator inter-rater reliability. CDE also provided training on the model educator evaluator system to nearly all LEAs in SY 2012-2013.

Throughout Years 1 and 2, CDE made significant progress in implementing its Race to the Top STEM plan. In Year 1, CDE hired a STEM coordinator who completed a STEM program needs assessment and developed a Colorado STEM report highlighting areas of need in the STEM in Action plan. In Year 2, the State continued to connect educators to STEM resources by creating a page on the State website dedicated to STEM activities and projects. However, it was difficult for CDE to ensure that all participating LEAs were aware of the STEM resources provided by the State.

Colorado Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, CDE continued to improve internal controls and exceeded performance measures in the areas of grant management and CDE grant communications with LEAs. CDE continued to implement the tiered monitoring process for participating LEAs in order to more thoroughly understand the progress, challenges, and successes of participating LEAs' implementation of the Race to the Top grant activities, and to support LEA implementation. CDE reported that the majority of LEAs were satisfied with communications and grant administration.

CDE also remained focused on collaborating with LEAs to support local Race to the Top implementation. CDE expanded its Resource Bank to include resources pertaining to its new standards and educator evaluation systems, in addition to the existing assessment resources. CDE also improved access to the Resource Bank by developing a single access point to all the resources it houses. CDE piloted the use of DISH, a system to aggregate and display comprehensive LEA information, with 10 LEAs to explore the relevance of DISH for supporting LEA data analysis activities. LEA information aggregated in DISH includes district profiles; demographic information; fiscal information; accreditation status and accountability data; and student information, including historical proficiency rates, median and adequate growth percentiles, and workforce readiness data. In September 2014, CDE made DISH available to all districts.

As a strategy to support LEAs with implementation of Colorado's reform initiatives, CDE piloted the use of Regional Effectiveness Implementation Consultants during Year 3 to support districts with comprehensive implementation of reform initiatives at the local level. These consultants worked with CDE to develop metrics to measure the effectiveness of their support efforts. CDE will track on these measures and, if successful, plans to determine how to broaden the support to address multiple program activities across Colorado.

Colorado

Additionally in Year 3, CDE continued to improve and expand upon its communications, using a variety of outreach techniques. For example, CDE used Twitter to interact with educators, parents, students, and citizens on education topics, ideas, and resources, and to leverage positive media coverage to a variety of stakeholders. Further, CDE added to its communication resources a new assessment communications toolkit that contained multiple resources (e.g., drop-in articles, sample PowerPoint presentations, fact sheets, and frequently asked questions), and CDE launched an assessment e-newsletter to disseminate important information, dates, and resources to the field.

CDE continued to facilitate the Content Collaboratives through Year 3 and completed the first and second phases of the project's work. This consisted of reviewing and vetting existing assessments identified by researchers and creating performance assessments intended for use by educators to (1) inform and improve classroom instruction and (2) serve as one of the multiple measures of student growth in the evaluation system. Additionally, the Content Collaboratives participated in the creation and piloting of sample curricula that address all content areas.

The State reported that feedback from LEAs indicated a need for in-depth assessment literacy to better understand how to use assessments for districts and school-level staff through the Colorado Assessment Literacy Program. In Year 3, CDE drafted a comprehensive, standards-based assessment framework to create a foundation for how CDE and the field will use terminology around assessments.

In Year 3, CDE implemented its teacher and principal evaluation systems, and developed evaluation systems for Specialized Services Professionals (SSP). Then 160 of the 178 LEAs and 12 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services elected to use the model evaluation systems that were developed, piloted, and revised in Years 1 and 2. Additionally, CDE developed model evaluation systems for SSPs.¹² Nineteen schools across the State piloted the SSP evaluation system and provided feedback that CDE used to inform revisions to the system.

CDE provided training to LEAs to support implementation of the different evaluation systems. CDE approved 56 trainers for all evaluators (principals, teachers, and SSPs) in LEAs that use the State model evaluation system and six trainers for evaluators in LEAs that use district-developed evaluation systems. Additionally, CDE continued to provide training for the State model evaluation system. CDE also made progress in the supports provided to LEAs to implement Colorado's evaluation systems. For example, CDE continued to add resources to *Elevate Colorado*, an online inter-rater agreement training system used to promote common interpretations of teacher quality and to support evaluators' ability to provide useful and actionable feedback to educators based on information and data collected through observations. At the end of Year 3, *Elevate Colorado*

¹² These professionals included school audiologists, psychologists, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, counselors, social workers, speech language pathologists, and orientation and mobility specialists.

included 11 videos aligned to professional practices in the State model evaluation system. Additionally, CDE, through an external contract, created an online performance management system for optional LEA support with the implementation and management of, and data collection for, the Colorado model evaluation system. CDE began to provide training on the performance management system in August 2014, and as of December 2014, 92 LEAs were using the system. Further, CDE developed resources addressing educator evaluation systems, including a suite of tools to support superintendents and principals in training district staff or communities about educator evaluation systems.

Throughout Year 3, CDE continued to develop STEM resources and provide supports to LEAs awarded STEM in Action grants. Beginning in 2013, CDE funded competitive grants to four LEAs. These grants provided supports and resources for LEAs to partner with community and business organizations to give students real-life experiences with STEM-related content. The grants were specifically focused on LEAs serving large populations of English learners and rural students. These grants were intended to improve student outcomes and reduce achievement gaps for English learners and rural students in STEM content areas.

CDE awarded four STEM in Action grants in Year 3, which were extended for an additional year in Year 4. Additionally, CDE continued to partner with the Content Collaboratives to develop an array of STEM resources, including 24 performance-based assessments connected to the educator-created sample curricula and instructional unit build-outs. These were released in October 2014. During Year 3, the CDE STEM coordinator supported Colorado's STEM in Action grantees in the implementation and progress monitoring of their STEM projects.

During Year 3, CDE made adjustments to STEM projects on the LEA level. CDE decided to continue funding all of the first-round grantees for a second year, rather than run a second competition for additional potential grantees. Further, CDE established cross-district meetings with 23 participating LEAs with Scopes of Work that included STEM activities and projects, as well as with the STEM in Action grantees. The first meeting, in December 2013, focused on planning for STEM integration into local curriculum planning, implementing STEM as part of instructional practice, and evaluating the STEM projects.

Challenges

Although Colorado's implementation of Race to the Top has generally remained on track and of high quality throughout the grant period, CDE encountered some challenges in Year 3. While CDE was successful in developing and piloting the principal and educator evaluation system in nearly all LEAs, it struggled to find the best way to provide technical assistance to those LEAs as they worked to create LEA-specific student growth components. Additionally, CDE was delayed in rolling out various resources (e.g., sample curricula,

Colorado

Colorado Department of Education's use of social media engages community and stakeholders

In Year 3, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) used social media as a technique to increase the number of avenues to disseminate positive information to the field about Colorado's education reform efforts, including Race to the Top activities. For example, CDE partnered with the Colorado Education Initiative and launched the monthly Colorado Education Twitter chat (#COedchat) in February 2014. The chats provide an opportunity for educators, parents, students, and citizens to interact with experts on education topics, ask questions, and share ideas and resources with other participants.

CDE's use of social media includes grassroots endeavors to increase the positive, online voice supporting the State's reform initiatives. To support this network of voices, CDE maintains a list of "social media ambassadors" composed of individuals from a variety of stakeholder groups, including CDE and its partner organizations, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Educator Leader Cadres, and educators in the field.

performance assessments, and assessment literacy). Also, according to CDE, although CDE broadly disseminated numerous resources for transitioning to the State's high-quality standards and assessments, many LEAs continued to require support for a "deeper implementation" of those resources in order to meet the required timelines for LEAs to begin using the new standards in 2012 and the educator evaluation systems in 2013.¹³

Of further note, CDE found it challenging in Year 3 to define and explain to LEAs what successful implementation of STEM efforts looks like in schools and classrooms. Consequently, CDE struggled with understanding the best method to develop resources and tools for LEAs to implement STEM at the local level; ultimately, CDE focused on connecting districts with STEM-focused work so that they could learn from one another.

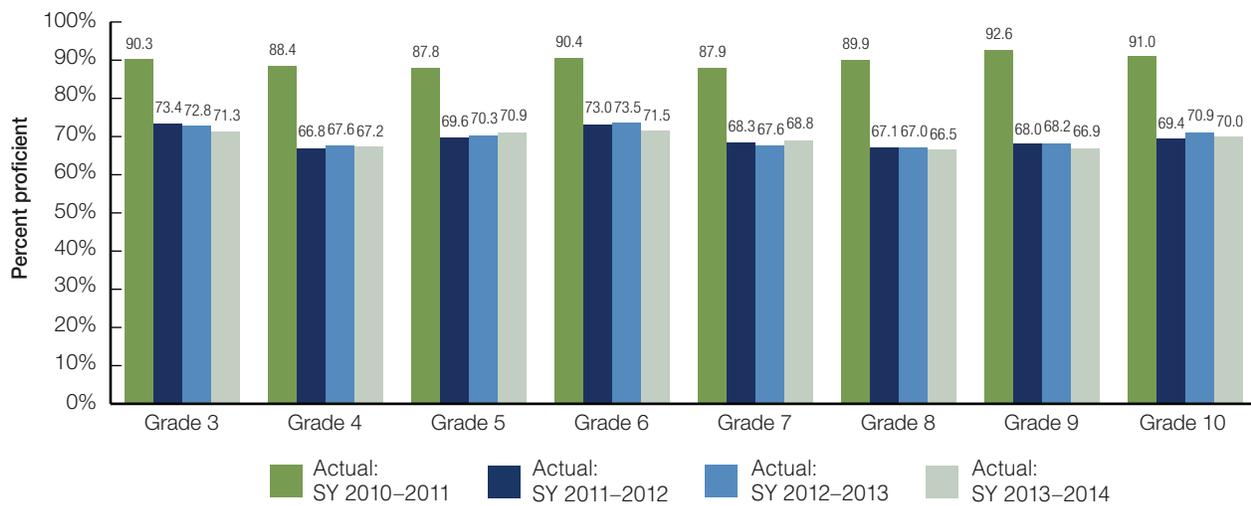
¹³ Please see discussion of Regional Effectiveness Coaches under "Accomplishments" for an example of how the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) took steps to address this challenge in Year 3.

Colorado

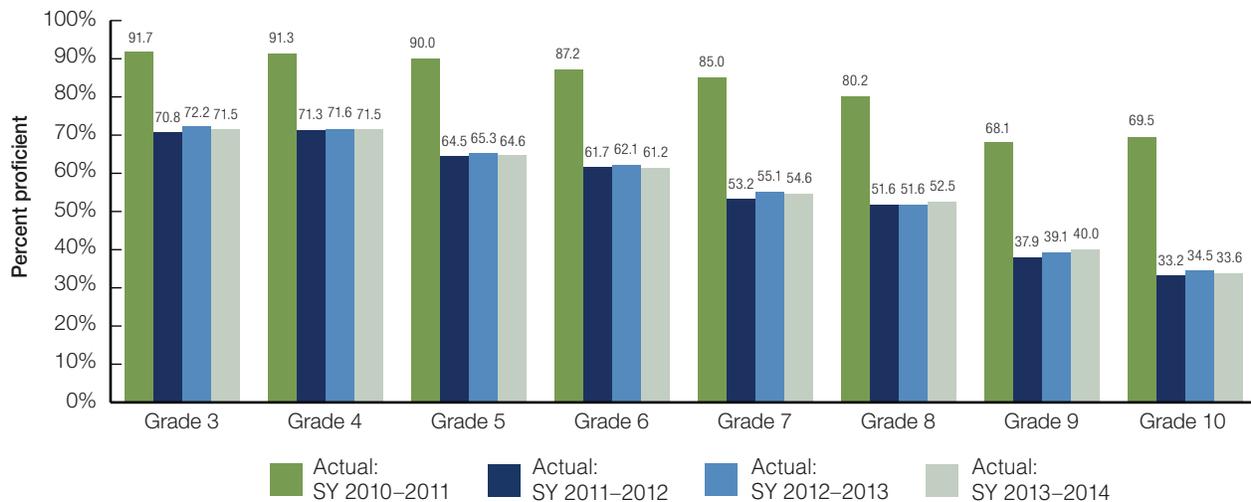
Colorado student outcomes data

Because Colorado used a new definition of proficiency in SY 2011-2012, this section focuses on student performance beginning in SY 2011-2012 in order to compare student outcomes under a common definition of proficiency. Student proficiency on Colorado's ELA assessments remained relatively constant when comparing all students from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014. However, there were slight decreases in grades 3, 6, 8, and 9, and small increases in grades 4, 5, 7, and 10 when comparing results from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014. Similarly, student achievement on Colorado's mathematics assessments remained relatively constant for all grades from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014. In mathematics, student proficiency rates increased slightly in all grades except grade six, which saw a small decrease from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014.

Student proficiency on Colorado's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Colorado's mathematics assessment

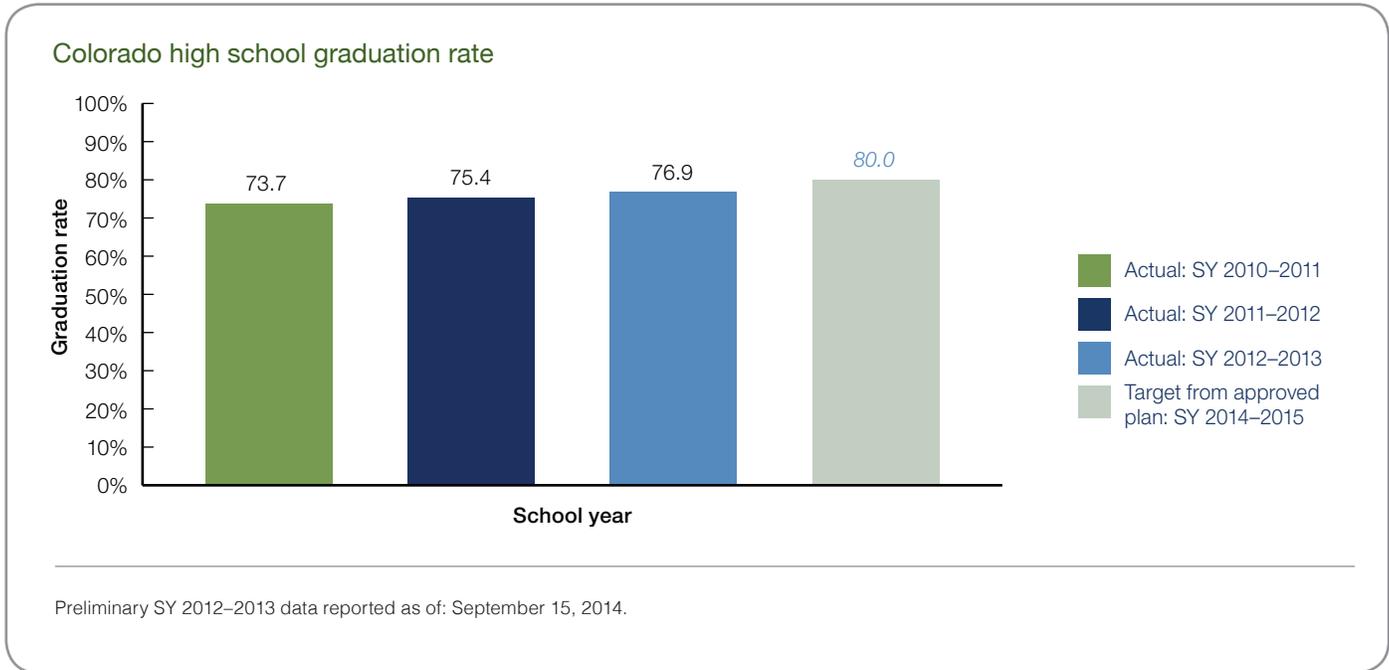


Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: October 21, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Colorado

The high school graduation rate for all students in Colorado increased slightly in SY 2012-2013, compared to the prior year. It increased by more than 3 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.



Looking ahead to Year 4

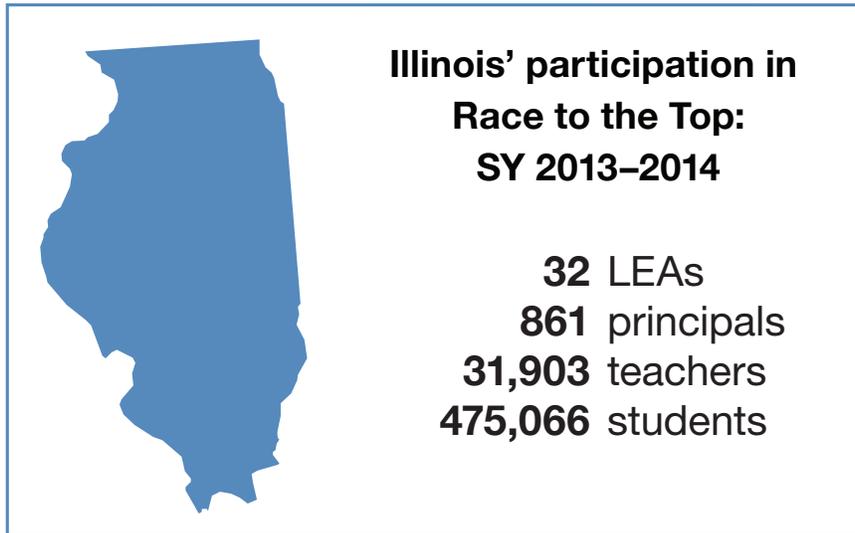
In Year 4, CDE will continue to leverage the Content Collaboratives for further assistance in supporting the field as it implements new standards and assessments. CDE plans to involve Content Collaborative members in statewide training and workshops, as well as in the Assessment Literacy Program. CDE will continue to monitor and populate the Resource Bank with Content Collaborative measures, instructional tools, and web-based tutorials on how to use the resources and tools. Further, CDE will also continue to develop and disseminate resources and materials supporting assessment literacy activities. Given the role the Content Collaboratives played

during the grant period, during Year 4, CDE plans to build a sustainability plan for Content Collaboratives that leverages existing platforms and those in development.

