

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP

GRANT REVIEW

Phase 1 Tier 2 State Presentation

The State of Florida

8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 16, 2010

Holiday Inn Capitol Hill

550 C Street, S.W.

Washington, D.C.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 DR. SMITH: We'll begin the program by our
3 presentation. First of all, it is a great pleasure to be
4 here. I'd like to introduce our team that has come from
5 Florida to present our application. To my right is Dr.
6 Frances Haithcock. She's Chancellor for K-12 education.
7 To my left is Governor Charlie Crist, previous
8 Commissioner of Education and current Governor of the
9 State of Florida. To the Governor's left is Mary Ellen
10 Elia, Superintendent of Schools for Hillsborough County,
11 and to her left is Alberto Carvalho, Superintendent of
12 Schools for Miami Day School District.

13 And we're thrilled to be will you this morning
14 to present our Race to the Top application and explain
15 what Florida is attempting to do with this particular
16 effort.

17 I was encouraged by Secretary Duncan's call for
18 an aggressive reform in America embodied in Race to the
19 Top, and Florida, through its application, hopefully has
20 demonstrated that we're ready to answer that call. I was
21 equally excited when I heard Secretary Duncan first speak
22 of the effort and heard his sense of urgency around this
23 work, the urgency for our nation to move forward with

1 dramatic reform to improve education and what we can do
2 to help improve the lives of all of our children in this
3 great country.

4 Our state's efforts to answer the call are best
5 illustrated through our Memorandum of Understanding
6 viewed by many as the most aggressive in the nation. We
7 intentionally chose to frontload our MOU with clearly-
8 defined expectations of work, the work that is to be done
9 in our schools and our classrooms across the State of
10 Florida.

11 Florida is demanding progress, and through this
12 grant we will fund those leader districts that will drive
13 that progress. Those districts that are unwilling to
14 commit to the hard work of reform simply won't be funded.
15 Our goals, reflected in our State Board of Education,
16 adopted strategic plan guided by legislation and enabled
17 through this application, is to double our college-going
18 rate by the year 2020 and eliminate the disparity in the
19 college participation rate. Our grant proposes we do
20 this by changing the work we ask our students in pre-k
21 through 12 to do and what we ask them to know. Improving
22 how we prepare our students to think and to analyze. Our
23 grant will clarify the expectations for our students by

1 clearly defining the work that should be done through the
2 common core of standards. Our grant will connect
3 educator performance to student progress through the
4 development of a fair and transparent method. That
5 connection will be reflected in professional development
6 opportunities, performance evaluation, and recognition
7 and rewards.

8 Based on student achievement that has been
9 support by robust, formative, and embedded assessments
10 that are diagnostic, prescriptive, and linked to research
11 based instructional tools and strategies. Formative
12 assessments that lift the quality of daily instruction
13 define the quality of classroom work we expect of our
14 students and assist teachers to have a strong
15 understanding of the type of instruction that is
16 demanded.

17 The impact of the improved instruction brought
18 about through this grant will benefit all 2.7 million
19 children in Florida, rich, poor, urban, rural, students
20 with special needs, and students with limited English
21 background. Among these groups of students, students
22 that are the neediest are those that have been trapped in
23 low and underperforming schools. When I visit these

1 schools, I often witness a culture of low expectations
2 and poor and non-challenging instruction.

3 This grant gives us the tools to define
4 appropriate classroom work, develop tools to support
5 teacher delivery of quality lessons, and staff these
6 schools with teachers and leaders that have a proven
7 ability to generate results.

8 And finally, building up Florida's strong
9 longitudinal data system, we have the ability to track
10 progress from kindergarten to career and with this grant
11 be able to make more meaningful data available to
12 parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers.
13 Florida stands ready to deliver.

14 And now it's my honor to introduce to the
15 panelists our Governor, Governor Charlie Crist, to speak
16 about Florida's commitment to this project.

17 GOVERNOR CRIST: Thank you, Commissioner.

18 Florida is a reform-minded state, and as a
19 result student achievement has dramatically improved in
20 our state, yet we continue striving to insure our
21 graduates are prepared to earn college degrees or to
22 directly enter high wage, high skill careers. Our
23 efforts align very closely with Secretary Duncan's for

1 assurances, curriculum standards and benchmarks, quality
2 teachers, turning around failing schools, and tracking
3 student learning.

4 Our commitment to reform is evident in our
5 achievements. In 1999, we began grading schools and
6 school districts and reporting those A through F grades
7 to the public. We do so because success comes only as we
8 measure our progress. After all, we measure student
9 progress. So it only makes sense to measure the schools
10 and districts they rely on for their future. Every
11 parent and taxpayer can easily identify each school's
12 performance simply by reading the newspaper or watching
13 the evening news.

14 We measure what is important, and then we
15 reward success. Every school that improves a letter
16 grade or maintains an A earns \$75 per student, which
17 usually translates into bonuses for teachers and staff
18 thanks to my predecessor Governor Bush implementing
19 school grades and rewarding our best schools.

20 Florida schools are never graded on a curve.
21 In fact, we raise the bar every few years only to see our
22 students raise their performance shortly thereafter. For
23 example, we raised expectations for our high schools two

1 years ago. Now we focus more on college readiness. Half
2 a high school's grade is based on student achievement on
3 standardized tests, and the other half is based on access
4 to rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement and
5 international baccalaureate as well as the school's
6 graduation rate. We have even raised the bar by
7 redefining our graduation rate and are still experiencing
8 overall improvement.

9 We know we cannot leave students in failing
10 schools behind. Opportunity scholarships empower those
11 students to attend better schools of their choosing, but
12 most importantly we help failing schools become better
13 schools. Our differentiated accountability school
14 improvement system has been a model for the nation.

15 We merged our accountability measure of school
16 grades with the No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly
17 Progress system. During the pilot last year, over 1000
18 Florida schools received intensive help with school-wide
19 planning, leadership development, teacher training,
20 tutoring, curriculum improvement, and more. As a result,
21 79 percent of our lowest performing schools experienced
22 significant gains.

23 Florida also has a history of using curriculum

1 standards to provide a framework for student learning.
2 With the National Governors Association, Florida is on
3 track to implement the common core standards. That will
4 allow students to compete nationally and internationally.

5 Florida empowers parents to choose the best
6 learning environment for their children. In fact, during
7 my time as a state Senator, Florida's charter school
8 legislation was adopted in 1996, and I was a co-sponsor.
9 Today we have 410 charter schools serving almost 138,000
10 students.

11 We believe the Race to the Top will help us
12 grow and improve our charter schools even more. Florida
13 is highly regarded for online education. Started in
14 1997, our Florida Virtual School expands course offerings
15 for fiscally challenged districts and provides
16 flexibility for students as well as families. Last year,
17 we saw more than 154,000 course enrollments. That is
18 more than five and a half times the state with the second
19 highest enrollment.