In SY 2014-2015, under Colorado law, LEAs will be required to implement SSP evaluation systems. To assist LEAs with implementing these systems, CDE will continue to provide targeted training to districts — and ongoing, one-on-one technical assistance to districts implementing the model system and/or aligning their systems to Colorado's evaluation systems.

CDE plans to build upon the STEM work it did in Years 1-3 and build a sustainability plan for STEM initiatives created through the Content Collaboratives and STEM in Action program.

Illinois



Illinois' education reform agenda

Illinois was awarded a \$42.8 million Race to the Top Phase 3 grant in December 2011 to improve educational outcomes for all students and to bolster its ongoing work in six areas: building State capacity and support, transitioning to enhanced State standards and high-quality assessments, using data to improve instruction, improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers, and providing effective support to teachers and principals. During SY 2013-2014, Illinois' Race to the Top grant included 32 participating LEAs composed of 31,903 teachers and 861 principals. Of the 475,066 participating students, 338,318 lived in poverty.

While the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is working to build its capacity for statewide implementation of key initiatives and systems, the 32 participating LEAs are charged with building systems and processes to accelerate and sustain improved student outcomes and are intended to serve as leaders of reform for the State. By participating in a comprehensive set of reforms designed to increase student achievement in ELA and mathematics, the participating LEAs are working to decrease achievement gaps between student sub-groups, improve high school graduation rates, and increase both college enrollment and the number of students who earn at least one year's college credit toward completion of a two- or four-year degree.

Illinois Years 1 and 2 summary

Illinois built State capacity in Years 1 and 2 by creating dedicated teams within the Center for Performance at ISBE to implement its Race to the Top plan. The project teams began developing performance agreements that documented project timelines, short- and long-term goals, and performance outcomes to support

performance management of each project. However, Illinois' continued adjustments to its organizational structure impeded the process for hiring necessary personnel in a timely manner. Although the State established ongoing meetings with project leads to ensure clear and consistent communication and to monitor project implementation, many projects were delayed.

To develop capacity to support LEAs, ISBE established a quarterly schedule to convene and provide regional support. These convenings were aimed at increasing local staff capacity through training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities on selected topics essential to local implementation of the LEAs' Race to the Top projects.

ISBE developed and administered the Illinois 5Essentials Survey of learning conditions in every school across Illinois. This survey is a diagnostic tool that researchers at the University of Chicago developed to assist schools in gathering data on five leading indicators for school improvement: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environment, and Ambitious Instruction. Additionally, in compliance with the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA),¹⁴ Illinois is working to complete a research-based study focused on teacher and principal evaluation systems to assess their validity and reliability, contribution to the development of staff, and role in the improvement of student performance. In Year 2, ISBE included pertinent data on the leading indicators of school environment from the 5Essentials Survey in the release of a new School Report Card. In that year, the Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research also finalized the Illinois research agenda and developed a system for outside research entities to access and gather data.

To assist in the transition to its new college- and career-ready State standards, ISBE continued to build its partnership with the Center

¹⁴ The Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 required districts to design and implement performance evaluation systems to assess teachers' and principals' professional skills, using student growth as a significant factor.

Illinois

for School Improvement (CSI) to help participating LEAs implement their continuous improvement efforts. However, throughout Year 2, the State experienced several challenges in executing contracts for the State's Local Assessment System, STEM Learning Exchange, and mentoring and induction projects; these changes then negatively impacted project timelines.

As part of its efforts to use data to improve instruction, in Year 1, ISBE began working with LEAs to integrate their data systems with the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE). The ISLE is a technology platform designed to connect teachers and students with content, resources, and applications based on individual student needs, in order to foster personalized learning. In August 2013, two participating LEAs began piloting some of the ISLE applications (e.g., content tagging/search applications and assessment tools) and by December 2013, 34 LEAs had integrated their student data into the ISLE.

Illinois also made progress on its work related to educator evaluation systems. In Year 1, Illinois created the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee to develop and finalize the State teacher and leader evaluation model, inform the development of support resources, provide guidance to LEAs on PERA, and ensure that teacher and principal evaluators in participating LEAs were trained under timelines required by PERA. In Year 2, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee continued to develop State teacher and principal evaluation models and provide guidance to assist newly trained evaluators in implementing educator evaluation systems. In addition, the State identified a contractor to design, develop, and complete a study of the State's implementation of PERA. However, at the end of Year 2, the State had not yet developed systems to provide support for participating LEAs as they implemented the pilots of their evaluation systems.

Illinois also worked to improve outcomes in STEM education. The Pathways Resource Center helped participating LEAs continue to develop at least two STEM Programs of Study by holding a number of regional and statewide meetings and webinars to provide information and share best practices. In addition, Pathways Resource Center coaches provided one-on-one assistance to LEAs. Illinois completed contract negotiations and established steering committees for each of the eight STEM Learning Exchanges that will support STEM Programs of Study implementation. Additionally, the State's College and Career Readiness (CCR) program partnered high schools with community colleges to begin aligning secondary and postsecondary curricula with a focus on STEM areas and to begin providing intervention activities to ensure that high school students successfully graduate ready for college and careers.

Illinois experienced significant delays in redesigning teacher preparation programs as the State changed its approach to identifying participating programs and redesigning curricula. Also, Illinois' mentoring and induction program was delayed due to challenges in procuring a contractor to lead it.

Illinois Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

To support the transition to its enhanced standards and high-quality assessments, Illinois made progress in a variety of projects related to STEM support, as well as college and career readiness. Illinois also continued to provide general support to LEAs through the CSI; after the State amended its plan, CSI staff focused on providing support to the five lowest-achieving LEAs, including the participating LEAs that were among the lowest-achieving in the State. The CSI staff developed online classroom resources and supports, and continued to complete other online resources related to the foundational supports for ELA and math curriculum implementation. During Year 3, Illinois also completed several activities to support the Rising Star Continuous Improvement Platform and develop the State's capacity in supporting LEAs and schools. These activities included developing online professional development modules and offering multiple professional development workshops on various topics related to the State's reform efforts. This platform guides districts and schools through the procedures and practices for instructional improvement and systemic change.

Illinois made progress toward its goals to have all participating LEAs deliver standards-aligned instruction and provide supports for standards implementation with a focus on assessment tools and STEM instructional resources. For example, to support LEAs, student intervention programs continued in all seven CCR sites (community colleges and partner high schools) throughout the year. Additionally, to support STEM education, the Pathways Resource Center continued developing two STEM Programs of Study, holding a number of regional and statewide meetings and webinars to provide information and share best practices. It also assisted participating LEAs by offering individualized support through Pathways Resource Center coaches. In April 2014, the Illinois Community College Board provided training to teams from all sites that focused on curriculum alignment between the community colleges and participating LEAs. Finally, Illinois' STEM Learning Exchanges progressed in accordance with their implementation plan and contracts, with the exception of the Information Technology Learning Exchange, which started late due to procurement issues.

Illinois continued to promote the use of data to improve instruction with its Race to the Top plan. ISBE worked to support participating LEA integration with the ISLE. It also made progress in its work with the PERA Research-Based Study by releasing an interim report focused on the implementation of educator evaluation systems in SY 2013-2014. Participating LEAs were in various stages of fully implementing integration with the ISLE, and by the end of the grant period, 94 percent had data residing in the ISLE system. Two LEAs completed their dashboard training and continued to make progress rolling out the ISLE system applications. Additionally, by the end

Illinois

of Year 3, ISBE had outlined plans to complete the process with remaining LEAs.

To improve teacher and principal effectiveness, Illinois implemented the PERA evaluator prequalification and training program. Through this program, Illinois produced a total of 14,094 trained teacher evaluators, of whom 2,246 were from Chicago Public Schools. According to the PERA Research-Based Study, the majority of districts in Illinois had a process to train evaluators and took actions to ensure inter-rater agreement. Additionally, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council supported the process by developing and disseminating multiple guidance documents and recommendations to ISBE regarding the types of supports and guidance needed in the field to ensure high-quality implementation.

Illinois State Board of Education rolls out exemplary report cards

The Education Commission of the States identified Illinois as having one of the best accountability report cards out of all 50 States and the District of Columbia, demonstrating how Illinois has provided greater transparency to students and parents through the Race to the Top grant. Results from the January 2014 survey of local educational agency administrators found that principals and superintendents noted that the website is easily accessible by parents and that they intend to use the report card to assist with parent and community engagement activities. Illinois released its second annual redesigned school report card on October 31, 2014. The 2013-2014 report card includes data on college enrollment, the number of freshman on track to graduate, remediation rates, and results from the survey of learning conditions. Illinois also launched a multiple-language support feature.

Challenges

In Year 3, Illinois continued to struggle with building SEA capacity in the hiring of personnel, ISBE's monitoring of Race to the Top activities,¹⁵ and its ability to provide support to the field. For instance, Illinois faced the challenge in Year 3 of organizing and providing a timely statewide system of support services targeted to low-performing LEAs, including low-performing participating LEAs. Additional challenges in Year 3 included projects related to the State's standards and assessments, data systems to support instruction, and supporting teachers and leaders.

¹⁵ During Year 3, although Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) staff explained that they were in the process of revising the subrecipient monitoring plan, the staff were neither able to produce this revised subrecipient monitoring plan nor clearly explain the process it used for monitoring the LEAs' projects and budget implementation for SY 2013-2014.

Because of a delay in obtaining a contractor for the Local Assessment Support project, which is designed to help participating LEAs develop local assessments that measure student growth and help educators improve instruction, the project will be implemented under a shortened timeline. This timeline will place constraints on the contractor's support of State-level teams in their creation of vetted assessment items for multiple non-tested grades and subject areas. While work will need to be completed by individual LEAs for their own use, the State, at the end of Year 3, had neither a plan nor a budget to provide LEAs with support and training on how to use the assessment document, review tool, and additional webinars and resources to develop those assessment items.

Aligning curriculum to new standards proved to be a challenge through Year 3 in the CCR project. ISBE and multiple districts noted the difficulty in finding materials and textbooks aligned to the State's new college- and career-ready standards in the marketplace. Additionally, the CCR sites encountered challenges with recruiting students to participate in the intervention programs.

In the three projects related to using data to improve instruction, Illinois was not on track to meet key milestones throughout Year 3. First, although ISBE did make some progress with the ISLE project, with about 21 additional LEAs anticipated to start ISLE implementation as Year 3 concluded, the State continued to struggle with this project due to funding issues and other factors at the State level. Second, the State did not make any progress in its Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research project. After facing challenges with implementation earlier in the grant period, ISBE struggled to determine an alternative plan for implementation. Third, ISBE lacked a specific plan for strategically reviewing and using the information for developing continuous improvement processes to support more effective educator evaluation system implementation. It also lacked a plan for how the State would meet the commitments of the PERA Research-Based Study (*e.g.*, how to use the data to recommend changes to district teacher and principal evaluation systems; provide oversight and management for teacher and principal evaluation systems; and determine how ISBE's regulations should be adjusted to assist with performance evaluations, local preparation, and implementation practice).

Illinois faced continued challenges with the educator evaluation system's incorporation of student growth and, in particular, in the State's capacity to provide support and training on this component. According to the PERA Research-Based Study, the State must provide additional technical assistance to LEAs on how to develop the student growth measure in their own districts, as well as more and/or directive guidance to disseminate to the field.

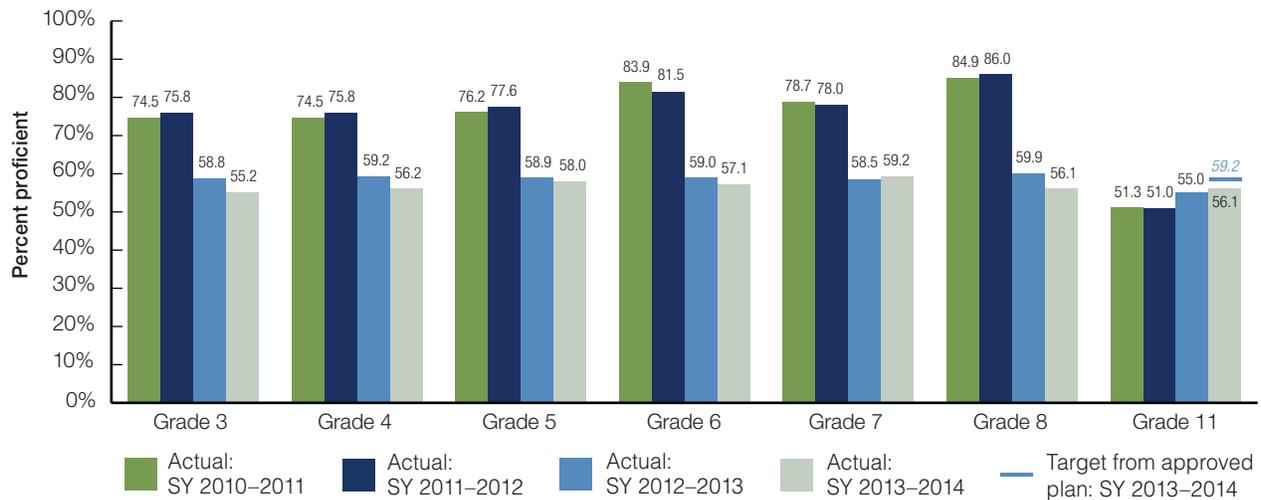
After being delayed during Years 1 and 2, the induction and mentoring project started in Year 3; however, by September 2014, the State had neither documentation regarding the services provided nor the ability to explain to the Department details surrounding project implementation.

Illinois

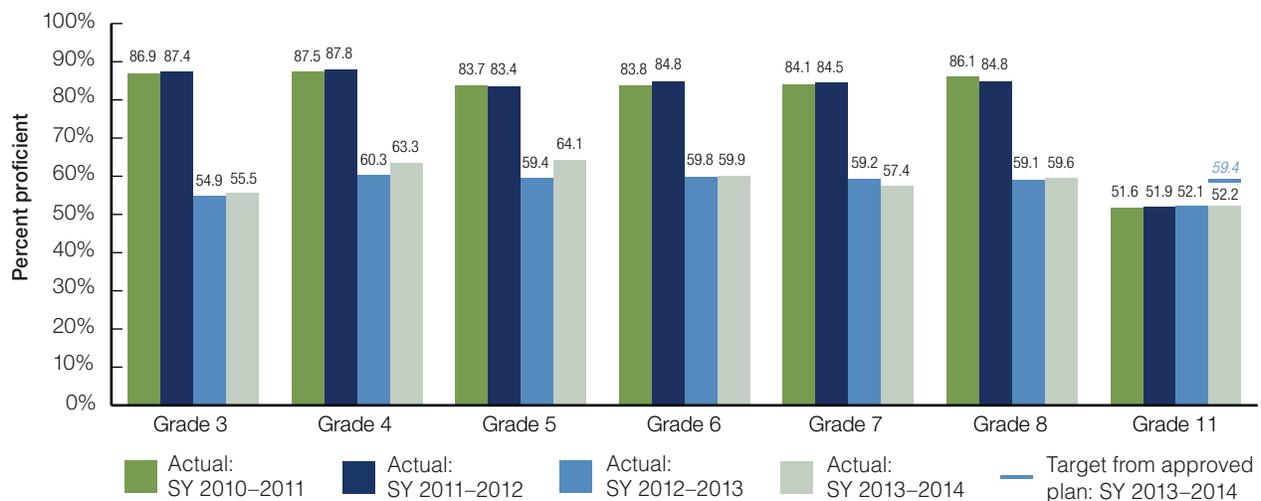
Illinois student outcomes data

In order to raise the bar on how well students are prepared to meet college- and career-readiness benchmarks, ISBE reported that 20 percent of the items on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) were aligned to the State's new college- and career-ready standards in SY 2012-2013. In addition, ISBE raised the performance level cut scores of the ISAT for elementary students in January 2013. From SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014, student proficiency rates on Illinois' mathematics and ELA assessments showed mixed results. In general, ELA proficiency rates decreased slightly from SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014; while most grade levels saw a small decline in proficiency rates, only grades 7 and 11 increased slightly. Mathematics proficiency rates generally increased across grades when comparing SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014, except for a small decrease in grade seven.

Student proficiency on Illinois' ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Illinois' mathematics assessment

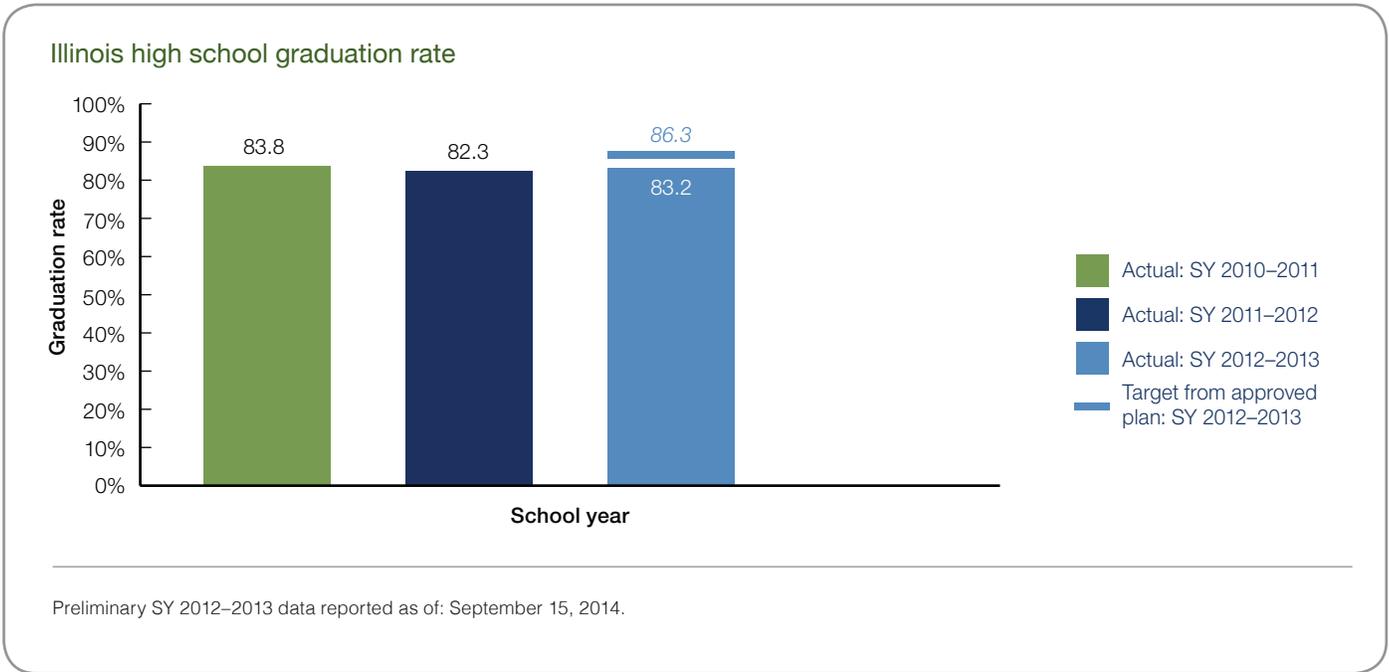


Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: November 10, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Illinois

The high school graduation rate for all students in Illinois increased slightly in SY 2012-2013, compared to the prior year. However, it decreased slightly from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.



Looking ahead to Year 4

In Year 4, Illinois will continue its work to get back on track with milestones and timelines, despite delays during Years 1-3. Given that a number of projects faced significant timeline delays during the initial years of the grant, ISBE has indicated it will work with the Department in Year 4 to identify projects that may require a no-cost extension, to continue to progress on its grant commitments during an additional year of implementation.

As ISBE continues its work to support the transition to its new standards and assessments, it will disseminate webinars of online modules to LEAs. These modules will provide information on how to use the assessment document and review tool created in Year 3 to develop their own assessments for local use in non-tested grades and subject areas. Also, the Illinois Community College Board will provide additional technical assistance and support to the seven CCR sites through conference calls, webinars, and on-site visits.

In Year 4, Illinois plans to continue its work with the PERA Research-Based Study project and will publish a final report in December 2015, which will include data from educator evaluation and support systems implementation in SY 2014-2015. ISBE will

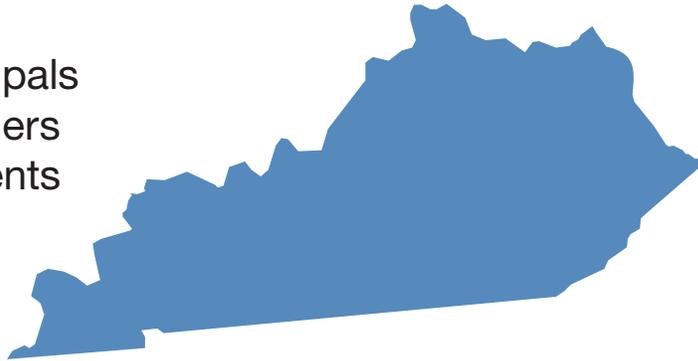
use findings from the study to recommend adjustments as needed to the State's teacher and principal evaluation systems and to better understand the validity and reliability of student growth measures used by districts. In Year 4, ISBE will also continue to partner with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council to identify problems of practice in the field regarding teacher and principal evaluation system implementation, and use this information to develop guidance for districts. Additionally, after making progress with its contract for the induction and mentoring project during Year 3, Illinois plans to provide induction and mentoring supports to LEAs during Year 4.

The Pathways Resource Center is funded solely through Race to the Top grant funds, which will end in Year 3. Therefore, the Pathways Resource Center will not continue to exist in Year 4. At that point, all of the resources will transfer to the Office of Community College Research and Leadership, but the funding for the Pathways Resource Center coaches will not continue. Pathways Resource Center coaches are helping LEAs develop sustainability plans and obtain other available grants to provide support for their continued STEM Programs of Study implementation after the Race to the Top grant period. Illinois will continue to support the newly redesigned report card and the survey of learning conditions.

Kentucky

Kentucky's participation in Race to the Top: SY 2013–2014

170 LEAs
1,530 principals
42,013 teachers
646,625 students



Kentucky's education reform agenda

The passage of Senate Bill 1 during the 2009 session of the Kentucky General Assembly launched Kentucky's education reform initiative, "Unbridled Learning." Unbridled Learning is designed to ensure that every child reaches his or her learning potential and graduates from high school ready for college and career.¹⁶ In 2010, Kentucky adopted new college- and career-ready standards and began developing new assessment and accountability models. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) also targeted interventions to improve struggling LEAs and schools, initiated the development of a new professional growth and evaluation system, and provided support for innovative practices at the local level.

Kentucky was awarded approximately \$17 million in Race to the Top funds to implement the State's Phase 3 application, which focuses on furthering the implementation of the State's Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS). CIITS, a comprehensive technology support system for Kentucky educators, is designed to customize learning experiences for students, personalize professional growth for educators, coordinate LEA- and school-

level planning and monitoring of student success, and disseminate promising practices and effective instructional models. Race to the Top grant funds have been used to enhance two CIITS modules, the Classroom module, which houses standards and instructional resources, and the Assessment Admin module (also known as the Classroom Assessment module), which includes a test item bank from which educators can create and administer classroom-specific formative assessments. Race to the Top funds have also been used to add to CIITS an Educator Development Suite (EDS), a teacher and leader effectiveness module. EDS houses teacher and principal evaluations and enables teachers and school leaders to track their goals, measure their performance, and access tools and training for continuous improvement.

Kentucky's plan also includes helping LEAs and schools offer more meaningful STEM experiences for middle and high school students. For example, Kentucky is committed to scaling up its AdvanceKentucky program. AdvanceKentucky is a statewide mathematics-science initiative designed to expand access to and participation in Advanced Placement (AP) mathematics, science, and English courses, particularly among student populations traditionally underrepresented in these courses.

In SY 2013-2014, Kentucky's Race to the Top grant included 170 participating LEAs composed of 42,013 teachers and 1,530 principals. Of the 646,625 participating students, 369,596 lived in poverty.¹⁷

¹⁶ Senate Bill 1 called for the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to implement a comprehensive process for revising the academic content standards in all areas. The bill required KDE to consider comments from teachers, postsecondary faculty, and others when revising those standards to ensure alignment with entry-level college course requirements and inclusion in teacher preparation programs. Kentucky's education reform agenda is anchored in the following four activities: (1) Adopting new standards and balanced assessments; (2) Establishing the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS), which provides student data and teaching resources directly to teachers and principals; (3) Developing a new teacher and principal evaluation system; and (4) Increasing capacity to turn around persistently failing schools. Race to the Top funding provided the State with an opportunity to accelerate progress in implementing these four activities and to provide incentives for school and LEA implementation.

¹⁷ On July 1, 2013, the Monticello Independent School District dissolved, and all of its schools became a part of Wayne County Schools, thus reducing the number of the State's LEAs by one.

Kentucky

Kentucky Years 1 and 2 summary

In Year 1, CIITS expanded and grew as a fundamental initiative of Kentucky's comprehensive vision for preparing students to be college and career ready. The extensive, multifunctional system served as a "one-stop shop" for providing LEAs with resources to support implementation of the State's rigorous standards. KDE focused on rolling out the Classroom module (which contains standards and instructional resources); building out the Classroom Assessment module (the platform where educators can create formative assessments); and driving educators' and administrators' use of CIITS for improving instruction and assessments. Throughout Year 1, KDE made significant progress in increasing the use of CIITS statewide by providing support and training to teachers and administrators on how to use CIITS effectively and with fidelity. For example, KDE developed a newsletter, *CIITS News*, to communicate to the field about CIITS development. *CIITS News* provides communication regarding major CIITS issues, as well as CIITS highlights that appear in other Kentucky publications (e.g., the Instructional Support Network newsletter).

In Year 2, Kentucky focused on providing in-depth training to teachers and administrators on how to use CIITS. Teachers and leaders across Kentucky participated in training designed to increase their awareness of CIITS tools and resources and how to effectively use them to continuously improve classroom instruction by using data. KDE routinely collected feedback from users via surveys and reviewed help desk logs to determine needed system upgrades and enhancements. In November 2013, the State reported that by that time, there had been over 1 million separate and unique logins to CIITS by teachers and administrators, educators had created more than 268,000 lesson plans and 190,000 formative assessments, and more than 55,000 students had completed a formative assessment through CIITS.

In Year 1, KDE also began to roll out the CIITS EDS module as it conducted a 54-LEA field test of the new teacher and leader evaluation system, the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES).¹⁸

The 620 teachers and leaders participating in the field test received targeted technical assistance on how to use EDS to support professional growth. In Year 2, Kentucky completed the field test of PGES and conducted focus groups and administered surveys to gather feedback from field test participants. The feedback was used to inform training and support as KDE prepared for the statewide pilot of PGES and EDS during SY 2014-2015.

During Year 1, Race to the Top funds supported five new AdvanceKentucky sites (Group 1) and in Year 2, Race to the Top funds supported the launch of five additional AdvanceKentucky

¹⁸ KDE's implementation timeline for its Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES) includes a statewide pilot with 10 percent of teachers in each LEA in SY 2013-2014 and statewide implementation in SY 2014-2015.

sites (Group 2). In Year 2, Kentucky reported that Race to the Top AdvanceKentucky Group 1 sites outperformed the State and the nation in the number of students scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams.¹⁹

Kentucky Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

Over the course of Year 3, KDE continued to support teachers and leaders in using CIITS resources, tools, and data to improve instruction. For example, KDE provided outreach to the field regarding CIITS usage. The CIITS Team completed on-site visits with all 173 LEAs to assess LEA CIITS implementation and provide support. After each visit, the CIITS Team completed an on-site analysis form reviewing the LEA's implementation strategy, identifying lessons learned, and noting the functions and supports users said were most helpful. The CIITS Team used information from the site visits to inform its approach to CIITS implementation during SY 2014-2015.

Additionally, KDE supported teachers and leaders by creating monthly CIITS webcasts and posting them on the KDE website. Each CIITS webcast included a targeted training on a CIITS function or topic; for example, training on EDS included lessons on understanding the student voice survey and how to complete the self-reflection portion of PGES. Additionally, each webcast included an update on CIITS enhancements and available training and resources; a question-and-answer period; and contact information for the CIITS manager, CIITS contractor, and CIITS help desk. Kentucky reported that it received approximately 80 to 90 participants on each webcast, and in response to user demand, KDE shifted to biweekly webinars in September 2014.²⁰

KDE's support to the field included enhanced communication during Year 3. For instance, KDE increased its publication of *CIITS News* from biweekly to weekly. KDE also enhanced its communication with the field through its use of social media (e.g., Twitter and Facebook) to share up-to-date information about CIITS and other KDE activities. Also, KDE continued to focus on CIITS implementation with LEA leadership and developed a document, "CIITS Implementation Process Reminders: How Can CIITS Implementation Support Teaching and Learning?," to use during a superintendents' briefing. This briefing focused on building capacity at all levels and provided recommended activities for doing this, such as determining technology use and needs, becoming familiar with professional learning opportunities and support groups, utilizing tools to communicate with educators, and integrating CIITS application into collaborative work environments.

¹⁹ Final Advanced Placement (AP) exam scores are reported on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating high-level mastery of content. AdvanceKentucky considers AP scores of 3 and above to be qualifying scores. In Kentucky, most institutions of higher education will offer college credit for qualifying AP scores.

²⁰ See <http://education.ky.gov/teachers/PGES/geninfo/Pages/Archived-PGES-Newsletters-and-Webcasts.aspx> to access past webcasts.

Kentucky

KDE's commitment to the continuous improvement of CIITS in Year 3 included adding content and working toward quality control of existing content resources and standards. Throughout Year 3, KDE content specialists mapped over 15,000 instructional content items from outside vendors to the State's new mathematics and ELA standards in CIITS. At the end of Year 3, newly hired KDE staff members were working to expand instructional items in the system. Additionally, KDE content specialists added new CIITS items for college and technical education courses. Also, the KDE CIITS Team,²¹ with the support of the CIITS contractor, added several new and/or enhanced CIITS functions in April 2014 (e.g., that included "assessment notes" to allow commentary about the utility and effectiveness of an assessment, the ability to import assessments, the ability to share item rights using a co-authoring folder, and the ability to track accommodations per student per test). As of February 2014, the CIITS classroom module, a repository of resources on the State's standards and aligned instructional materials (e.g., learning targets and suggested sequences of learning, sample aligned units and assessments, and formative and summative assessments) was fully operational.

Data demonstrate that CIITS usage continued to rise during Year 3. Kentucky also reported that 64 percent of teachers in participating LEAs created and published lesson plans in CIITS, thereby exceeding the SY 2013-2014 target of 50 percent. Additionally, over 5,000 KDE educators attended online or on-site training provided by the CIITS contractor.

In Year 3, KDE continued to support teachers and leaders in using the State's new evaluation system and data to improve instruction. First, KDE supported teachers and leaders participating in the statewide pilot of PGES. Second, KDE supported teachers and leaders in utilizing EDS to track their evaluation ratings and developing personalized professional growth plans.²² In providing support, KDE made available slides and webinars to help teachers and principals use PGES and EDS throughout the end of SY 2013-2014. Further, in August 2014, KDE produced weekly webinars to provide training and support on PGES and use of EDS. KDE also assigned Effectiveness Coaches to each LEA to provide on-site support and assistance with PGES and EDS during the SY 2013-2014 pilot. Further, after completing the statewide pilot at the end of SY 2013-2014, KDE commissioned the Southern Regional Education Board to design and conduct a focus group and to prepare a written report summarizing the pilot experience. Feedback from the report, in addition to feedback collected after various CIITS EDS trainings,

²¹ The KDE CIITS Team is a KDE performance management team for the CIITS project. This team provides oversight and monitoring of all contractors and vendors, using a monthly performance assessment tool to capture performance information and feedback from KDE staff on tasks performed by contractors and vendors, meeting with contractors and vendors, and using data from monthly performance assessments to inform meeting agendas with these groups.

²² The Educator Development Suite (EDS) module allows for data and information from the PGES to be accessed in CIITS. The module allows teachers and leaders to develop individualized professional learning plans based on need and evaluation data; search a catalog of State and local professional learning activities, including PD 360; register for these activities; and maintain a record of their own professional learning.

AdvanceKentucky makes huge gains to expand access to Advanced Placement courses for Kentucky's students

In Year 3 of Race to the Top, AdvanceKentucky made impressive gains in its work to increase access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses in participating schools. These gains show progress toward the program's goal of expanding access to AP courses so that students who are traditionally underserved and underrepresented in those courses are exposed to and provided with the support they need to excel in college-level courses.

In Year 3, the increase in the number of AP STEM-related courses offered in AdvanceKentucky schools outpaced the increase in similar courses at other Kentucky schools. In Group 1, schools added four AP statistics courses and five AP science courses (biology, two courses in chemistry, physics, and environmental science). In Group 2, schools added AP physics, chemistry, and statistics. Overall, during the grant period, the number of AP mathematics courses increased by 31 percent in AdvanceKentucky schools and by only 5 percent statewide, while the number of AP science courses increased by 21 percent in AdvanceKentucky schools and decreased by 1 percent statewide.

Additionally, at the end of SY 2013-2014, AdvanceKentucky schools showed significant gains in the number of students with qualifying AP mathematics or science scores (i.e., scores of 3, 4, and 5 on a 5-point scale) compared to baseline numbers. In Group 1, there were 64 students in SY 2013-2014, compared to 8 in SY 2011-2012. In Group 2, there were 71 students in SY 2013-2014, growing from only 37 students in the baseline year.*

* For more information on the positive results of AdvanceKentucky, see it featured in the U.S. Department of Education's PROGRESS blog at <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/progress/?s=advancekentucky>.

was used to inform changes to EDS (e.g., the ability for staff to co-author instructional items), as well as training and support to prepare teachers and leaders for the statewide implementation of PGES in SY 2014-2015. KDE also rolled out statewide implementation of the new teacher and leader evaluation system during SY 2014-2015. Although all teachers and leaders received training and were prepared to use the EDS component, educators encountered issues with the system's functionality that adversely impacted users' perception of and trust in CIITS (see "Challenges" for more information).