20 Our robust data system tracks student, teacher,
21 and institutional performance over time. We collect and
22 analyze test scores, demographics, enrollment patterns,
23 and diplomas, certificates, and degrees earned. We then

1 target promising programs worth improving and ineffective
2 ones that should be abandoned.

3 Our new high school grading system is a prime
4 example. Until this year, we graded high schools just
5 like elementary and middle schools. But high school is
6 unique with students changing classes, teachers, and even
7 classmates hourly; and our data showed we needed more
8 nuance method for measuring their success. We continue
9 to believe that our most effective teachers should be
10 rewarded for their efforts. Beginning in 1983, weighted
11 funding was established for Advanced Placement courses.
12 In 1998, we began requiring a connection between teacher
13 salaries and student performance.

14 I have said that Florida is a reform-minded
15 state, and as you can see, we have been unafraid in our
16 efforts. I also want you to know that our commitment to
17 reform exists far outside Florida's capitol. We have
18 received 80 letters of support from stakeholders,
19 including the entire education community from pre-K to
20 Ph.D. Eighty-nine percent of school districts signed the
21 MOU. That equates to 80 percent of our schools,
22 representing 81 percent of our students and 82 percent of
23 our students in poverty. Two district Superintendents

1 are here today from our largest and third largest
2 districts in Florida, the nation's fourth and eighth
3 largest. We also have support from state leaders, our
4 legislative partners, our Attorney General, the Florida
5 PTA, and much more support comes from business and civic
6 organizations as well, the Florida Chamber of Commerce,
7 the Florida Council of 100, all of Florida's Urban
8 Leagues, the Florida State Conference of the NAACP, and
9 Hispanic organizations such as ENLACE.

10 We know our students deserve the best learning,
11 the best teachers, and the best environment possible, and
12 like you, we know our success revolves around four
13 objectives: curriculum standards and benchmarks, quality
14 teachers, turning around failing schools, and tracking
15 student learning.

16 I know turn over to Chancellor Frances
17 Haithcock to explain more details of Florida's success.

18 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Good morning. You've heard a
19 lot about a great vision. You've heard about commitment.
20 You've heard about history.

21 So what kind of progress has Florida made with
22 its background? This is the graph that Governor Crist
23 talked to you about. It's one of our favorite graphs.

1 It shows the number of D and F that have declined over
2 the years. It shows the line in green of the number of A
3 and B schools that have increased dramatically since
4 1999, but what it also shows is that each point at each
5 era Florida has raised its standards; and in doing so the
6 students and the teachers, in the State of Florida have
7 responded and the trend has continued to go up.

8 In addition, we have excellent results in
9 national comparisons, the National Assessment of
10 Educational Progress made. This looks at fourth grade
11 math, and it looks at African-American students versus
12 white students. It shows in 2003 what the gap started
13 with, a 35 percent gap. It shows what it is now with 20
14 percent, a great improvement, although not nearly great
15 enough, but it also shows what our goals are in this
16 graph to bring it to closing at 12 percent and then in
17 2019 actually closing of the gap. This is the same type
18 showing reading, but it shows our Hispanic students, the
19 gap that we started with in '03, how it has closed to 13
20 percent now, how we're continuing to of course project
21 that in the future for our goals.

22 Remember 10 years before our reform, our Bowe
23 reform in Florida, that we were one of the lowest states

1 in the United States in NAEP results. Now we're over the
2 national average.

3 This shows our graduation rate, one thing that
4 we need to work on a lot, but we can see a good trend
5 even at this point using the harder federal graduation
6 rate. This compares our Hispanic students, our African-
7 American students, and our white students and the
8 projectory toward our goal where we intend to close that.

9 This is a great slide. Florida has been highly
10 involved in pushing toward access to more rigorous
11 courses and college readiness. It started seven or eight
12 years ago in earnest with a partnership through statute in
13 the state, and you can see the results of that. This
14 shows our African-American students, our Hispanic
15 students, and our white students and how it has changed
16 from 1999 to 2009. Note, our African-American students
17 has reached 571 percent in exam takers. That's not all
18 of the story. The rest of the story is, you know, you
19 can always take a class, but then how do you perform in
20 that class? So this one shows, again, exam takers on the
21 left, but then on the right, again, how the students that
22 took that exam increased in scoring either three, four,
23 or five on the AP exam.

1 So Florida is a great investment, and Florida
2 will deliver because it has delivered. And we brought
3 with us the most important people to talk to you about
4 how and why Florida has delivered and will deliver, our
5 Superintendents who are probably two of the top
6 Superintendents in the nation. We're going to start with
7 Superintendent Mary Ellen Elia. She has a story to tell,
8 and I'm going to let her tell it.

9 MS. ELIA: Well, it really relates to the fact
10 that Florida will deliver. Hillsborough County, which
11 includes Tampa, is a large and diverse county with a
12 distinct urban, suburban, and rural community. We're the
13 nation's eighth largest school system with more than
14 191,000 students of which approximately 57 percent are
15 eligible for free and reduced lunch.

16 Our graduation rate of 82.2 percent is the
17 highest among Florida's large school districts; 120 of
18 Hillsborough schools received an A and more than three-
19 fourths of our schools received an A or B rating under
20 Florida's system, and our district earned an overall A
21 grade.

22 Our school district is uniquely positioned for
23 the Race to the Top initiative because we're already

1 committed to those goals and making progress towards the
2 goals. We recently received 100 million dollars in
3 Empowering Effective Teachers grant from the Bill and
4 Melinda Gates Foundation. The focus is on recruiting the
5 best teachers, strategically placing them with the
6 targeted students, supporting them to get better,
7 creating fair and meaningful evaluation, and a very
8 different compensation model. The focus is on teachers,
9 but make no mistake the goal is to increase student
10 achievements. We believe that a great teacher is the
11 best way to affect student learning.

12 None of this would be possible if it weren't
13 for our collaborative relationship with our teachers.
14 All of these initiatives are things we're doing with our
15 teachers not to our teachers. As a result of our
16 efforts, we're seeing and will continue to see systemwide
17 changes that are improving student achievement. We're
18 fine tuning our assessments and standards. For
19 accountability to work, the standards and assessments
20 must be fair and equitable. They must be transparent and
21 understandable and easily accessible to teachers. I
22 think that's an extremely important thing. Teachers need
23 to know where they are with their students all the time.

1 We're also improving our ability to collect
2 meaningful data and use it in that classroom today, not
3 at the end of the year.

4 We're creating a new teacher evaluation system
5 that would be more meaningful based on principal input,
6 peer input, and on student achievement. Soon we will
7 completely restructure our compensation system, which
8 currently is based on the annual step increases and
9 seniority with the opportunity to earn an add-on pay for
10 performance bonus. It ultimately, however, will be a
11 career ladder based on a teacher's evaluation, including
12 a three-year growth model for student achievement.

13 Student achievement is not an add-on in terms
14 of our new compensation system. It's the reason we
15 exist. Student achievement will be at the center of
16 teacher compensation and play a major role in their
17 evaluations.

18 Because leadership is so important for schools,
19 principals' evaluations will be revised to include a 360-
20 degree component with all stakeholders having input.
21 They'll also receive salary based on student performance
22 and teacher performance, that is those teachers that they
23 have moved forward to become career teachers. They'll be

1 responsible for them as they move into the future.

2 We already have a track record of turning
3 around struggling schools because our district has a
4 focus on excellence and continuous improvement.

5 I don't want to underestimate the importance of
6 a district action plan. We have a district support model
7 that has shown to actually bring higher annual progress.
8 We all own the challenges just as we all like to own the
9 successes. Under our differentiated pay system, we
10 provide incentives for some of our best teachers to work
11 with students who most need them. We're ready to take
12 that to the next level. Struggling students are not just
13 in our high poverty schools. We can't lose sight of
14 those who are struggling in some of our highest
15 performing schools, so our pay system will include those
16 students who are in any of our schools that need extra
17 support; and teachers will be given additional support in
18 their compensation based on that.

19 When all of these pieces are in place, we
20 expect increases in student achievement and increased
21 college and career readiness. Not only do we want our
22 students to get into college and to get jobs, we want
23 them to be ready to excel when they get there. We expect

1 these reforms to be long-lasting and significant because
2 we're working together, the teachers, administrators,
3 school board, and our community to build the foundation
4 and to change the culture that will serve our students
5 and Florida's students well into the future.

6 Now I'd like to introduce my colleague, Alberto
7 Carvalho, from Miami-Dade Schools.

8 MR. CARVALHO: Thank you very much, Mary Ellen.
9 I guess the one connecting thread that seamlessly unites
10 all of our presentations is Florida's commitment to
11 improving and investing in the future work force by
12 strategically preparing today's youth.

13 To put Miami-Dade's experience into context, we
14 are the fourth largest school system in America with over
15 346,000 pre-K-12 students and another quarter million
16 adult learners. Over 62 percent of them live in poverty;
17 54 percent speak a language other than English. In fact,
18 the City of Miami reflects the tale of two cities, often
19 referred to as the poorest city in the nation.

20 In Miami-Dade, we have in fact refocused on the
21 classroom and seen remarkable improvement in terms of
22 school improvement and individual student performance.
23 Over 90 percent of our schools meet state proficiency

1 requirements. Seventy-three percent of those same
2 schools are A or B, and we this past year achieved the
3 highest ever number of A-rated schools receiving an
4 unprecedented 205. This year was a special year also
5 because the majority of our 10th graders passed the
6 reading portion of the state's accountability exam on the
7 first attempt.

8 Now to achieve these results, we had to use
9 data to drive instruction every single day, yielding
10 significant gains in terms of school and individual
11 student performance. We developed the very robust data
12 warehouse, allowing us to drill down to the classroom and
13 individual student level. With these two principals,
14 district staff support levels and teachers have been able
15 to strategically analyze the data and deploy human
16 resources and specific professional development to
17 support classroom instruction.

18 We have become much more in deploying our
19 resources and have given our most fragile schools and
20 students an additional 20 days of instruction through our
21 Saturday Success Academy.

22 Change cannot be achieved in a vacuum. It
23 requires support from the workforce, the community, and

1 organized labor. In fact, over the past 12 months, we've
2 been able to settle five union contracts. One of which
3 had been unsettled since 2007. Now this is an
4 achievement in light of the declining economic
5 conditions, to be able to land five union contracts was a
6 monumental achievement for our community. Our unions, in
7 fact, also supported the employee partnership plan,
8 agreeing to a two to three day pay deferment to protect
9 viable and important educational programs and the
10 employment of other colleagues.

11 We have over the past 14 months reestablished a
12 climate of trust between district administration, school
13 board, and community through open dialogue and
14 transparency. We welcome public scrutiny. We cannot do
15 this work alone. So I established a Superintendent's
16 Business Advisory Council composed of the top CEOs in our
17 community to help us in guiding this important work.

18 We have implemented academic standards to
19 prepare students to compete on a global stage. We are
20 aggressively expanding the availability of high-end
21 programming to all of our students through dual
22 enrollment programs in colleges and universities,
23 implementing career academies to provide our students

1 today workforce readiness skills that will help them in
2 the future. Through these programs they're earning not
3 only a high school diploma but getting a two for one, a
4 high school diploma as well as an industry recognized
5 certification.

6 Through technology we have found ways to
7 deliver individualized instruction to students where they
8 are and how they learn. Where we have refused to lower
9 expectations for our students because of their economic
10 or linguistic circumstances and provide them with the
11 opportunity to excel, they have, and we've seen
12 outstanding results, particularly amongst our Hispanic
13 and African-American minority populations.

14 In fact, when we compare our students on a
15 national platform to those across the country as recently
16 disposed under the NAEP, the trial urban district
17 assessment mathematics, our children out perform their
18 peers in New York, LA, Chicago, and many other urban
19 centers across America, a proud moment for Miami-Dade, a
20 proud moment for Florida. In fact, the sixth annual AP
21 report to the nation highlighted Miami-Dade as having the
22 greatest number of Hispanic students scoring a 3 or
23 higher on the Advanced Placement exam in no less than

1 nine different AP exams.

2 We believe, as all of us should, that the best
3 predictor of future performance is past success. Our
4 district has had two of the state's historically lowest
5 performing schools, Miami Central and Miami Edison. If
6 change can be effected in these schools, change can be
7 scaled up to the rest of our district and to the rest of
8 Florida. Closing these schools because of performance
9 was not an option. Strategically improving these schools
10 by being bold in our actions was the solution.

11 At Central and at the new Edison Edu-plex, we
12 have instituted a rigorous staff selection process based
13 on school performance and learning gains, only the best
14 need apply. The administrative staffs at both schools
15 were moved and changed by me, and the review of student
16 performance resulted in a replacement of no less than 47
17 percent of the instructional staff, 350 teachers
18 districtwide during one single year.

19 We have and continue to actively recruit Teach
20 for America teachers with the right balance between skill
21 and will set to help our youth. In fact, we recruited 75
22 additional teachers this year and just landed a six
23 million dollar grant through the Knight Foundation to

1 bring in 350 additional TFA teachers.