Kentucky

KDE continued to scale up AdvanceKentucky throughout Year 3. A third cohort of schools, Group 3, was selected to participate in AdvanceKentucky in SY 2014-2015, bringing the total number of AdvanceKentucky schools funded by Race to the Top to 15.²³ By the end of Year 3, all Race to the Top-funded AdvanceKentucky schools were operating on schedule and consistently with the AdvanceKentucky framework developed by the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation (KSTC). Additionally, KDE and KSTC made progress in sustainability planning with the creation of a partner program for schools and districts “graduating” from AdvanceKentucky. This allowed KDE to continue to deliver high-quality AP courses with resources and supports for teachers and administrators.²⁴

Challenges

In Year 3, KDE received feedback from the field concerning the quality and quantity of items available to create formative assessments and the accurate alignment of items and instructional resources to the State’s new standards. The State also experienced limited growth in locally created, high-quality resources and assessment items. These are among Kentucky’s strategies for sustaining the Classroom and Assessment Admin modules of CIITS. Absent robust, high-quality items to develop formative assessments, educators in several LEAs were continuing to use other pre-CIITS products to develop and administer classroom-level assessments and to create and publish curriculum maps aligned to the State’s new standards. In an effort to overcome this difficulty, at the end of

Year 3, KDE hired additional staff tasked with monitoring the quality control of existing CIITS items and instructional resources, developing new items and formative assessments, and supporting LEAs in their development of locally created items and resources.

A notable challenge KDE faced was a technical glitch in the EDS module of CIITS. As part of the statewide implementation, many educators created personal reflection statements in EDS to accompany their fall evaluations, but those typed statements were lost due to the system timing out without notice. Because creating and receiving feedback on personal reflection statements is a critical first step in Kentucky’s new teacher and principal evaluation system, the experience adversely impacted educators’ confidence in EDS. However, as noted under “Accomplishments,” KDE established strong feedback loops that were used to inform changes to EDS.

KDE also faced challenges in providing timely online best practice resources to LEAs on how to use the CIITS assessment module and the EDS. These activities were scheduled to begin in July 2014, prior to the start of the statewide implementation of Kentucky’s new teacher and leader evaluation systems in SY 2014-2015. The availability of these best practice resources may have prevented or mitigated the issues teachers experienced in EDS. Additionally, although a significant number of teachers statewide received training on how to use CIITS and EDS before full implementation, KDE fell short of ensuring that all teachers were trained.

²³ In Year 3, Group 1 completed its third year as an AdvanceKentucky school (and second year of offering courses), and Group 2 completed its second year as an AdvanceKentucky school (and first year of offering courses).

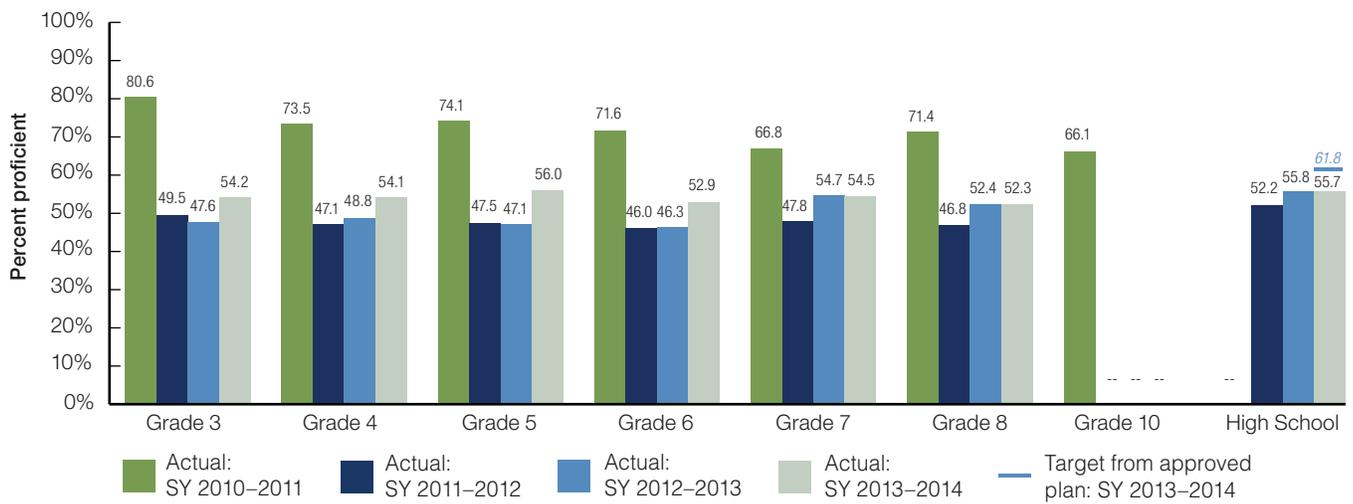
²⁴ AdvanceKentucky schools receive training, stipends, and mentor support free of charge during the first three years but must be self-sustaining in Year 4 and beyond.

Kentucky

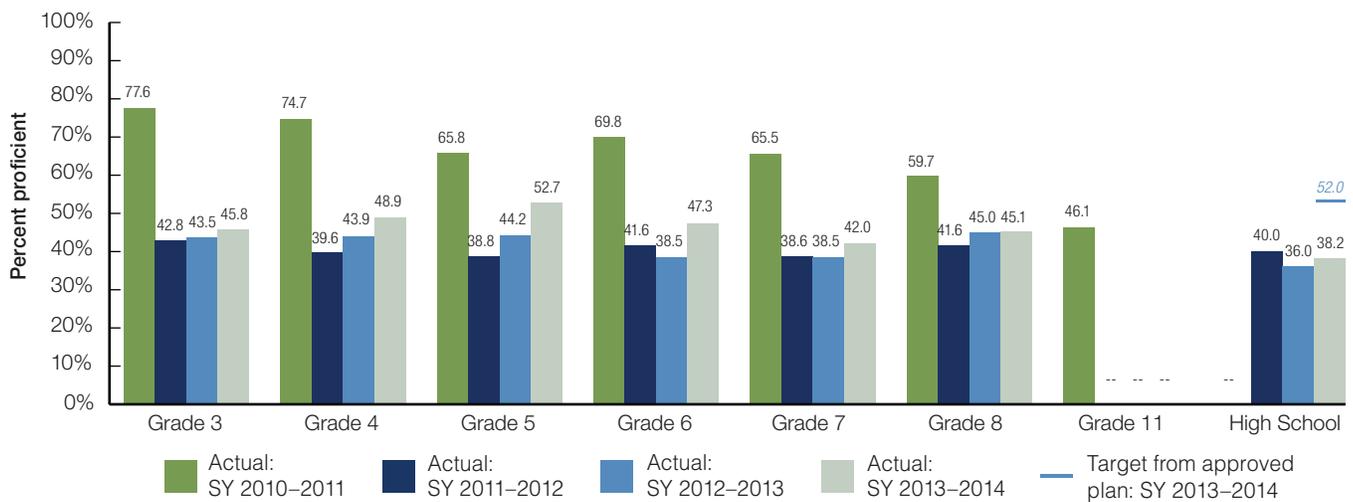
Kentucky's student outcomes data

In the spring of 2012, the full range of assessments for grades 3-12 were aligned to the State's new college- and career-ready standards. Under these standards each assessed grade level in ELA increased in proficiency from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014, although some grades showed slight decreases from SY 2012-2013. Similarly, proficiency rates increased overall in mathematics from SY 2011-2012 to 2013-2014; within this, proficiency rates increased in each grade from three through eight, and although proficiency rates decreased in high school from SY 2011-2012 to SY 2013-2014, proficiency rates increased slightly from SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014.

Student proficiency on Kentucky's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Kentucky's mathematics assessment

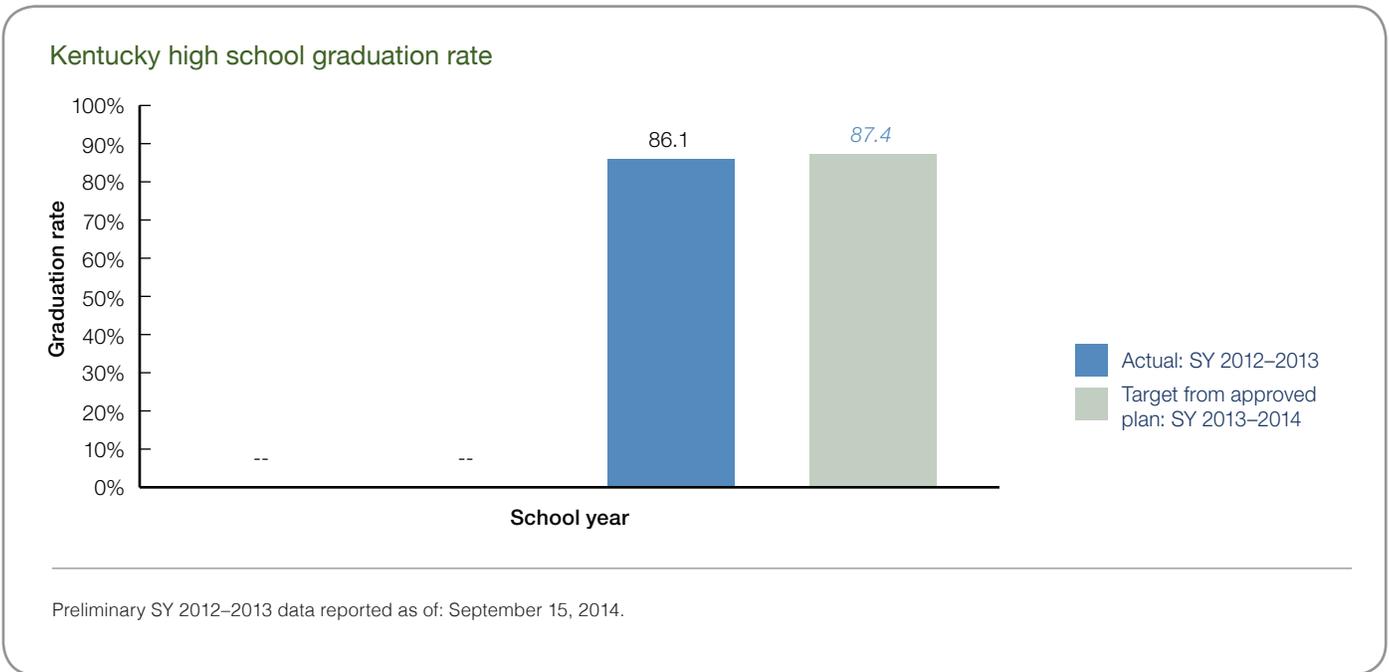


Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: November 10, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Kentucky

Kentucky received a waiver from the Department allowing a delay in transitioning to a cohort model on graduation rate. Accordingly, the State did not provide an adjusted cohort high school graduation rate for SY 2011-2012. The State reported its first adjusted cohort rate in SY 2012-2013.

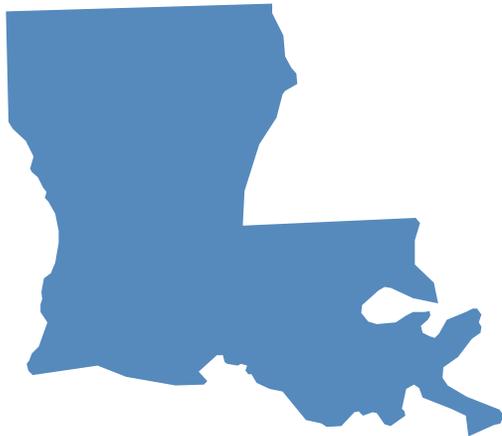


Looking ahead to Year 4

In Year 4, Kentucky will continue to build upon and improve its current Race to the Top projects. KDE plans to continue to improve its monitoring of CIITS and EDS, as well as its training and support to the field on the use of these tools. KDE is scheduled to continue to coordinate and deliver professional learning opportunities to LEAs in order to support the use of the assessment modules. Additionally,

KDE will continue to support LEAs and teachers in submitting instructional resources to CIITS. KDE will continue its focus on quality control of CIITS items and aligning instructional resources to its new standards, as well as developing items and instructional resources. Further, the State will continue its AdvanceKentucky program by starting to train five new schools that will open during SY 2015-2016.

Louisiana



Louisiana's participation in Race to the Top: SY 2013–2014

46 LEAs
966 principals
16,092 teachers
251,133 students

Louisiana's education reform agenda

In 2012, Louisiana launched its comprehensive reform plan, known as Louisiana Believes, in pursuit of the State's objective of ensuring that all students graduate from high school ready for college or career. More specifically, Louisiana Believes seeks to (1) raise basic expectations for students and schools; (2) provide educators with tools to teach, hold educators accountable for student achievement, and empower educators to make decisions that support student achievement; and (3) engage families and provide them with options to support their child's needs. Louisiana's Race to the Top plan aligns with Louisiana Believes and focuses on building LEA capacity to implement Compass, the teacher and principal evaluation system; supporting the transition to the State's new college- and career-ready standards; adding content and functions to Louisiana's online instructional improvement system, Enhanced Assessment of Grade-Level Expectations²⁵ (EAGLE); expanding the number of charter schools; and increasing the number of AP courses.

In SY 2013-2014, Louisiana's Race to the Top grant included 46 participating LEAs composed of 16,092 teachers and 966 principals. Of the 251,133 participating students, 191,526 lived in poverty. Louisiana was awarded over \$17 million to support its Race to the Top plan, with half of those funds allocated to the 47 LEAs that opted to participate in the State's Race to the Top project.

²⁵ The Enhanced Assessment of Grade-Level Expectations (EAGLE) includes a formative assessment component, an item bank of various items and questions for kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12), and a content assessment reporting system.

Louisiana Years 1 and 2 summary

Louisiana created a new district support structure that divided the State into five networks and assigned a team of experienced staff, Network Support Teams,²⁶ to assist districts in their planning and implementation of education reform and to build greater capacity in districts. Throughout Years 1 and 2, Louisiana's Network Support Teams played a significant role in Louisiana's Race to the Top implementation. Additionally, during the first two years of the grant, the Network Support Teams provided technical assistance, resources, and training to help LEAs implement the State's new college- and career-ready standards and the transition to the new teacher and principal evaluation system, Compass. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and Network Support Teams also trained teachers and principals to use EAGLE with contract support; LDOE added test items and resources to EAGLE. In Year 2, Network Support Teams became a critical mechanism to support LDOE's communication to the field and served as a vehicle for the field to provide feedback to LDOE on the status of the State's new college- and career-ready standards and Compass implementation, and to identify areas in which additional support and resources were needed.

During Year 1, the State changed its timeline and process for transitioning to its new college- and career-ready standards such that all grades would implement the standards in SY 2012-2013. To

²⁶ In Year 1, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) initially proposed to use its Trailblazer initiative framework to implement some components of its Race to the Top plan. The initiative included LEAs committed to working with the District Support Office to enact deep-level reforms aimed to boost student performance. With the adoption of Louisiana Believes, the State amended its plan to use Network Support Teams instead of the Trailblazer initiative to implement its Race to the Top plan.

Louisiana

support the transition, the State provided resources and trainings to teachers and leaders during SY 2011-2012. Although Network Support Teams delivered trainings to LEA staff on aligning curriculum materials and resources to the new ELA and mathematics standards, available curriculum materials and resources for all subjects and grades were scarce. Furthermore, the State held summer institutes in 2012 for all grades and provided resources to kindergarten and first-grade teachers. In Year 2, LDOE released two online resources — the Teacher Support Toolbox and the District and School Support Toolbox — to support the transition to the State’s new standards and the new teacher and principal evaluation system. Key resources in the Teacher Support Toolbox include guides to understanding the mathematics and ELA standards, and instructional and assessment materials aligned to those standards. These materials include end-of-year assessment guides and items for ELA and mathematics, sample year-long scope and sequence resources for K-12, video examples of effective instruction, and student work samples. With the launch of the teacher and leader toolboxes, training focused on effectively using toolbox resources across all grades. Additionally, in Year 2, LDOE provided targeted training on implementation of the State’s new standards to over 4,000 classroom teachers who were selected to serve as Teacher Leaders, or building-level contacts. Nearly every school in the State identified a teacher to serve in this capacity.

In its efforts to increase the number of students taking AP courses, the State funded 82 teachers and administrators in Year 1 and 427 teachers and administrators in Year 2 to attend the College Board’s AP Summer Institutes. These intensive three-day trainings were designed to provide teachers with the requisite knowledge to teach AP courses. In Years 1 and 2, LDOE reported anecdotal feedback from AP Summer Institute participants but did not conduct follow-up sessions as planned to determine the usefulness of the training and to assess participants’ future training needs. In Year 2, LDOE launched a new registration platform, Course Choice, offering 109 AP courses, of which 46 were STEM-focused AP. Many of the courses offered through the system were not offered in Louisiana’s brick-and-mortar schools.

To support the State’s objective of ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and leaders, Louisiana’s Race to the Top plan focused on implementing Act 1 and the Talent Recruitment System.²⁷ In Year 1, LDOE provided training on Act 1 to Network Support Teams and administrators across the State and developed guidance for LEAs to use to revise personnel policies in order to be in compliance with the Act. In Year 2, LDOE rolled out the Talent Recruitment System, a free, web-based service that allows job-seeking educators to search for employment opportunities in the State. Schools and districts post open positions, educators post their credentials for

²⁷ Act 1 allows districts and schools to use measures of teacher effectiveness to guide personnel policies and decisions. It calls for teachers to be compensated based on experience, demand (locally defined and inclusive of certification area, geography, etc.), and effectiveness, without decreasing any teacher’s salary or affecting retirement. The statute preserves tenure for current teachers, except for the small number who earn an “ineffective” rating.

those districts, and schools can view those teachers’ credentials for consideration for employment.