2 Most importantly, because this work can be
3 done, we negotiated differentiated contract provisions
4 with the teachers' union at selected struggling schools
5 to allow for the implementation of school-wide reform.
6 As an example, teachers now participate in collaborative
7 planning. Students are assessed quarterly and that data
8 in turn drives changes in instruction and targets
9 professional development. At Edison, a landmark
10 agreement was negotiated which also provides for
11 incentive dollars, \$5,000 upfront and an additional
12 \$5,000 tied to performance pay for significant school and
13 student improvement. Scaling out these achievements is the
14 district's next goal. At each of the schools and across
15 our district, we have seen success, but I believe we can
16 and must do much more.

17 The investment provided by Race to the Top will
18 provide the bridge to the next level of student
19 achievement. I firmly believe that these funds will
20 enable Miami-Dade and other school systems throughout
21 Florida to expand our successes such as these. It is
22 often said that as Miami-Dade goes, so goes the state,
23 and as Florida goes, so will the nation.

1 Looking at Florida is looking at the rest of
2 America 10 to 20 years down the road. Miami-Dade is
3 ready and able to deliver solutions to overcome 21st
4 Century educational challenges. Florida is worthy of
5 this investment.

6 Thank you for your time.

7 DR. SMITH: Thank you very much, Alberto, and
8 to the entire panel for your presentation. Hopefully
9 this presentation has demonstrated that Florida does have
10 a very clear vision, a very clear plan, has solid
11 commitment, a history of commitment for school reform and
12 improvement of education for our children. And we do
13 have a strong capacity to deliver as we have over the
14 last decade to deliver strong aggressive reform and bring
15 about change in our schools and our classrooms.

16 So, again, we're very pleased to be here at
17 this point and look forward to entertaining your
18 questions. Thank you very much.

19 MS. MEYER: All right. Thank you very much.
20 You have a minute of your 30 minutes left. So we'll have
21 a 61 minute Q & A session. I just want to ask you, do
22 you want me to move this into the middle of the table?
23 You can see it then. Alright, so again, we're going to

1 start. Let me just reset this. Again, the amber light
2 will come on when there's five minutes.

3 Reviewer # 1: Good morning, as you know, I'm
4 Reviewer #1, and I'm the facilitator for this Q & A
5 session. I wanted to just thank you so much for coming
6 and just make an initial comment to say that all of us
7 have read your applications, 608 pages of it, several
8 times. As you know, part of the first review process was
9 to score independently and discuss it as a group, and
10 then we're hopeful by using that application along with
11 clarifications that we determine today to arrive then at
12 a final set of scores.

13 So I would like to start with an opening
14 question, and it's a rather long one and complicated one,
15 but it's probably an important one. So one of our
16 overall goals for this Q & A is to increase our
17 understanding of whether you indeed have a substantial
18 and realistic plan to address the criteria specified, not
19 only in each of the individual components but across the
20 board in terms of coherence, comprehensiveness,
21 sustainability with the focus on results.

22 In this regard, kind of the big broad question
23 I'd like for us to spend some time on is can you explain

1 how the large amount of money that you requested, over a
2 billion dollars, matches your expected return on results?
3 Now in that regard, I've gone to the application because
4 that's what we're using as a basis, and I'd like to pose
5 then sort of three areas that I'm interested in having
6 you respond to.

7 The first is strategy for setting growth
8 targets, particularly the idea for the NAEP methodology
9 of improving performance of the highest performing
10 subgroups and grow the lower performing subgroups at a
11 faster rate. And to this regard, I specifically mean your
12 projections over the initial three-year period of one
13 percent growth for your white subgroup and zero percent
14 growth up until 2018, 2019. Similarly in your NAEP
15 fourth grade math, your white subgroup for targeting over
16 the three-year period the one percent, and by 2019 two
17 percent compared to then the higher growth rates of the
18 minority subpopulation. So that's the first question,
19 and then I have kind of two follow-ons for that, but I'll
20 stop there so you can respond.

21 DR. SMITH: I don't know how you'd like to have
22 us respond. We'll do whatever is required to get the
23 points across. I'll start certainly with a couple of

1 issues.

2 I spent a lot of time on the data obviously,
3 and we pride ourselves in the ability to accurately
4 calculate and project progress. Florida's longitudinal
5 database, Juan Copa, who is the master, the genius behind
6 all these numbers. This individual has really crafted
7 our rate of growth and projections.

8 And regarding NAEP, there are a couple of
9 factors. Certainly if we're -- as an objective, as our
10 goal, say it's to close the achievement gap, then we have
11 to have varying rates of improvement over time. And
12 that's paralleled with what we see currently with some of
13 our historic data. That we have shown dramatic
14 improvements in minority groups, low income groups, and
15 partly we didn't want to overstate. Again, these are
16 projections, so they are what they are, but we wanted to
17 tie as closely as we could to past performance,
18 understanding, however, which we've seen as Frances
19 Haithcock indicated in her presentation, we've seen a
20 reduction in the gap over time in fourth grade and eighth
21 grade reading and mathematics for subgroups. We've seen
22 that growth. We've seen a more rapid growth over time
23 historically for minority populations in Florida.

1 Race to the Top is an advantage in that it
2 enables our state to move forward on what we consider to
3 be the most important next step for Florida is why Race
4 to the Top is strategically so important to our state and
5 why we tied such a large request of financial commitment
6 from the U.S. Department of Education to it. It's not
7 good enough to simply show gains as we have in the past
8 but to accelerate that if we're to hit a 2020 target.
9 And so saying that, Race to the Top would give us that
10 capacity. Again, I won't go on in great detail, but the
11 biggest element of that is going to be to have increased
12 focus on the work that's done in classrooms across the
13 state of Florida, and the preparation and the ability of
14 those that are asked to deliver.

15 And how were the projections derived? They
16 were derived by our expectation to enhance the
17 performance that we've seen in the past. If you take
18 trend lines, take them out, and understand that Race to
19 the Top is going to help us move more rapidly towards
20 successful accomplishment of elimination of the gap.

21 Reviewer # 1: So, please, sir, just so that we
22 confirm the methodology, the numbers that we saw there by
23 2018, 2019 for white students, there would be no

1 projected growth versus the other numbers for the
2 minority groups, just so we can confirm that's accurate
3 information.

4 DR. SMITH: You want to speak to this?

5 Dr. HAITHCOCK: The chart that we showed,
6 showed that, but we went strictly by projections that we
7 have had historically. It really does bring up, from
8 2003 there has been growth in all groups, but if you look
9 at 2009, the projectory should just be right over -- I'm
10 looking at math right now. I'm not sure what you're
11 looking at --in the white group. So it has a projectory,
12 a little teeny bit up, but the minority groups have
13 really been closing the gap.

14 Reviewer # 1: Okay.

15 Dr. HAITHCOCK: So we tried to do something
16 that was realistic and at the same time projected what we
17 felt what we were going to get. Remember those scores
18 are in the mid 90s and projected at the mid 90s which is
19 a good solid score on NAEP in those areas.