In addition to providing funding for new charter schools, LDOE’s Race to the Top plan called for increased accountability of charter operators to ensure high performance. In Year 1, LDOE issued a request for new charter schools and awarded Race to the Top funds to support six charter schools. After a review by an independent panel, the State selected 14 applicants as new charter operators, seven of which were supported by Race to the Top funds.²⁸ Also in Year 1, the newly funded, State-authorized charter schools completed a State-designed, streamlined reopening process. The State created a roadmap with milestones and key dates to monitor schools’ progress during the start-up year. Having completed all start-up activities, the seven Race to the Top-funded charter schools opened on schedule at the start of SY 2013-2014. Also in Year 2, the State awarded four Charter Management Organizations to support six new charter schools.

Louisiana Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, the Network Support Teams continued to be the primary vehicle for communicating with and providing technical assistance to Louisiana’s LEAs. LDOE strengthened the Network Support Team structure by using LDOE-developed planning guides and establishing conference calls to collaborate and problem solve with LEAs. These planning guides defined six focus areas (school leader and teacher learning targets, assessment and curriculum, school and teacher collaboration, Compass observation and feedback, pathway to college and career, and alignment of resources) and identified qualities of excellence for each. For each focus area, the planning guides also provided milestones, decisions for consideration, and links to resources on the LDOE website. Network Support Teams began using the guides in January 2014, and at the end of Year 3 reported that informal feedback had been positive and had yielded suggestions for improvement. Also, LDOE and the Network Support Teams held monthly planning calls with LEA leadership teams, which generally consisted of the superintendent; chief academic officer; and directors of finance, technology, and special education. During the calls, LDOE provided operational updates and an opportunity for LEAs to discuss implementation updates.

In addition to using classroom teachers as Teacher Leaders, LDOE recruited classroom teachers identified by LEAs to serve as Teacher Leader Advisors who would take on additional responsibilities related to implementing the State’s new college- and career-ready standards.²⁹ In Year 3, Teacher Leader Advisors developed new items for EAGLE

²⁸ The State previously reported (in Year 1) the number of new charter schools funded with Race to the Top funds to be six; however, the correct number is seven, of which six were State approved and one was authorized by the local district.

²⁹ Many Teacher Leader Advisors first served as Teacher Leaders.

Louisiana

by writing, reviewing, and editing EAGLE assessment items aligned to the State's standards. Additionally, Teacher Leader Advisors, along with LDOE content staff, created a set of four curriculum guidebooks aligned to the State's new mathematics and ELA standards; these books were made available for all grade levels. Teacher Leader Advisors and LDOE content staff also created assessment guides and sample tests for English and mathematics in grades K-12. Further, Teacher Leaders facilitated virtual book clubs to encourage and provide assistance to teachers using curriculum resources aligned to the State's new standards, such as the new mathematics and ELA guidebooks.

Louisiana students make new state record as a result of Advanced Placement opportunities

Louisiana's Race to the Top plan emphasizes the goal of increasing the number of AP courses offered to students throughout the State. In Year 3, Louisiana made noteworthy progress in the number of courses offered, which led to significant increases in student participation and the number of college credits earned.

Specifically, in Year 3, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) added 92 more AP courses, 36 of them in STEM subject areas. This increase in course offerings led to 1,000 more students enrolling in courses in 2014 than in 2013. Further, the number of college credits earned by students in 2014, compared to 2013, increased by 1,250 credits. According to LDOE, this is the greatest increase in the number of students taking exams and credits earned in the State's history.

In Year 3, LDOE increased the number of Teacher Leaders from 4,000 to 5,500 in an effort to meet its goal of providing support and assistance to teachers to implement the State's college- and career-ready standards in every building statewide. LDOE provided training to Teacher Leaders through various channels such as a Teacher Leader summit on June 3-4, 2014; ELA and mathematics summer institutes in July 2014; and ELA and mathematics training in August 2014. To further support Teacher Leaders, LDOE continued to use monthly newsletters to update them on available resources and training opportunities, and to share best practices.

LDOE continued efforts to increase teachers' use of the EAGLE system and its reporting function to improve classroom instruction. In Year 3, LDOE began to offer EAGLE training at every statewide and regional training event, including the June 2014 Teacher Leader Training, which drew over 4,000 Teacher Leaders who represented nearly every school in the State. EAGLE training topics included how

to effectively support classroom instruction and student achievement using EAGLE. LDOE launched an enhanced EAGLE system in fall 2014 that includes the ability to use one test item covering multiple standards and to utilize the test items to assess other statewide tests, including end-of-course exams. Additionally, LDOE continued to increase the number of resources available in the online toolboxes (*i.e.*, the Teacher Support Toolbox and the District and School Support Toolbox) to support implementation of the State's college- and career-ready standards.

In Year 3, LDOE continued to support and refine Compass implementation. For instance, LDOE developed additional training, resources, and tools to help teachers and administrators implement the system. Some of this support was in the form of webinars and materials to assist teachers with creating Student Learning Targets, which the State defines as a "vision for what students should know or be able to do at the end of the year" that "should guide teachers' instruction throughout the year."³⁰ Also, the State provided videos to give teachers and leaders examples of how to prepare for and participate in productive feedback conversations. Additionally, LDOE updated the Compass Information System for SY 2013-2014, improving feedback loops between evaluators and educators and creating real-time reports to track LEA progress. LDOE also leveraged its Network Support Team members to serve as master Compass evaluator trainers. A core group of 15 Network Support Team members received additional training to allow them to redeliver Compass evaluator training to new leaders as well as new Network Support Team staff.

Challenges

At the end of Year 3, LDOE had not demonstrated a robust, comprehensive process for assessing the quality of Network Support Team implementation. Although LDOE surveyed LEA administrators semiannually about supports provided by Network Support Teams, it did not administer any surveys to building-level staff. While Network Support Team trackers (which track the dates of Network Support Team LEA visits, reasons for visits, and the assistance provided) were regularly reviewed by LDOE staff and shared with LDOE leadership, the Department remained uncertain about whether trackers and other data (*e.g.*, school performance scores, student achievement, and direct feedback from educators) would be used to inform the continuous improvement of Network Support Teams.

At the conclusion of Year 3, LDOE had not demonstrated how it was using data to support teachers to become more effective. For example, LDOE had not shown how it was using Compass data to identify less effective STEM teachers and to identify appropriate professional development aligned to those teachers' needs. Additionally, it was unclear how LDOE was providing guidance to Network Support

³⁰ LDOE explains the basic concept of Student Learning Targets (SLTs) and offers sample SLTs and guides on how to create SLTs on its website at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/teacher-support-toolbox/student-learning-targets>.

Louisiana

Teams or LEAs on how to provide differentiated or targeted support and resources for identified teachers in need of additional support. Also, although LDOE continued to offer teachers and leaders the opportunity to attend AP Summer Institutes, there was a decrease of 45 participants from the prior year, with 382 teachers attending in summer 2014.³¹

Although LDOE made efforts to increase teachers' use of EAGLE, which included doubling the number of items added to the system, the limited availability of assessment items across grades and subjects constrained the extent to which teachers used it. For instance, according to the EAGLE inventory at the end of Year 3, the majority of ELA items were in grades K-6, although there was a noted deficit in grade five. By comparison, the majority of science and social studies items were in the high school, with fewer items available for grades K-8. Also, of those science items available in grades K-4, most were for grade four, resulting in a deficit for the lower grades.

Louisiana continued to face the challenge of identifying effective teachers and leaders and ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and leaders across high-poverty and high-minority schools as planned. For instance, although LDOE reported an increase in the

number of Talent Recruitment System registrants in Year 3, it lacked the ability to collect data to show the system supported equitable access to effective teachers. Also, although LDOE made minor changes to the Talent Recruitment system, LDOE acknowledged that it did not have the staff capacity to respond to feedback requesting that evaluative information on candidates be included in the system. As a result, at the end of Year 3, the extent to which LEAs' compliance with Act 1 and use of the Talent Recruitment System impacted equitable access to teachers and leaders remained unclear.

Although LDOE opened two new charter schools in SY 2014-2015, at the end of Year 3, it fell short of opening all four schools anticipated to open during Year 3. At the end of Year 3, LDOE did not have a timeline for when these schools would open. Additionally, at the conclusion of Year 3, LDOE had not been able to demonstrate the extent to which it was providing oversight, guidance, and support to new charter schools. LDOE reported in Year 3 that it used a Charter School Performance Compact to provide schools with clear guidance and expectations, but at the end of Year 3, the extent to which LDOE was using this tool as intended remained uncertain.

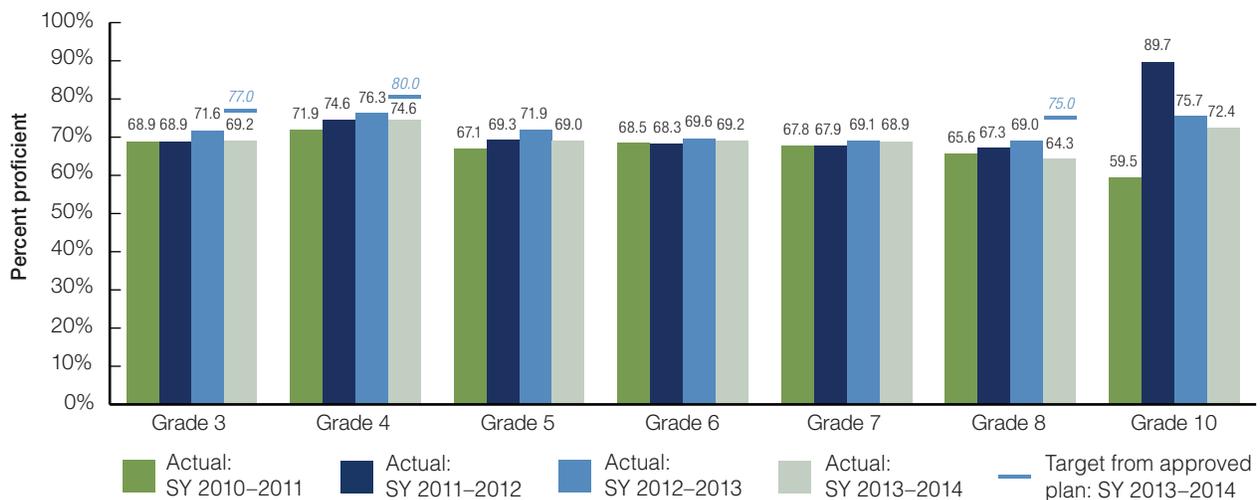
³¹ The State noted to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) during its on-site review that there were a limited number of sites for AP summer institutes within reasonable proximity to many of its teachers (with Jacksonville, Florida, being the closest), which may account for the low number of teachers who attended in Year 3. Additionally, LDOE reported that priority in providing summer institutes was given to start-up AP programs (those schools that previously had no AP courses) and to teachers of AP STEM-focused courses.

Louisiana

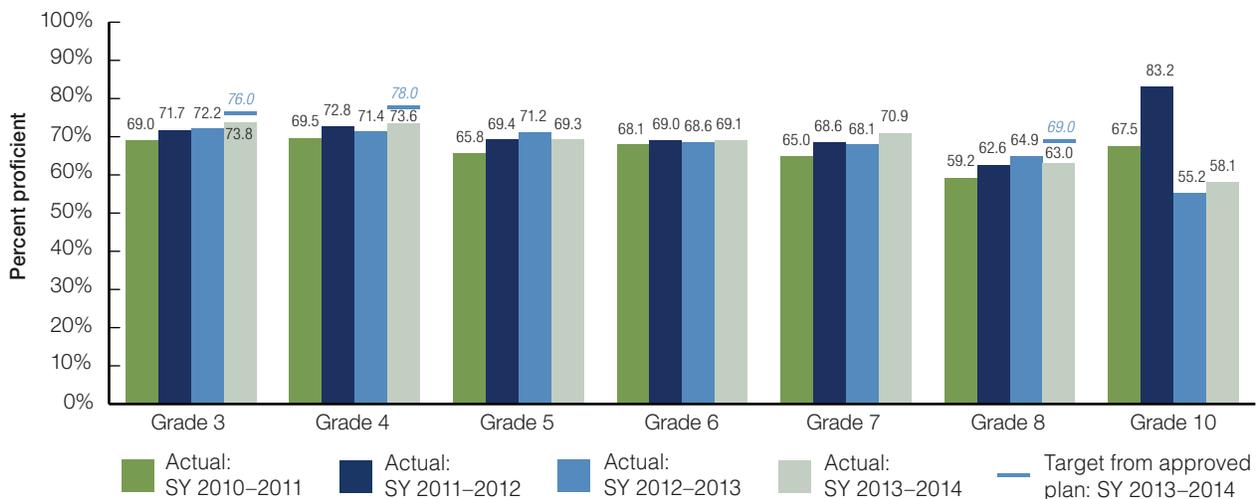
Louisiana student outcomes data

Student proficiency rates increased slightly in ELA from grades three through seven and decreased slightly in grade eight from SY 2010–2011 to SY 2013–2014. Although proficiency levels increased in grade 10 by approximately 13 percentage points between SY 2010–2011 and SY 2013–2014, there was a notable decrease in Year 3 from results in SY 2011–2012. In mathematics, Louisiana student proficiency levels in grades three through eight increased from SY 2010–2011 to SY 2013–2014, but proficiency levels significantly decreased in grade 10 during that time, dropping by approximately 9 percentage points.

Student proficiency on Louisiana's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Louisiana's mathematics assessment

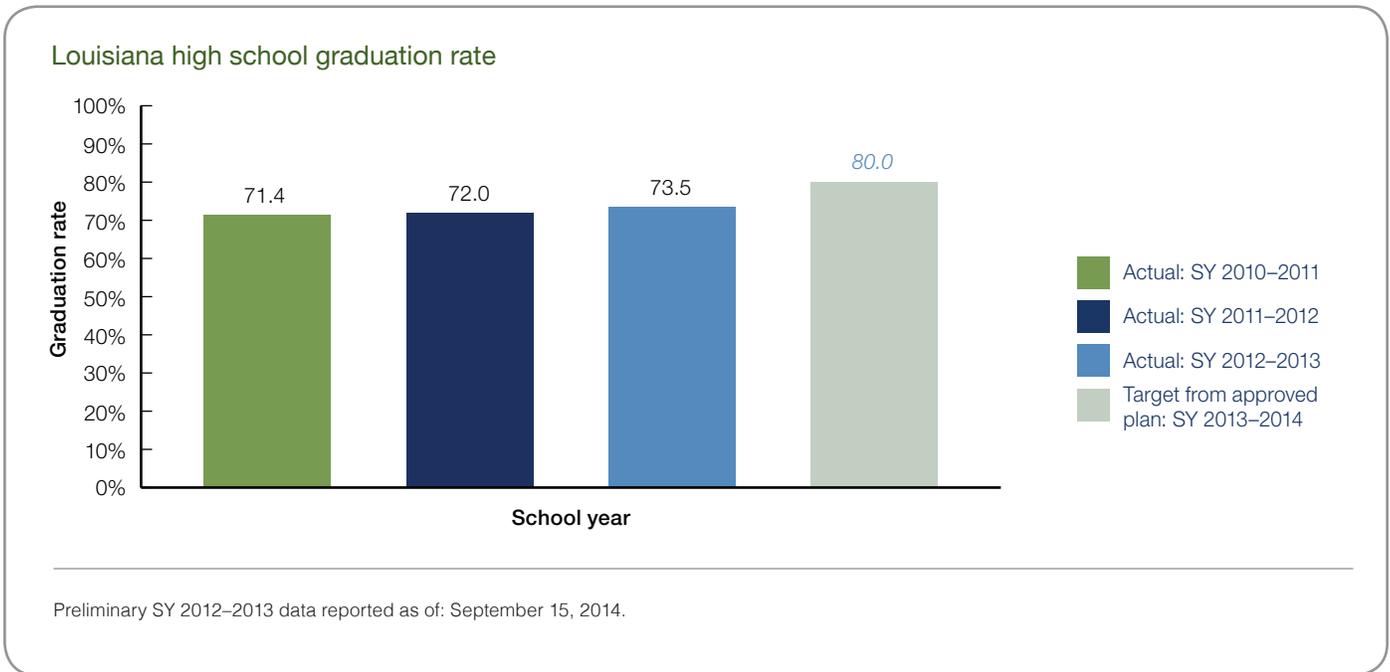


Preliminary SY 2013–2014 data reported as of: December 22, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Louisiana

The high school graduation rate in Louisiana increased slightly in SY 2012-2013. It increased by over 2 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.



Looking ahead to Year 4

In Year 4, Louisiana will continue to use multiple data sources to continuously improve its Race to the Top projects. For example, LDOE will continue to use survey data and information from weekly calls to guide district support and adapt upcoming trainings, such as AP Summer Institutes, to the needs of the field. Additionally, Network Support Team staff will continue to collaborate with district leaders, school leaders, and evaluators on a monthly basis to build district and school capacity through observation and reflection on everyday practice.

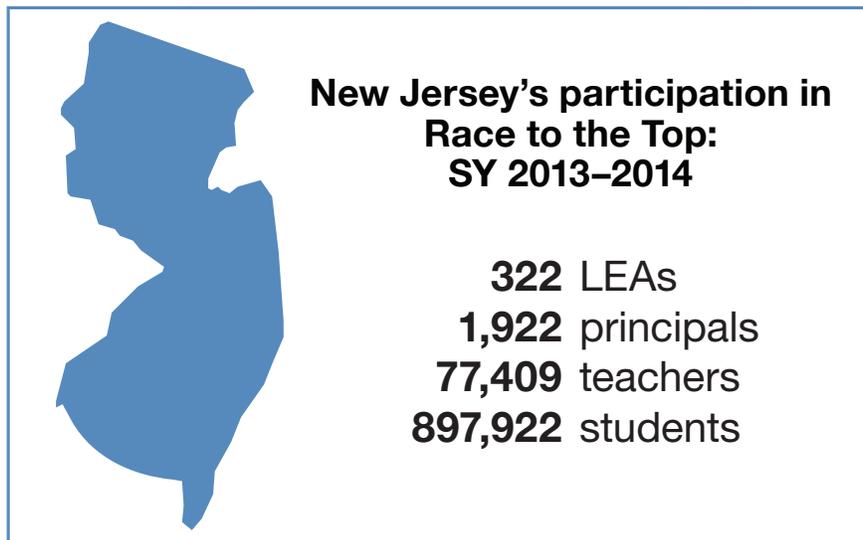
Over Years 1-3, Louisiana invested in tools aligned to its new standards and Compass resources designed to support educators' use of data to improve classroom instruction, provide targeted professional development, and increase the number of effective teachers. As the grant comes to a close, LDOE and the Network Support Team will move beyond the model's initial focus of providing support to LEAs to implement Compass and the State's college- and

career-ready standards, and shift to building LEA capacity to sustain implementation of these initiatives.

In Year 4, Louisiana will continue to encourage LEAs to use EAGLE as a system for instructional improvement. LDOE will continue to add assessment items to the system and provide training to teachers, with a focus on how to use the system and its data to inform classroom instruction.

Finally, Year 4 marks the first year that all Race to the Top-funded charter schools will be operating, with the final two schools that were previously slated to open in SY 2014-2015, anticipated to open in SY 2015-2016. In Year 4, LDOE expects to provide technical assistance and monitor the two Race to the Top-funded charter schools that will begin start-up activities in Year 4. As LDOE's oversight, guidance, and support to new charter schools has been a noted challenge for the State, LDOE's strategic use of its Charter School Performance Compact will be critical to meeting its objective of incubating and scaling up high-performing charter schools.

New Jersey



New Jersey's education reform agenda

To help ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and careers, New Jersey has established education reform goals that include closing the achievement gap and improving the academic achievement of all students; producing high school graduates who are ready to succeed in college and careers; and substantially improving college attendance rates for students statewide.

In a reorganization that directly aligns with Race to the Top priorities, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) created four divisions, each corresponding with a basic building block of its reform plan. The four divisions are Academics (standards, assessments, curriculum, and instruction), Talent (educator effectiveness), Performance (targets, measurement, analysis, and accountability), and Innovation (high-quality, nontraditional methods of delivering K-12 schooling and technology). These divisions focus on New Jersey's priority initiatives: implementing the State's college- and career-ready standards, known as the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments; developing a statewide framework for educator evaluation; leveraging the effective use of data to improve instruction; and increasing the number of effective charter schools.

New Jersey's \$37,847,648 Race to the Top grant, half of which is allocated to participating LEAs, has bolstered its efforts to implement this reform agenda. In SY 2013-2014, New Jersey's Race to the Top grant included 322 participating LEAs composed of 77,409 teachers and 1,922 principals. Of the 897,922 participating students, 405,215 lived in poverty.

New Jersey Years 1 and 2 summary

In Years 1 and 2, New Jersey created the systems and processes required to implement its education reform initiatives. New Jersey established a Race to the Top office with designated project managers to manage its Race to the Top plan; built relationships with and monitored participating LEAs; and developed various communication structures with other program offices, including the Office of Charter Schools and the Office of STEM Education. These steps helped ensure that Race to the Top activities were implemented with fidelity to the plan. The major programmatic components of NJDOE's work involved developing the first version of model curricula and formative assessments in mathematics and ELA aligned to the NJCCCS. In Year 2, these resources, developed by teams of over 300 educators, were implemented throughout the year in Priority and Focus schools³² and were made available statewide.

In Year 1, New Jersey also launched two educator evaluation pilot programs, one for teachers and one for principals. Nineteen LEAs applied for and received grants to participate in the teacher evaluation pilot, while 15 LEAs signed on to the principal evaluation pilot. In SY 2012-2013, the pilot districts began training participants and implementing an approved teacher or principal evaluation system, aligned with its evaluation framework. During the pilot year, LEAs selected and implemented approved educator evaluation systems aligned with the State's educator effectiveness framework. The Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee collected feedback and lessons learned from the pilot and codified this information in reports published throughout the year. Ultimately, the experience

³² The definitions for Priority and Focus schools can be found in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, available online at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>.

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from the SY 2012-2013 pilot programs helped to inform the State's educator effectiveness law and regulations that were put in place in fall 2013. All LEAs statewide were required to evaluate all teachers and principals in SY 2013-2014.

In Years 1 and 2, New Jersey experienced delays but made some progress in developing an Instructional Improvement System (IIS). In Year 1, with guidance from the IIS steering committee, the IIS advisory team, and an external contractor, the State determined the technical and programmatic requirements of its IIS and drafted a request for proposals to secure a vendor to create the system. The State experienced procurement delays in Year 1, and as a result, the State was not able to finalize a vendor or begin system development by the beginning of SY 2012-2013 as planned. However, New Jersey developed a new plan for this project in Year 2 and maintained a smaller-scale, interim version of the IIS called the School Accountability Management System to administer formative assessments in its Priority schools. In addition to test administration, the smaller system also included a scoring and analysis tool; a dashboard that displays up-to-date information on student-level assessment, attendance, and discipline data; and project management software that helps school leaders manage progress against their School Improvement Plans.

New Jersey's Race to the Top office continued to work with program offices and LEAs to implement Race to the Top activities during Year 2. It completed a full cycle of subrecipient monitoring, which included analyzing programmatic and fiscal reports from LEAs throughout the year and completing on-site program reviews for LEAs with Race to the Top allocations over \$150,000. New Jersey also maintained its various project management and communication structures, including a web-based Scope of Work management system for LEAs, a State-level Race to the Top website, and a Race to the Top email box dedicated to providing timely answers to questions from LEA representatives.

In Year 2, New Jersey also revised its model curriculum units and formative assessments aligned to the NJCCCS in mathematics and ELA to include enhanced Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and classroom resources for teachers. It also made progress on completing model curricula for other subjects, including visual and performing arts, health and physical education, world languages, and social studies. Many of the new and revised resources were loaded onto a new online tool — the NJ Educator Resource Exchange — that allows teachers to download lessons, frameworks, and activities that support teaching the NJCCCS.

NJDOE completed the second round of teacher and principal evaluation system pilot programs in Year 2. To assist LEAs, NJDOE hosted a series of presentations across the State designed to share information, answer questions, and solicit feedback from educators about the educator effectiveness system.

New Jersey's Office of Charter Schools reviewed and approved new charter school applications. The application process from Year 1 resulted in six approved charter schools that opened their doors in fall 2013. The spring 2013 review process yielded three new charter schools that were eligible to open in fall 2014.

New Jersey faced some internal capacity challenges that led to delays in certain projects in its plan. For example, the State did not have a permanent content lead for social studies, which impacted the State's ability to complete its model curriculum and formative assessments for social studies in grades K-8 by the end of Year 2 as planned. Similarly, New Jersey initially struggled to identify internal expertise to support the development of model curriculum units with scaffolds — or accommodations — for English learners and students with disabilities. New Jersey also experienced significant delays in developing its IIS, as previously mentioned.

New Jersey Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

New Jersey continued its efforts to ensure statewide capacity to implement and sustain its plans through a coordinated communication plan, LEA monitoring, and its Race to the Top management office. From fall 2013 through summer 2014, NJDOE implemented its subrecipient monitoring plan, collecting progress reports from all 322 participating LEAs and conducting on-site visits of the 22 LEAs with the largest fund allocations.

New Jersey supported the transition to its enhanced standards and high-quality assessments by providing model curriculum units, assessments, and professional development, all aligned to those standards. The State completed version 2.0 of all model curriculum units and formative assessments in mathematics and ELA on schedule, posted them to the model curriculum website, and implemented them in Priority schools. New Jersey also launched the first phase of curriculum scaffolds for grades K-5 for mathematics and ELA. The State used preliminary information provided by an external evaluation of the implementation of its standards to modify professional development opportunities and resources to meet teachers' needs.

New Jersey continued to develop the IIS, which supports statewide efforts to more effectively use data to improve instruction. NJDOE completed the IIS pilot in spring 2014 and made the IIS available to participating LEAs for SY 2014-2015. New Jersey awarded subgrants to 10 participating and four involved LEAs, to provide supplemental support for their IIS implementation. By the end of SY 2014-2015, 33 participating and involved LEAs will implement the first three modules (lesson planning and instructional materials module,

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New Jersey focuses on high-quality implementation of teacher and leader evaluation systems

During the course of the Race to the Top grant, New Jersey piloted and implemented its teacher and leader evaluation systems. It also established procedures to ensure that the teacher and leader evaluation systems were of high quality. In SY 2012-2013, the State completed the teacher and leader evaluation pilot program, and the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee released a final* report that included 12 recommendations (e.g., regarding increasing leadership capacity, providing valuable professional learning, integrating initiatives, and providing flexibility for LEA training implementation) for the State to consider when implementing the evaluation systems. The State reported at the end of Year 3 that it intended to use the report content to inform the guidance, support, and professional development it would offer during the first full year of implementation in SY 2013-2014.

In SY 2013-2014, all noncharter LEAs fully implemented a teacher and leader evaluation system, AchieveNJ, in compliance with the Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey (TEACHNJ) Act. To ensure high-quality implementation and continuous improvement, the AchieveNJ Advisory Committee, a group composed of 33 educators from across the State, met eight times throughout SY 2013-2014 to offer input on topics including elements of high-quality implementation and how to provide support for principal leadership.

Additionally, throughout the year, State evaluation staff members, including three implementation managers, visited LEAs — on average five to seven per week — to gauge the quality of implementation and assist in addressing challenges. The New Jersey Chief Talent Officer and evaluation team leadership met with the leadership of the New Jersey Education Association quarterly to review implementation, address concerns, and foster continuing dialogue about evaluations.

Further, the State maintains a detailed website, <http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/>, that provides online access to all materials and resources related to AchieveNJ, including guidance for implementation in SY 2014-2015, procedural updates, and opportunities for training and professional development.

*The final Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) report is available online at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/sboe/meetings/2013/December/public/EPAC%20Report.pdf>.

assessment creation and dissemination module, and data reporting module) of the IIS.³³

As part of its efforts to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, New Jersey developed a robust evaluation system. In SY 2013-2014, all noncharter LEAs fully implemented a teacher and leader evaluation system, AchieveNJ. Every noncharter LEA created a District Evaluation Advisory Committee composed of a variety of LEA stakeholders to assist the LEA in solving problems and making recommendations on the LEA's evaluation system. Every noncharter LEA also created a School Improvement Panel to oversee educator evaluation at the school level. The School Improvement Panels ensure that evaluation procedures and mentoring processes are implemented, appropriate professional development is provided, and corrective action plans are in place.

New Jersey made progress in its goal to approve applications for charter schools with great potential to be high-performing schools. The State completed all three cycles of charter school application review, including new charter applicants; existing, high-performing charter applicants; and charter renewal applicants. The Commissioner granted five final charters, and these schools opened in September 2014. The State initiated the 2014 cycles for charters seeking to open in fall 2015.

Challenges

The State continued to experience delays in projects due in part to the procurement process. For example, procurement delays caused the State to push back the release of the IIS. The delayed IIS subsequently resulted in the State falling short of meeting some of its performance measure targets.³⁴

New Jersey was also delayed in completing and posting many model curriculum units, assessments, and scaffolds for English learners and students with disabilities aligned to the NJCCCS — in particular, for the visual and performing arts, social studies, and science. Despite training approximately 600 educators to use the Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Practices (EQuIP) rubric to vet NJCCCS-aligned lesson and unit plans, at the end of Year 3, the State had received only one lesson plan submission in its model lesson award program, far short of the original number of resources

³³ "Full" implementation of the Instructional Improvement System (IIS) includes implementation of the three modules; however, the State did not specify when in SY 2014-2015 the LEAs were required to fully implement all three modules, only that the implementation of all three had to be completed by the end of the school year. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) required each LEA to provide a local IIS implementation timeline and Scope of Work as part of the Statement of Commitment and Services (submitted by each LEA opting to use the IIS and approved by NJDOE). Therefore, at the conclusion of Year 3, the 33 LEAs were in different stages of implementing the IIS.

³⁴ The State-developed performance measures for this subcriteria are "Percentage of Participating LEAs across the State actively utilizing Instructional Improvement System platform to access model curriculum, formative assessments, and data reports: SY 2012-2013: 10 percent, SY 2013-2014: 20 percent, and SY 2014-2015: 30 percent."

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the State anticipated.³⁵ Additionally, New Jersey reported that use of the Educator Resource Exchange website was lower than its targets and that NJDOE was exploring the value of this investment moving forward. Initially, New Jersey intended for the Educator Resource Exchange to be a website of free materials for teachers to contribute to, comment on, rate, and download. On the Exchange, built out during Year 2, the State is able to track logins and use of specific resources, of which there were over 2,000 at the end of Year 3. However, New Jersey reported that because of vacancies in content roles at the SEA level, the SEA lacked sufficient capacity to continue to review additional external materials and post them to the site.

While the State established a system for monitoring participating LEAs' progress, providing differentiated support to 322 LEAs across the State remained a challenge. At the end of Year 3, there were no apparent structures in place to provide adequate support to build capacity in all of the 322 LEAs, and no clear coordinated approach

between the Regional Achievement Centers (RACs) and the content areas. New Jersey committed to using its RACs as the primary method for supporting and building capacity in the areas of standards and assessment, data use, and teacher and leadership improvement.

New Jersey faced challenges in implementing its evaluation system. SY 2013-2014 student growth percentile data were not available to LEAs at the end of Year 3. As a result, educators did not receive a full, summative rating for SY 2013-2014 during Year 3. LEAs made human capital decisions for 85 percent of teachers by the end of SY 2013-2014, meaning that any human capital decisions prior to this time were based only on the observation or student growth objective components.³⁶ The State reported that no consequential human capital decisions were made for those teachers who did not have a summative rating; however, LEAs provided additional support to those educators who received low ratings on the observation and student growth objective components.

³⁵ In May 2013, the Office of Academic Standards announced the State's New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) model lesson/unit award competition. Educators were invited to submit lessons and units aligned to the NJCCCS to the State. The competition called for lessons to be vetted against the Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Practices (EQuIP) rubric and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. If approved, the intention was that they would be included on the Educator Resource Exchange (<http://www.njcore.org>). A teacher or team of teachers contributing a lesson or unit earning an exemplary score would receive a monetary award, an official endorsement of their plan or unit, and State recognition.

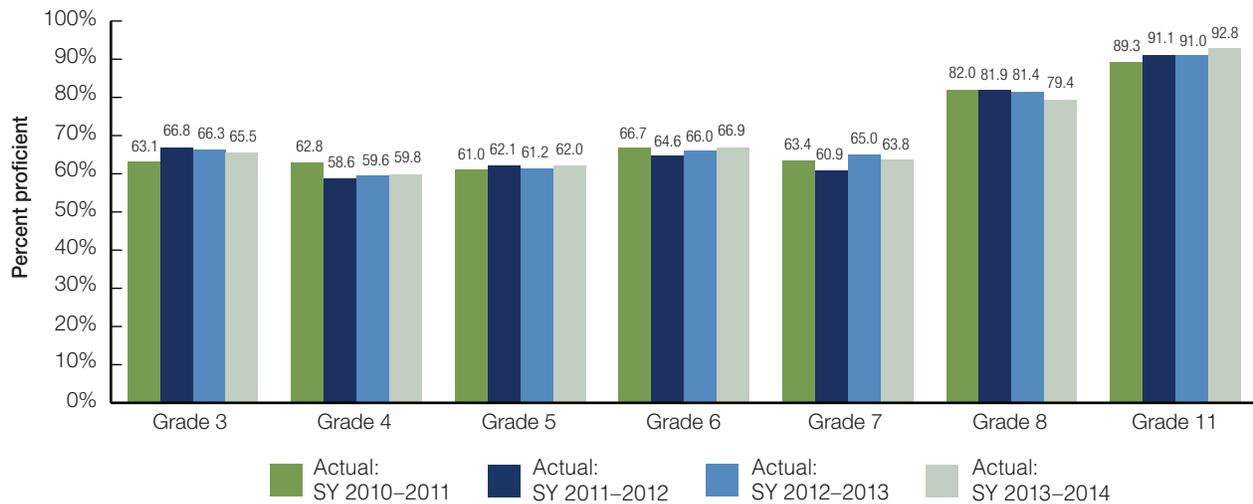
³⁶ The State has made several revisions to the weights of components within AchieveNJ. In SY 2012-2013, the State revised the framework to 55 percent teacher practice and 45 percent student growth. In SY 2013-2014, the State proposed to revise the framework again, reducing the percentage of student growth to 30 percent (20 percent student growth objective and 10 percent student growth percentile).