20 Reviewer # 1: The second part of the question
21 then is another methodology or rationale that you
22 presented on the proposal on the same issue, return on
23 results, and it has to do with the rationale for

1 shallower achievement growth during the first initial
2 years on gap closure, but then a steeper growth during
3 the latter years. Could you clarify the intentionality
4 around that?

5 Dr. HAITHCOCK: I think it's just as simple as
6 it's going to take in this grant to get some of these
7 very difficult concepts in place that are highly
8 important like teacher quality, professional development.
9 It's going to take a lag time to get them in place, get
10 them defined, get them implemented, and that's why we
11 show this.

12 Reviewer # 1: Okay. And then this last kind
13 of sub-question, once again, on the return on results is
14 on the graduation rates, the kind of historical
15 performance where you project doing in four years going
16 forward, what you've done in seven years in terms of the
17 last time frame for the graduation rate?

18 DR. SMITH: Yeah. We really believe that is a
19 realistic projection. Again, we had lengthy debates on
20 this, and we wanted to take, again, the projections of
21 just taking forward what growth we've seen and then try
22 to play into that the impact of the strategies that are
23 being implemented and but not go beyond to become

1 unrealistic in our expectations.

2 So we tried to target what we thought was a
3 realistic gain. We do firmly believe that what is going
4 on in our high schools -- with Race to the Top and also
5 some of the legislative work that's gone on just recently
6 in Florida, our high school, as the Governor mentioned,
7 our high school program and so forth is going to greatly
8 enhance our ability to have an increased high school
9 graduation rate.

10 Reviewer # 1: Thank you very much.

11 MS. ELIA: Can I just add to that? I think it's
12 very important to understand the timing of that because
13 we're already in the midst of those new high school
14 standards and the new evaluation, which will come this
15 year. And so at the time that if we receive this grant,
16 it was given, we already would have gone through one year
17 of that new strategy and the implications of that, which
18 are for high level coursework, etcetera. So you would
19 anticipate that one would be put in place because we're
20 working on it now.

21 Reviewer # 1: Okay. Great. Now my colleague
22 sitting here --

23 Reviewer # 2: Can I ask you a couple followups

1 to that? What led to you all not including any
2 measurements/projections for Asian students?

3 DR. SMITH: Population size.

4 Reviewer # 2: Okay.

5 DR. SMITH: We knew that our book was 600 pages
6 already, but, again, our major predominant populations.
7 We could have gone much further.

8 Reviewer # 2: Okay. Another one,

9 MR. CARVALHO: if I may answer that.

10 Reviewer # 2: Sure.

11 MR. CARVALHO: Miami-Dade is the fourth largest
12 in the country, largest district in the State of Florida,
13 63 percent Hispanic population, 26 percent African-
14 American population, about 10 percent non-Hispanic
15 whites. So that's the population for our state. So if
16 you're going to move Florida, you got to target these
17 groups, not forgetting every single, any one single kid.

18 Reviewer # 2: Thank you. The next real quick
19 one is what motivated you all to focus on presenting
20 achievement levels that are basic and above versus
21 proficient and above?

22 DR. SMITH: That's a good question. Again, we
23 spent a lot of time discussing which way is the best to

1 present our primary factor, data that we've been
2 gathering historically has been looking at basic and
3 above, and it's just simply the best way we thought to
4 display our growth in NAEP performance. It wasn't to
5 indicate that higher levels of performance were not going
6 to be tracked as well.

7 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Also, of course, we have two
8 primary goals. One of those primary goals is dealing
9 almost entirely with how many students get to college and
10 are successful once they get there. So even though we're
11 talking about closing gaps in one goal, the other primary
12 goal is access to rigor and acceleration. So we thought
13 it was a good balance.

14 Reviewer # 2: Okay. And the last question for
15 my panel here, did you --

16 DR. SMITH: Just to add, the really important
17 goal in all of this is what happens when kids graduate
18 from our high schools, what do they do?

19 Reviewer # 2: Okay.

20 DR. SMITH: Again, so we're trying to
21 illustrative of what goals we expected, and we will be
22 tracking students into college. And we will know their
23 success and their course taking and everything that

1 happens with them. So our real measure is going to be
2 what happens to kids when they get into college and how
3 well they succeed.

4 Reviewer # 2: Okay.

5 Reviewer #1: Do you have a followup question?

6 Reviewer # 2: No. This is just related to the
7 data that they show on that. How do you get an A as a
8 school in Florida? What goes into that? What factors
9 into that?

10 DR. SMITH: I want to do it briefly because I'm
11 afraid my Superintendents might take the rest of the hour
12 on that answer. Very basically, for elementary and
13 middle school it's a formula developed around a
14 combination of achievement, how well the students
15 achieve, and growth, what kind of gains you have in
16 student achievement.

17 For high schools, and that's on the state
18 assessment test, grades three through eight. In high
19 schools, it is that performance on state assessment test
20 and growth. But in addition, the other half of it, as
21 explained by the Superintendents, is that it's tied to
22 both performance and growth in college-ready measures
23 such as AP, IB, ACE, dual enrollment, and also career-

1 ready, which means enrollment and performance in industry
2 certification programs and other factors. But that's the
3 basic gist of it, and if the Superintendents want to
4 clarify.

5 MS. ELIA: I think one other factor that's
6 important is the disaggregation of the scores as well.
7 So we use that so that we have a better view of exactly
8 where we are relative to all of the students in our
9 schools.

10 Reviewer #1: Do other panels have questions?

11 Reviewer # 2: I just have one last question.

12 Reviewer #1: Okay.

13 Reviewer # 2: Do you all measure for your A
14 schools, is it -- to get an A do they need to be at the
15 basic level, proficient level? How does that work?

16 DR. SMITH: It would be based on our FCAT
17 measures, our state assessment, not the NAEP. We use the
18 NAEP to confirm our performance and our growth, but it's
19 based on state accountability.

20 Reviewer # 2: Okay.

21 MR. CARVALHO: It's a combination of both, a
22 percentage of proficient students and also a recognition
23 of the performance and growth for lower-scored titled

1 children.

2 Reviewer # 2: Okay.

3 MR. CARVALHO: But the full recognition, as the
4 Commissioner explained, for high schools which
5 incorporate now other necessary dimensions to predict
6 future beyond high school success in college, technical
7 school, etcetera. So we're looking at career academies,
8 dual certification, AP, dual enrollment classes, IB,
9 etcetera.

10 Reviewer #3: Now I'm going to switch gears.
11 So in your proposal, you have about 80 percent of your
12 LEAs are participating, but we note that you didn't
13 require union signatures to count an LEA as
14 participating. But you discuss that you are pretty
15 confident that you are going to have cooperation. So I
16 just wanted to probe that a little bit. What gives you
17 that confidence? I don't know where to direct the
18 question.