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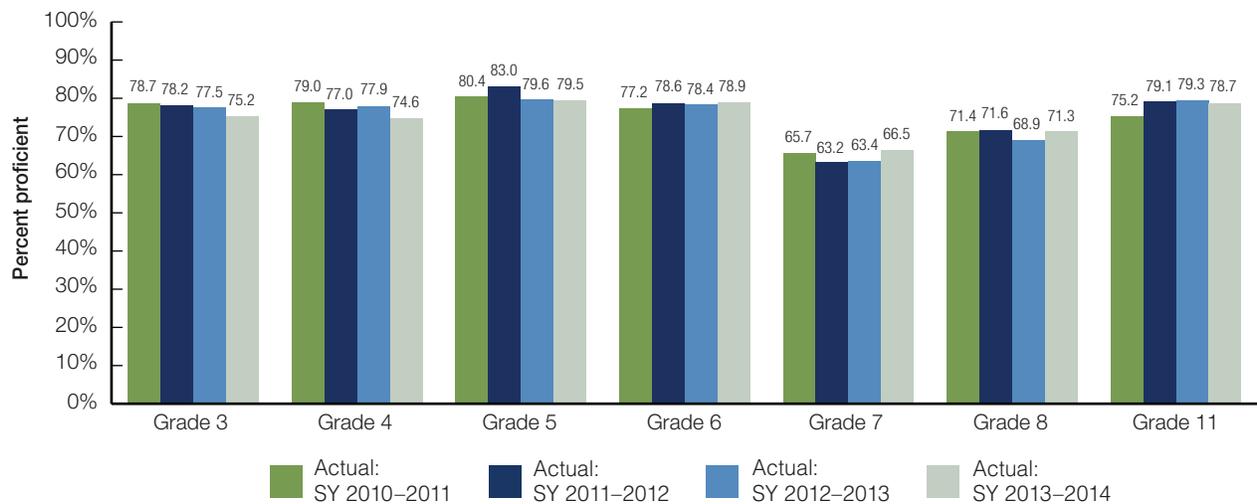
New Jersey student outcomes data

On the State's summative assessment, New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge, student proficiency rates showed mixed results in ELA and mathematics when comparing SY 2013-2014 to SY 2010-2011. Overall, ELA proficiency rates increased slightly for most grades from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014. Although student proficiency rates increased in nearly all grade levels, they decreased slightly in grades four and eight from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014. However, grade four increased slightly when compared to the prior year. In mathematics, student proficiency rates decreased slightly from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014 in grades 3, 4, 5, and 8 but increased in grades 6, 7, and 11. However, grade eight increased by over 2 percentage points from the prior year.

Student proficiency on New Jersey's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on New Jersey's mathematics assessment



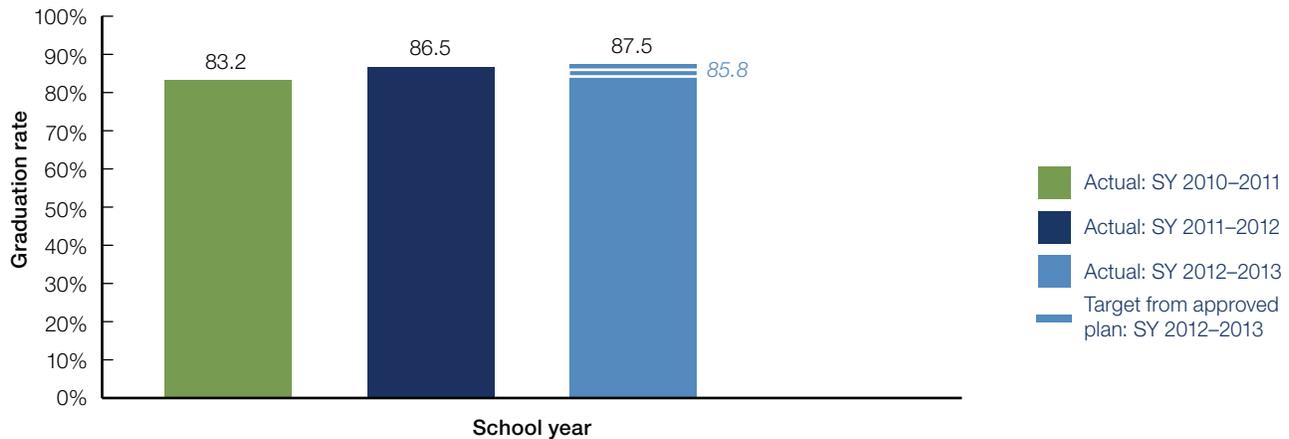
Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: September 25, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

New Jersey

The high school graduation rate in New Jersey increased slightly in SY 2012-2013 from the previous year. It increased by over 4 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.

New Jersey high school graduation rate



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: September 15, 2014.

Looking ahead to Year 4

New Jersey will continue to develop curricula aligned to its newly developed standards and assessments. New Jersey will also work toward the ongoing development of the online professional development modules for 25 identified, vetted, and approved NJCCCS topics for teachers. The State plans to roll out professional development modules and complete the project in December 2015.

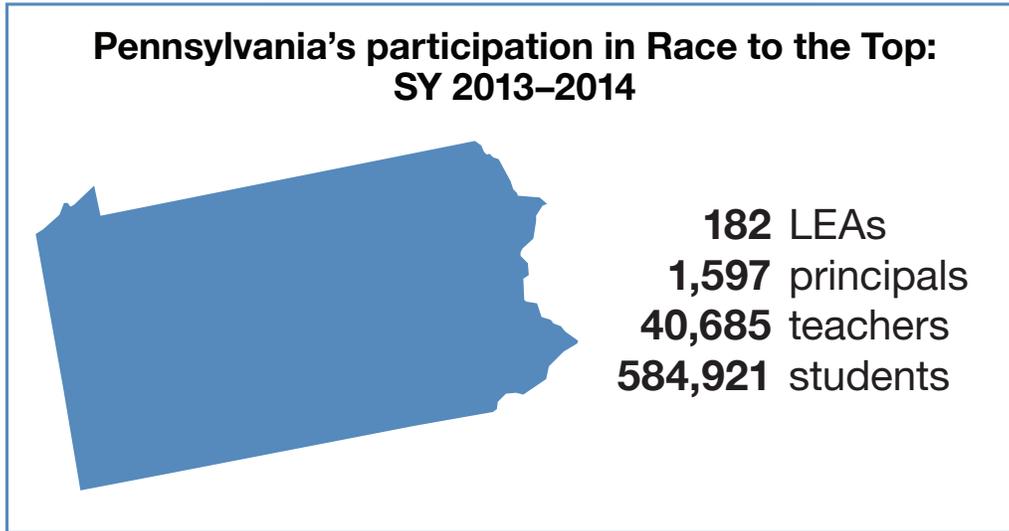
In addition, New Jersey will develop NJCCCS leadership academies for superintendents, principals, and leaders in curriculum and instruction. This work will build upon the original plan in the State's Race to the Top Phase 3 application, including developing and executing professional development for instructional leadership

and principals. This project will help districts and schools build strong leadership teams able to support their staff with professional development, standards-aligned curricula, job-embedded coaching, and a climate and culture for sustainable implementation of the NJCCCS.

At the end of Year 3, Rutgers University is under contract with the State to conduct research regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of the State's college- and career-ready standards, with a specific focus on the professional supports needed by educators. The project will help the State allocate its limited professional development funds to targeted areas proven effective through research and data.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's participation in Race to the Top: SY 2013–2014



Pennsylvania's education reform agenda³⁷

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) designed its Race to the Top Phase 3 application to accelerate key aspects of the State's strategic plan for education. As one of seven States to receive a Race to the Top Phase 3 grant, Pennsylvania received approximately \$41 million over four years. In SY 2013-2014, Pennsylvania's Race to the Top grant included 182 participating LEAs composed of 40,685 teachers and 1,597 principals. Of the 584,921 participating students, 339,741 lived in poverty.

As part of its efforts to implement a comprehensive and coherent approach to education reform, Pennsylvania has been working to implement college- and career-ready standards and aligned high-quality assessments through the adoption and implementation of the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PA Core Standards). This includes updating the State's Standards Aligned System portal, an interactive website that provides teachers throughout the State with resources to support the transition from Pennsylvania's existing State standards to the PA Core Standards.

Pennsylvania also revised sections under the Pennsylvania Code on standards and assessments, and similarly, PDE revised State regulations to reflect the transition to the PA Core Standards and the end-of-course Keystone Exams. These regulatory revisions included the requirement that, beginning with the Class of 2017, students demonstrate proficiency through the Keystone Exams in mathematics, science, and language arts to earn a high school diploma. The State is also committed to improving educator effectiveness. As part of this

³⁷ This section reflects counts of schools and students reported in the State's Phase 3 application.

effort, Pennsylvania is implementing new teacher, specialist,³⁸ and principal evaluation systems that evaluate educators' professional practices and incorporate student growth into the educator evaluation system. Through its Race to the Top plan, Pennsylvania is committed to providing professional development on the use of the new evaluation systems, including how to utilize the information to improve teacher and principal effectiveness.

Pennsylvania's Race to the Top application also includes several initiatives that PDE believes will impact student outcomes and contribute to Pennsylvania's education reform efforts. In particular, Pennsylvania will focus on expanding student and teacher access to quality courses and instructional resources, increasing access to data that can be used to inform instruction, implementing new educator evaluation systems, and expanding access to high-quality charter schools.

Pennsylvania Years 1 and 2 summary

To support educators in implementing the PA Core Standards, in Year 2, PDE made a number of resources available to educators through the Standards Aligned System portal. For example, Pennsylvania incorporated Classroom Diagnostic Tools for grades 6 through 12 in mathematics and science, and selected over 30 high-quality online STEM courses for the State's Online Course Catalog. In fall 2013, PDE also launched its online School Performance Profile, a publicly accessible report card for every school in the State. PDE's goal is for the Profile to be used to inform multiple reform

³⁸ In summer 2013, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) clarified that Pennsylvania's educator effectiveness law, Act 82, categorized specialists into two groups: (1) educators with instructional certifications and unique roles and functions (e.g., librarians and literacy coaches) and (2) nonteaching licensed professionals (e.g., occupational therapists and social workers).

Pennsylvania

initiatives, including educator evaluation systems, and PDE's support for Pennsylvania's lowest-achieving schools.

In Year 1, the State compiled an online list of public charters and the authorities under which they existed. In Year 2, the State built upon its web-based inventory of public charters by publishing a separate list of cyber charter schools in operation for SY 2013-2014. In winter 2013, PDE demonstrated progress in its development of a more consistent approval process for cyber charter schools, which represent 14 of the State's 176 charter schools. The State started developing a rubric to use during its annual on-site reviews for cyber charter schools.

In Years 1 and 2, Pennsylvania also made progress toward full implementation of its teacher, specialist, and principal evaluation systems. In the first year of Race to the Top implementation, Pennsylvania focused on piloting its educator evaluation systems. Building upon lessons learned in the pilots conducted in SY 2010-2011 and SY 2011-2012, the State began using its teacher observation rubric in all LEAs in SY 2012-2013. It also moved into the second year of piloting the professional practices portion of its principal rubric in 237 LEAs. Additionally, PDE began training staff in the State's Intermediate Units (IUs) on elements of the State's educator evaluation systems, and the IUs began training LEA staff to build knowledge and capacity of educator evaluation systems at the local level.³⁹

In Year 2, PDE continued to phase in elements of Pennsylvania's educator evaluation systems. In fall 2013, all LEAs participated in Pennsylvania's teacher evaluation system, with performance ratings based on professional practice and building-level data. In order to support LEAs in implementing the new evaluation systems, PDE continued to offer professional development opportunities for LEAs through the IUs, web-based professional development modules, and webinars. PDE also implemented multiple pilots on aspects of Pennsylvania's educator evaluation systems to introduce the new systems to LEAs and gather feedback. For instance, PDE piloted its principal and specialist observation rubrics in preparation for full implementation in SY 2014-2015 and conducted a student growth roster verification pilot in a portion of LEAs for the teacher evaluation system.

PDE struggled in Year 1 and a portion of Year 2 with capacity and management issues, which resulted in delays in several of Pennsylvania's Race to the Top projects. In Year 1, PDE was delayed in a portion of its standards and assessments efforts, particularly in the evaluation of STEM courses available from online course providers. It was also delayed in implementing its Math Design Collaborative project, which provides middle school educators with training and access to formative assessment lessons in mathematics.

³⁹ Pennsylvania's Intermediate Units (IUs) are part of the State's public education governance structure serving in a role between the State educational agency and the LEAs. The IUs provide region-based services to LEAs across the State. Under Pennsylvania's Race to the Top plan, the IUs provide a variety of professional development opportunities to LEAs and assist the State in providing oversight of LEAs and their use of Race to the Top funds.

Pennsylvania also struggled in Year 2 to progress against its timelines and goals in some projects, including developing resources to support the implementation of Pennsylvania's new standards and assessments and creating data systems to improve instruction. For example, Pennsylvania did not initiate its educator dashboard in spring 2013 as planned, due to hiring and procurement challenges. This impacted PDE's ability to meet its goal of providing LEAs and educators with greater access to quality data.

Pennsylvania Year 3 summary

Accomplishments

In Year 3, PDE increased its internal staffing and monitoring of IUs and LEAs. During SY 2013-2014, PDE monitored each of the State's 29 IUs, including all 182 Race to the Top participating LEAs, to review Race to the Top grant requirements, assess LEA progress, and gather feedback regarding PDE's implementation of grant projects. PDE used information from these visits to provide individualized technical assistance to LEAs when necessary, and to communicate implementation successes and challenges to PDE Race to the Top project leads. Beginning in fall 2014, the State began on-site subrecipient monitoring visits for SY 2014-2015.

During Year 3, PDE continued to progress toward its goal of increasing student achievement in STEM and supporting the transition to the PA Core Standards. In doing so, it expanded the availability of online courses, giving students access to high-quality courses aligned to the PA Core Standards. For example, PDE added AP courses and subjects related to Keystone Exams, bolstering the catalog to include 40 courses total in Algebra, Biology, AP Biology, AP Calculus, and Grade 10 ELA. In SY 2013-2014, Pennsylvania reported that over 13,000 students in participating LEAs enrolled in PDE-certified online courses. Additionally, in fall 2014, PDE launched a web-based repository of resources (*e.g.*, lectures, assignments, assessments) called Pennsylvania Learns for educators and students. This site includes free or low-cost educational resources aligned to the PA Core Standards, which educators can incorporate into their lessons and courses. As of fall 2014, Pennsylvania Learns included mathematics resources for grades 6 through 8, and ELA, biology, and algebra resources for grades 9 through 12.

In spring 2014, PDE piloted the Math Design Collaborative, a project that provides middle school educators with training and access to formative assessment lessons in mathematics. PDE used surveys and focus groups to gather feedback on the quality of the Math Design Collaborative resources and training during the pilot to inform statewide implementation. In fall 2014, PDE launched the project statewide. To promote and sustain the Math Design Collaborative project, PDE developed a repository of resources on the Standards Aligned System portal, which is available for all educators, along with the existing Professional Learning Community.

Pennsylvania

In Year 3, Pennsylvania made progress on its projects to increase access to quality data for stakeholders. Following initial delays in Years 1 and 2, PDE made available the early warning system portion of its educator dashboard for all LEAs in SY 2014-2015. The early warning system provides LEAs with access to real-time student-level data to help educators identify middle school students in need of additional academic interventions or support services. The State is making this tool available to LEAs to help reduce the number of students who drop out of school. Additionally, PDE continued its work to ensure data quality and made progress in streamlining its processes for collecting data from LEAs. Through the Pennsylvania Information Management System, the State's longitudinal data system, PDE consolidated and reduced the number of data collection windows required for LEAs from 29 to 6 annually. To further support its data strategy initiatives during Year 3, PDE continued its annual training and technical assistance for Pennsylvania Information Management System administrators and users in LEAs and IUs.

PDE also continued its work with the online School Performance Profile to provide better information to improve school performance. In Year 3, PDE added a "school supports" section to the site that includes a repository of resources schools and teachers may use to strengthen academic achievement, instruction, and other elements of school performance.

In Year 3, PDE worked with all LEAs to complete the student growth element for evaluations for teachers of tested grades and subjects, known as the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System. In SY 2013-2014, the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System team provided extensive professional development opportunities and technical assistance resources to the field, to ensure that LEAs had the ability to provide PDE with key information, such as teacher roster verification. The Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System analysis is scheduled to constitute the teacher-specific student growth element for teachers of tested grades and subjects in educator evaluations beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.

PDE made progress on its timeline for its teacher evaluation system. In SY 2013-2014, all LEAs implemented teacher evaluation systems based 85 percent on observation and practice evidence and 15 percent on building-level data, a school academic performance score calculated through Pennsylvania's School Performance Profile.

PDE provided support to LEAs and performed a number of pilots to prepare the State for full implementation of its teacher and principal evaluation systems. For instance, PDE assisted LEAs as they prepared to include SLOs in teacher evaluations in SY 2014-2015 by developing a repository of resource documents, including an SLO template and guidance documents. Additionally, PDE completed a pilot of teacher SLOs in 120 LEAs in SY 2013-2014 to help them prepare to include SLOs in teacher evaluations in SY 2014-2015. The 800 classroom teachers and 340 administrators, principals, and school leaders in this pilot had the opportunity to use PDE's guidance documents. PDE also made progress in Year 3 in developing and implementing its specialist

evaluation system for nonteaching professional employees. PDE piloted observation and practice rubrics for seven specialist roles in SY 2013-2014 and implemented the evaluation system in SY 2014-2015. PDE completed a third pilot of the principal observation and practice rubric in SY 2013-2014 with 182 participating Race to the Top LEAs. PDE partnered with a third-party vendor to analyze the observation and practice data.⁴⁰ In Year 3, PDE also supported principals as they prepared to integrate elective data, such as SLOs, into principal evaluations. PDE created several technical assistance tools for the field, including an Elective Data/SLO template, guidance for completing the Elective Data/SLOs portion of the principal rating tool, and guiding questions for administrator evaluators. All of these tools are available through the PDE website.

PDE trained educators on the teacher and principal observation and practice rubrics. PDE had a goal of providing 100 percent of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with training on the teacher observation and practice rubric by the conclusion of SY 2013-2014. Although PDE met this target for principals, it narrowly missed it for teachers, with 97.5 percent trained on the rubric as of Year 3. Also, IUs continued to offer trainings, including refresher courses on the teacher observation and practice rubric, as well as courses in other topical areas related to teacher effectiveness. Additionally, as of SY 2013-2014, PDE reported that 94 percent of superintendents and 87 percent of principals in participating LEAs were trained on the principal evaluation rubrics. These figures exceeded the State's target of 50 percent in both categories. Further, PDE continued to offer professional development to its participating LEAs on the updated observation and practice rubrics for nonteaching professional employees throughout Year 3.

In Year 3, PDE's charter school office conducted on-site monitoring visits and reauthorization visits in four cyber charter schools. Additionally, PDE provided support to cyber charter schools in completing their annual reports and assured that all cyber charter school annual reports were posted on the PDE website.

Challenges

Although PDE made notable progress in Year 3, accomplishing a number of activities along Pennsylvania's Race to the Top timelines, PDE staff need to provide continued oversight of SEA- and LEA-led activities to ensure that Pennsylvania meets its Race to the Top goals. At the end of Year 3, PDE reported that it had spent approximately 49 percent of its Race to the Top funds, which is less than anticipated for three-fourths of the grant period. While the State is working to overcome initial delays across a number of projects that inhibited PDE's ability to draw down funds in Years 1 and 2, the amount

⁴⁰ In July 2014, PDE published its final regulations for the State's principal evaluation system, which revised the timeline and design of some elements of the State's model. PDE originally planned to fully implement its principal evaluation system in SY 2014-2015, with ratings based on observation and practice evidence (50 percent), building-level data (15 percent), correlation data (15 percent), and elective data, including Student Learning Objectives (20 percent). See "Looking ahead to Year 4" for a discussion of how Pennsylvania will continue to phase in its principal evaluation system.

Pennsylvania

PDE expanded the development and awareness of the Math Design Collaborative in Year 3

In Year 3, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) made notable progress with planning and implementing its Math Design Collaborative. The Math Design Collaborative framework emphasizes students working through problems and uses a hybrid of assessment and instruction as a key tool for implementation. As a process to enhance PA Core Standards-based instruction, the Math Design Collaborative provides resources, strategies, and professional development to assist teachers as they assess student learning.

Since its pilot in spring 2014 and the start of statewide implementation in SY 2014-2015, PDE has received positive feedback from the field regarding the usefulness of the resources and tools it has made available through the Math Design Collaborative. In implementing the Math Design Collaborative, PDE has leveraged its Standards Aligned System portal, an interactive website for teachers throughout the State composed of resources to support the transition from Pennsylvania's existing State standards to the PA Core Standards. As PDE continued to populate the Standards Aligned System portal for educators to access the Math Design Collaborative resources and tools, it also used YouTube to promote the project.*

PDE also increased community awareness of the Math Design Collaborative in Year 3 through public presentations and partnering with institutions of higher education. For example, the Math Design Collaborative team presented at Curriculum Advisory Meetings for two Intermediate Units to make local school districts aware of the Math Design Collaborative trainings. It also presented at the Pennsylvania Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators symposium at Shippensburg University. Additionally, the Math Design Collaborative started to work with Messiah College and Shippensburg University, providing future teachers with the trainings.

* See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk2_i00lbn4 for a sample video and links to additional videos related to the Math Design Collaborative.

of funds remaining is indicative of the pace that PDE will need to maintain in order to complete key milestones and fully accomplish its goals.

PDE has been challenged to (1) ensure strong continuous improvement processes in some projects, (2) ensure high-quality implementation of grant activities, and (3) identify needs in the field. For instance, as of the end of Year 3, PDE had not presented evidence of a formal mechanism to assess LEAs' fidelity of implementation for its evaluation systems and use of data systems to improve instruction. Additionally, although PDE made progress in bolstering resources on the State's Standards Aligned System portal, it is unclear whether PDE has the capacity to assess the extent to which educators know of and are utilizing the resources. Although PDE reported LEAs could provide feedback on the quality and utility of the resources available on the portal through (1) IUs, (2) an annual Standards Aligned System Institute, or (3) emails to the vendor, it is not clear whether these data will provide PDE with formative feedback that is representative of the field and indicative of additional teacher needs. Also, PDE did not demonstrate that it used continuous improvement processes for elements of either its School Performance Profile or Early Warning System projects. Specifically, at the end of Year 3, PDE had not demonstrated use of continuous improvement processes to assess the quality and utility of the resources that support stakeholders in using School Performance Profile data. Further, although PDE was highly engaged with stakeholder groups during the initial development of the School Performance Profile, PDE did not provide evidence that it continuously improved the School Performance Profile functionality or supported the field in using the site to inform practice. Throughout Year 3, PDE gathered initial feedback from pilot LEAs on the launch of the Early Warning System in spring 2014 but did not demonstrate how it would utilize this information.

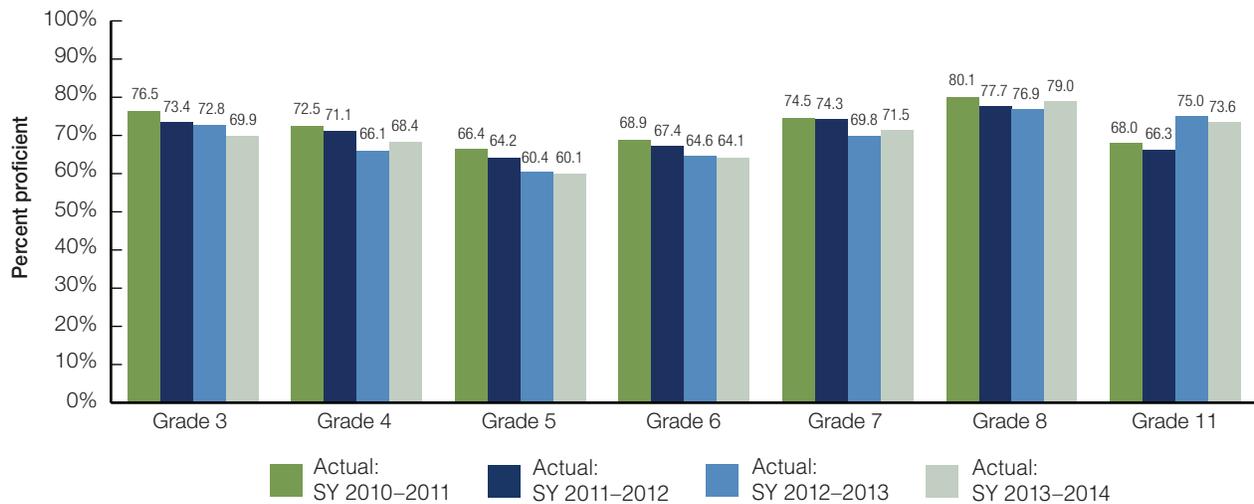
Several Race to the Top projects in PDE's charter school work continued to be delayed or incomplete. Examples of goals and projects that the State had not yet completed at the end of Year 3 include creating a communication and technical assistance plan; providing families with information or resources to help them evaluate charter schools as an option for their students; and developing a process for the annual identification and update of charter school priorities and long-term goals to ensure successful conditions for high-performing charter schools in light of legislation and existing policies. After facing significant delays in the State's work with charter schools during Year 2, at the end of Year 3, PDE still had not provided convincing evidence to demonstrate it was on track to meet its overall goals and commitments in this area.

Pennsylvania

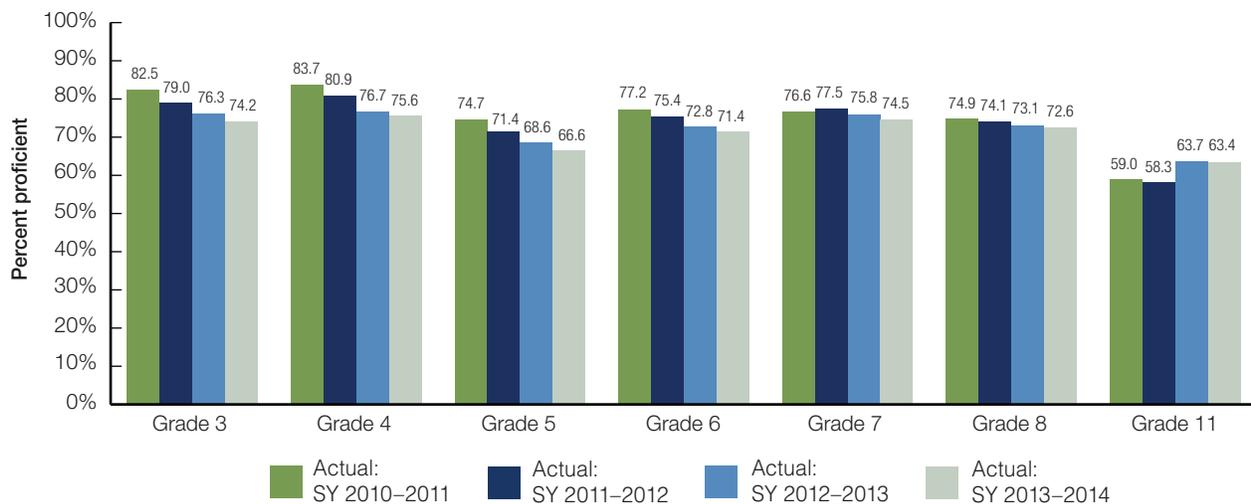
Pennsylvania student outcomes data

In SY 2012-2013, Pennsylvania implemented the State's new end-of-course Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature. From SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014, student proficiency rates on Pennsylvania's ELA assessments increased in grades 4, 7, and 8 but decreased in grades 3, 5, 6, and 11. Pennsylvania's student proficiency rates in mathematics generally decreased from SY 2012-2013 to SY 2013-2014, with each grade from 3 through 8 and 11 showing a slight decrease.

Student proficiency on Pennsylvania's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Pennsylvania's mathematics assessment



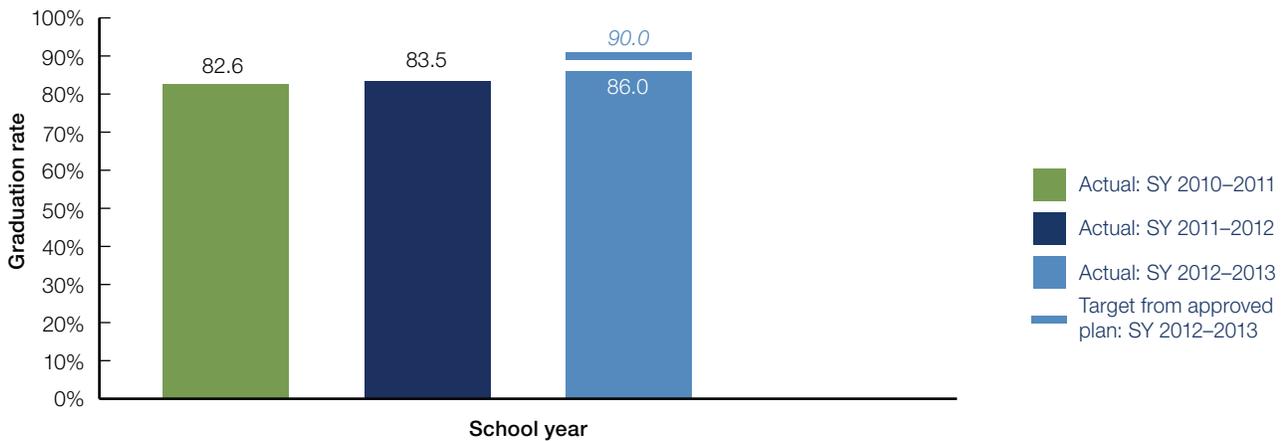
Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: September 10, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last three years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

Pennsylvania

The high school graduation rate in Pennsylvania grew by over 2 percentage points in SY 2012-2013 from the prior year. It grew by over 3 percentage points from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013.

Pennsylvania high school graduation rate



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: September 15, 2014.

Looking ahead to Year 4

In Year 4, PDE will continue subrecipient monitoring to ensure that LEAs are on track to meet their goals before the end of the grant period. To do this, PDE staff will collect and use information from on-site monitoring visits in SY 2014-2015 to better understand the quality of resources and projects developed by PDE and any additional challenges that may be experienced in the field.

PDE will continue in Year 4 to develop online resources to support the State in the transition to its new standards and assessments. Additionally, PDE will continue its work with the Math Design Collaborative with all participating LEAs, and will provide technical assistance to IUs supporting LEAs to sustain this work. Additionally, through the use of online resources, PDE plans to further develop hybrid learning by engaging LEAs and institutions of higher education in professional development opportunities, and by developing guidance and professional development for hybrid

learning. In Year 4, PDE will also implement the State's curriculum analysis tools to ensure that written, taught, and tested curricula align to the State's new standards and assessments.

As part of Pennsylvania's Race to the Top plans, PDE will also continue its data systems work. PDE will provide training and technical assistance in use of the Pennsylvania Information Management System. PDE will also continue to roll out the Early Warning System in cohorts of LEAs that elect to participate in the project. Additionally, PDE will continue to work with IUs to help LEAs and schools improve performance by using information from the School Performance Profile.

PDE will continue to phase in its evaluation systems during Year 4. Additionally, PDE will continue its work to establish and ensure high-performing charter schools. In Year 4, the State will build upon its work in Year 3 to develop a comprehensive plan for its charter school projects through PDE's Comprehensive Planning process.

Budget

For State budget information, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>. For the State's fiscal accountability and oversight report, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance-fiscal-accountability.html>.

Glossary

Alternative routes to certification: Pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom, including English learners and students with disabilities): (1) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (2) are selective in accepting candidates; (3) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (4) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (5) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

Amendment requests: In the event that adjustments are needed to a State's approved Race to the Top plan, the grantee must submit an amendment request to the Department for consideration. Such requests may be prompted by an updated assessment of needs in that area, revised cost estimates, lessons learned from prior implementation efforts, or other circumstances. Grantees may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided that the following conditions are met: the revisions do not result in the grantee's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions; the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal; and the Department and the grantee mutually agree in writing to the revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve the revisions or modifications. If they are approved by the Department, a letter with a description of the amendment and any relevant conditions will be sent notifying the grantee of approval. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html>.)

America COMPETES Act elements: The 12 indicators specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act are (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary

and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b));⁴¹ (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA): On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the ARRA, historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The Department of Education received a \$97.4 billion appropriation.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Report submitted by each grantee with outcomes to date, performance against the measures established in its application, and other relevant data. The Department uses data included in the APRs to provide Congress and the public with detailed information regarding each State's progress on meeting the goals outlined in its application.

College- and career-ready standards: State-developed kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) English language arts and mathematics standards. State school chiefs and governors developed the standards in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders to align their expectations for students to the demands of college and the workplace.

The education reform areas for Race to the Top: (1) Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career; (2) Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and support educators and decision makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement; (3) Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and (4) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Supporting local educational agencies' (LEAs') implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing school intervention models.

⁴¹ On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law to replace the No Child Left Behind Act, and reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Glossary

Effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of growth in student learning (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by growth in student learning (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

High-minority school: A school designation defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

High-poverty school: Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

Highly effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of growth in student learning (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by growth in student learning (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

Instructional improvement systems (IIS): Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as instructional planning; gathering information (*e.g.*, through formative and interim assessments as defined in the Race to the Top requirements, summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

Invitational priorities: Areas of focus that the Department invited States to address in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants did not earn extra points for addressing these focus areas, but many grantees chose to create and fund activities to advance reforms in these areas.

Involved LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State's plan that necessitate full or nearly full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State's Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State's application.

Participating LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year at the time of the award, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC): One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information, please see <http://www.parcconline.org/>.)

Persistently lowest-achieving schools: As determined by the State, (1) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving 5 percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (2) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving 5 percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (1) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (2) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)

Glossary

Qualifying evaluation systems: Educator evaluation systems that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (1) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on growth in student learning as a significant factor, and (2) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

Reform Support Network (RSN): In partnership with the Implementation and Support Unit, the RSN offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to grantees of the Race to the Top education reform initiative. The RSN's purpose is to support the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

The **School Improvement Grants (SIG) program** is authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. Funds are awarded to States to help them turn around persistently lowest-achieving schools. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)

School intervention models: A State's Race to the Top plan describes how it will support its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

1. **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
2. **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
3. **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
4. **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Single sign-on: A user authentication process that permits a user to enter one name and password in order to access multiple applications.

The **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information, please see <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/default.aspx>.)

The **State Scope of Work:** A detailed document for the State project that reflects the grantee's approved Race to the Top application. The State Scope of Work includes items such as the State's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>.) Additionally, all participating LEAs are required to submit Scope of Work documents, consistent with State requirements, to the State for its review and approval.

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS): Data systems that enhance the ability of States to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The SLDS help States, districts, schools, educators, and other stakeholders to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. (For additional information, please see http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about_SLDS.asp.)

Student achievement: For the purposes of this report, student achievement (1) for tested grades and subjects is (a) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA, as amended by NCLB; and, as appropriate, (b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in number 2 of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (2) for non-tested grades and subjects, alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pretests and end-of-course tests, student performance on English language proficiency assessments, and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Growth in student learning: The change in student achievement (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Value-added models (VAMs): A specific type of growth model based on changes in test scores over time. VAMs are complex statistical models that generally attempt to take into account student or school background characteristics in order to isolate the amount of learning attributable to a specific teacher or school. Teachers or schools that produce more than typical or expected growth are said to "add value."