19 MS. ELIA: Let me jump in there. We've been
20 ahead in Hillsborough because of the work that we did to
21 put together a -- I'd like to say a like project to what
22 you read for the Gates Foundation on teacher quality and
23 empowering effective teachers.

1 This is a process. You work with unions and
2 you work through issues. And I think that's what we
3 really saw as part of this process, that it takes the
4 time necessary to sit down and work through many of the
5 issues. You've heard some of the things that have
6 happened in Miami-Dade with Alberto. We are ahead of the
7 game somewhat, and that's one of the reasons that our
8 union was able to sign off. But I think what we need to
9 do and what many of our Superintendents have already
10 begun is to sit down and talk through some of these
11 issues, and really that has to begin at the district
12 level working at the table and really getting to where we
13 all can accept.

14 And I believe --I'm basically a teacher. I
15 believe that teachers want to do great work, and they
16 need to have the kind of support that's necessary. And
17 we need to work through the issues, but we're not in
18 education for adults. We're in it for students, and so
19 that has to be our primary goal. We have worked through
20 those things, but it is a process that takes time. And I
21 think that you'll see that many of our districts are
22 already moving ahead down that page.

23 Alberto has some specifics on things that

1 they've done in Miami-Dade to show that.

2 Reviewer #3: So as a followup to that, what's
3 the worst case scenario if the teacher cooperation isn't
4 garnered? How does that look? How does that play out?

5 DR. SMITH: Yeah. Let me respond to that. We
6 have a very clear understanding. It goes to the very
7 fundamental reason why we chose to put forth a very
8 detailed, rather aggressive Memorandum of Understanding -
9 -

10 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

11 DR. SMITH: -- as I mentioned in my comments.
12 We didn't do that by mistake. We could have chosen as a
13 state to put forth a very loose, difficult to really
14 understand. Do they mean this? Do they mean that? How
15 big is this? What are the parameters? What's the real
16 requirement? One that makes it very easy for everybody
17 to say and I can find something in that I like and sign
18 on to it, but then when this nation -- when the parents
19 of this nation come calling to see if this federal
20 investment of their dollars made a difference, I would
21 predict that Florida's ability to say. "Yes we did," is
22 going to be more successfully accomplished because we
23 clarified the task up front.

1 And so we chose to have the heavier lift on the
2 front edge --

3 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

4 DR. SMITH: -- rather than disappointment on
5 the back edge, and that was a very clear choice of ours.
6 So what we intend to do, we have five districts. And,
7 again, you have to understand, this was being called for,
8 Race to the Top, in part -- it calls for a lot of things
9 -- but in part it calls for Superintendents and boards
10 and unions to engage in negotiation to really get where
11 they have to go.

12 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

13 DR. SMITH: Now negotiations are negotiations.
14 You can't call it anything else, and, you know, there's
15 some people that might think that I really want to keep
16 my powder dry before I have to start declaring my
17 position on some tough issues. And so, you know, I'm
18 pretty excited that we have five districts that signed up
19 as early as they did because they already had that kind
20 of relationship with their unions. Those five districts
21 represent a larger student enrollment than I believe
22 three of the entire states that applied.

23 So we're very excited to go forward, as I said

1 in my opening remarks, with leader districts. The
2 opportunity that's afforded through Race to the Top for
3 teachers, for communities, for children, for parents is
4 extraordinary, and I'm convinced and I understand --
5 because of the phone calls we got on the flight up here,
6 it's like, "Good luck because we know we're going to be
7 able to do this well in Florida," from the folks you
8 don't see here in the panel, the other Superintendents
9 and other well wishers that -- there is the will.
10 Florida has done it in the past. We've taken on tough
11 reforms. We've had things that people argued about a lot
12 and had lots of good headlines over it, and we still
13 delivered and did it well.

14 At the end of the day with what is at stake in
15 Race to the Top, I am confident that those that lead our
16 districts and lead districts will come to the table and
17 negotiate and be funded. If they choose not to, then
18 they simply won't be a part of this.

19 GOVERNOR CRIST: May I speak to that for a
20 moment?

21 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

22 GOVERNOR CRIST: The Commissioner is exactly
23 right, and what we -- Florida has been bold, and we have

1 stretched. And we have brought about this grading system
2 that was pretty uncomfortable at the outset and
3 challenging and difficult, but the reality became more
4 clear that by doing so and measuring what occurs in the
5 classroom has lifted our achievement for our children,
6 and that's always been our focus. And if we are
7 successful, and we certainly hope that we are with Race
8 to the Top, we have the opportunity to compound that
9 success. And it's funny to see how many people start to
10 come along the more successful you become. And that's
11 happened to us already in Florida. And one of the things
12 we stress today is that, you know, sort of judge us by
13 what we've already done as a predictor of what we will
14 do.

15 Reviewer #3: Sure.

16 GOVERNOR CRIST: And we believe that, you know,
17 it's been challenging and not necessarily easy coming
18 along in this reform-minded endeavor, but it has been
19 successful. And it has garnered tremendous work, and we
20 believe that will continue to occur.

21 Reviewer #1: Can I ask a followup question?
22 Can I ask Commissioner Smith? I understand the point
23 about this has to be a local process of negotiation, but

1 I'm just wondering if you see the Department of Education
2 doing anything to create any context which would indeed
3 facilitate the movement in this particular area of unions
4 signing on.

5 DR. SMITH: Absolutely. We want to build this
6 context and are actively engaged in that at the state
7 level with all of our association leaders --

8 Reviewer #1: Because you talked specifically
9 about from the context of the state agency what you would
10 envision doing to support the action at the local level.

11 DR. SMITH: Absolutely. And, again, first of
12 all, it is in part due to the relationships we have at
13 the state level and being sure that we have ready access,
14 regular communication with all association leads, and
15 that does continue because at the state level it also is
16 a process and we get there over time. And so having
17 regular communication and ongoing work together, and we
18 will do that.

19 The second piece, this is complex. This is
20 different. Race to the Top is asking for some pretty
21 radical reform --

22 Reviewer #1: Mm-hmm.

23 DR. SMITH: -- on the fundamentals of the way

1 we've done business in the past. People have to get
2 their arms around that and understand it, and our state
3 is prepared, the Department of Education, is prepared to
4 engage a broader conversation around what it means to
5 have growth models. You know, why would I want to trust
6 that? Why would I want to believe in that? And how does
7 the formula work that would give confidence to teachers
8 that this really is going to move from subjective
9 evaluation to more objective evaluation of my work and
10 give more credit to the things I do every day with my
11 children, and why would I think that's fair and will give
12 me an opportunity for recognition?

13 And those, we know that they're taking place
14 locally, but the state has a very, very significant role
15 in sharing those conversations statewide. So all can
16 participate; all can watch; all can see, not only
17 teachers but parents and other community leaders to
18 understand that this is a process that will be embraced
19 in Florida.

20 Reviewer #1: I'm going to move us on because
21 we more questions.

22 MR. CARVALHO: If I may add three quick points
23 because I think this is a critical issue. Number one,

1 it's been discussed. This is substantial but it is a
2 realistic plan. It is sustainable and it is based on
3 data. And the measure ought to reflect all of that. My
4 confidence, my personal confidence as Superintendent of
5 Miami-Dade is based, number one, a fundamental belief
6 that this work is of paramount importance to children;
7 two, the continued emphasis on negotiations at the local
8 level with the necessary embedded flexibility to
9 negotiate provisions that make sense in the classroom but
10 ultimately are unwavering in terms of what constitutes
11 good quality teaching.

12 I think a combination of an upfront declaration
13 of what is expected with an emphasis of negotiation at
14 the local level with the necessary flexibility afforded
15 by the Department of Education will bring about a
16 successful statewide negotiation of the provisions
17 embedded in the Race to the Top.

18 Reviewer #1: Thank you very much. All right.
19 Just moving us on because what we want to do is to seek
20 clarifications for the various areas so that we have
21 important information to make a final judgment. So we,
22 once again, have heard your initial presentations. We've
23 read the proposals, but we do really want to get

1 underneath some of these areas. We'll run out of
2 information and we won't have the information. So please
3 understand, if I'm pushing you, it's because I want us to
4 make sure we can cover all of our questions.

5 Okay. I think (Reviewer #4), you're next.

6 Reviewer #4: You're requesting a very large
7 amount of money for initial development projects, four of
8 the projects total 125 million dollars. What the four
9 have in common is that there seems to be a lot of similar
10 work going on or planned work, and I'm wondering is
11 Florida trying to reinvent the wheel? And let me just
12 give you four that I'm talking about. The 55 million
13 dollar assessment work and the planned 315 million USDE
14 grant that's going to be given for what, to me, seems as
15 identical work.

16 The second one is the 44 million dollars in
17 development work for data systems when there are numerous
18 states that have models that have been proven and are
19 working effectively. I'm talking about the development
20 work, not the implementation work.

21 Then the 10.7 million dollars for lesson study.
22 Again, the midwest and the pacific northwest have entered
23 a lot of work in that area and have really excellent

1 materials. And the 15 million for principal and teacher
2 evaluation. There are, again, some states that have done
3 considerable work in that.

4 My question basically is how will you tie in
5 with those projects or how will you work with them to be
6 sure that it's the best use of the money for the country
7 as a whole and for you?

8 DR. SMITH: I'll just dive into this. We spent
9 a lot of time on the budget. We knew it was going to be
10 a large request. We wanted to make sure that we had
11 funds in there that would fill the need to do this early
12 work. And, again, I can take these individually if you'd
13 like. How would you like me to respond on this?

14 Reviewer #3: Okay. Is there a big question
15 for him, Reviewer #4? Could money be saved by
16 piggybacking on work that's already been done?

17 DR. SMITH: Again, that would remain to be
18 seen. I will tell you this, that Florida does not intend
19 to reinvent the wheel just to reinvent the wheel and to
20 make -- make mistakes while we do it. We intend to build
21 on success that we find around the country or around the
22 world. And, again, specific, our work already gained
23 measures and so forth, the value added and so forth, and

1 teacher evaluation.

2 We've spent a great deal of time studying
3 what's going on in other states, what other institutions,
4 Vanderbilt, Wisconsin, other places are looking at, what
5 other cities are looking at in terms of those. And we're
6 trying to learn what lessons have been learned or failed
7 and then take that to the next level.

8 So, yes. We definitely intend to build on the
9 work that's on elsewhere. We also intend to aggressively
10 push this issue of collaboration with other states,
11 whoever might end up becoming a recipient. We think
12 there's -- once the common core gets moved along, there's
13 a lot of conversations that seem pretty logical that
14 you'd want to engage in this work together.

15 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

16 DR. SMITH: Saying that, there are -- we get
17 reported as having one of the stronger, you know,
18 longitudinal data systems in the country. So why in the
19 world would we want money for that? Well, we think it is
20 strong. We can track a child from kindergarten to
21 career, but there's so much more that it could do. And
22 we didn't understand this Race to the grant (sic) is to a
23 race for some portion of it to be to status quo for our

1 state; that we've always engaged in this, whether it be
2 standards or teaching or data systems, that we want this
3 to be a move forward for Florida, not just holding us the
4 same. So we've built a proposal that's intended to do
5 that.

6 I hope that answered your questions
7 satisfactory.

8 Reviewer #4: Yeah. I guess basically what I'm
9 saying is the work you've done on the standards, you
10 intend to use those same models --

11 DR. SMITH: Yes.

12 Reviewer #4: -- for this other --

13 DR. SMITH: Yes.

14 Reviewer #4: -- very heavy duty development
15 work; that there is no reason to do individually each
16 thing?

17 DR. SMITH: For example, the standards and the
18 assessment work, the somewhat of assessment work.

19 Reviewer #4: Right.

20 DR. SMITH: We've been collaborating with
21 states. We've been working very closely with other
22 states on that work, but tailoring it to what we intend
23 to do is unique.

1 Reviewer #4: I understand that.

2 DR. SMITH: Lesson study is -- this isn't just
3 picking up a package and going with it. This is central
4 to our work because it's so closely tied to quality
5 teaching and support of our teachers. And we think
6 helping our teachers to be able to really craft the
7 perfect lesson that they're so proud of and that they can
8 post it on our data system so other teachers can have
9 access to it would light up the world. And that's what
10 we're looking for.

11 Reviewer #4: And please do understand that I
12 understand the difference between development and
13 implementation.

14 DR. SMITH: I understand.

15 Reviewer #4: I agree with you completely.
16 Implementation has to be local and it has to be very
17 good.

18 Reviewer #1: So just a reminder for the
19 reviewers and the presenters, we're just a little over
20 halfway now. So we got to get on to the last point.

21 Reviewer #2: Sure. A great portion of the
22 requested funding that you all have listed in your
23 application will go towards consultants and

1 subcontractors. How does your significant reliance on
2 using subcontractors support your effort to build long-
3 term sustainable capacity to implement and execute your
4 efforts at the district and school level.

5 MS. ELIA: I can give you one example. We're
6 in the midst of working on some of these projects. In
7 fact, we've worked in conjunction with the Department of
8 Education on looking at the three-year growth model, and
9 you mentioned some of the states in the Midwest. They've
10 worked very closely with the University of Wisconsin or
11 Mathematica or a couple others that have been part of the
12 work that's been done.

13 I think it's important to know that as that's
14 happening, as Eric pointed out, there's some uniqueness
15 in it, and I think that the result of not -- for
16 instance, if we decided in Florida to go kind of on our
17 own, then we wouldn't be using a lot of the work that
18 already had been done. You know, you learn from errors,
19 and you learn from problems that come up. And I think
20 it's important for us to have the concept of having
21 people who are experts be part of our process because our
22 teachers, our administrators, as we're growing, we're
23 looking at Vanderbilt and at ValEd, and a number of other

1 different consulting contracts. And to do that I think
2 it's important to have the experts that have had
3 experience in other places that can bring that experience
4 to us and then customize it for Florida.

5 Dr. HAITHCOCK: I'd like to add to that because
6 I think we're very well poised to do a great balance of
7 those two things. This grant is very aligned to what
8 Florida's goals are, very aligned from the very
9 beginning, and we are organizationally organized in the
10 state to be able to develop these different plans within
11 those four assurance areas because we have staff at the
12 state level, very little, but staff at the state level is
13 organized around exactly those categories, which is very
14 important because when you're going out and getting
15 knowledge from outside the system, your contractors,
16 you've got to build the capacity of the state and the
17 districts to be able to sustain it.

18 We have the best project management system at
19 the state level I've ever seen, and we have been
20 developing that over the last several years with fervor.
21 And so we have a system that we feel like that is
22 organizationally aligned to the assurance areas and
23 supported by project management to be able to sustain it

1 as we bring in, exactly what you were talking about,
2 knowledge from outside the system in incorporating this.

3 Reviewer #2: So you're going to use the bulk
4 of those resources to attract expert expertise, bring
5 that into the thinking at the district -- just clarifying
6 what you said -- district, state, and local schools?

7 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Exactly.

8 Reviewer #2: Okay.

9 Dr. HAITHCOCK: We will, as I said, we're
10 organized around the assurance areas, but that
11 organization will be developed in conversations with the
12 districts and supports in the districts on developing,
13 for example, teacher evaluation.

14 So there will be consultants that will come in
15 and help us. We have an organization at the state level
16 that's devoted to it, and it will be done out of the
17 district and state.

18 DR. SMITH: Now I'm going to say it again. I
19 know we're short of time, but real quickly, and our
20 ability -- this is not a four-year grant that goes away
21 for Florida. This is a long-term -- this is Florida.
22 This is just simply Florida, and if we ramped up with
23 staffing internally to accomplish this mission, and when

1 the grant disappears we don't have the financial ability
2 to sustain it. We looked long and hard about that. We
3 don't want to build a model we can't push out 20 years
4 from now. We want to get to 2020 with the delivery.

5 So our intent is to stay lean, stay mean, stay
6 focused, get the talent and intelligence we need and
7 deliver on it.

8 Reviewer #1: There are two areas of inquiry.
9 One is the capacity in which you've responded to mean the
10 functional capacity at the state level, but even though
11 there are some one-time costs as I started with, you have
12 asked for a lot of money. So could you speak to have you
13 addressed this long-term question of financial
14 sustainability and making sure that what you invest in
15 originally will have the potential to live beyond the
16 term of our Race to the Top.

17 DR. SMITH: Yeah. And in large part, our grant
18 is focused on capacity building, both the development of
19 new ways of work but also capacity building that we are
20 very confident can be sustained at the district and state
21 level beyond the terms of this grant. It's very
22 important. We don't want to engage in this work for four
23 years to such a heavy commitment and heavy lift for all

1 of us involved --

2 Reviewer #1: Mm-hmm.

3 DR. SMITH: -- to have it not sustain over time
4 is just critical. So most of our investments have been
5 focused on getting that capacity upfront.

6 Reviewer #1: Well, let's just take for example
7 the turnaround. I was going to ask that later, but just
8 because that is a significant investment, probably the
9 most significant that area because you have a lot of
10 initiatives there. But the community compacts I'm
11 thinking are just focused on three, you know, initiatives
12 around model building for which you would hope if they
13 were really great that they would be replicated around
14 the state, and those have a five million dollar price tag
15 each. So, I mean, how will those kind of things be
16 funded?

17 DR. SMITH: I'm so happy you raised that as an
18 example. That's great. It's one of our jewels buried
19 inside our application is the community compacts, and we
20 think it's a critical piece, particularly the work around
21 struggling schools. And we have examples of the Harlem
22 zone and others that have done phenomenal work.

23 How well you can replicate those and drive

1 those. What does it mean in Miami-Dade, or Tampa, or
2 Orlando, or Jacksonville? What's the difference? So,
3 yes. We have a significant investment in that. We want
4 to incent that upfront to build the models that can work
5 to help transform the way communities think about what
6 their children can do, not just the expectation within
7 the walls and how those --

8 Reviewer #1: So where's the five million going
9 to come from then after the Race to the Top? I mean,
10 just how would you --

11 DR. SMITH: Right.

12 Reviewer #1: I mean, we're in an economic
13 culture. There's not a lot of money for any agencies
14 including education, but just where will you go?

15 DR. SMITH: Our expectation, because we see
16 this to a degree. We have a pretty strong community
17 operation going on.

18 Reviewer #1: Mm-hmm.

19 DR. SMITH: You know, Miami-Dade and Liberty
20 City has a very strong upfront initiative that are
21 supported, but what's missing is the modeling about what
22 components that can build greater local, philanthropic
23 support to sustain these activities over time. We have

1 bits and pieces. We've never been able to pull all the
2 pieces together and demonstrate success. Our expectation
3 is that success can be replicated elsewhere. It can be
4 supported by philanthropies that really believe in this
5 mission but have not always been satisfied with the
6 results they see.

7 If we can use this fund to get it on the
8 ground, get it started and get it going in a successful
9 fashion through a highly competitive grant process, we
10 think that we can move this work forward in Florida.

11 MR. CARVALHO: Well, rather than speaking just
12 on what we plan to do, let me use the Miami-Dade
13 experience.

14 So I personally have negotiated now nine
15 different compacts with municipalities beginning with the
16 first ever City of Miami, the large municipality within
17 our county, and we expect Coral Gables, City of Miami
18 Beach, Miami Gardens. Miami Gardens is the largest
19 African-American majority population city in the state.
20 And what have these compacts done? Number one, allow for
21 an opportunity to leverage resources.

22 Reviewer #1: Mm-hmm.

23 MR. CARVALHO: I'll use a couple of examples.

1 So parks and libraries now become educational settings
2 where educational opportunity can be extended beyond the
3 regular school day, before school, after school programs.

4 Two, the joint seeking of grant opportunities,
5 both through state, federal, for from nonprofit
6 organizations and foundations. They're very active in
7 that to total the amount of resources that the City of
8 Miami and the school board jointly applied for and have
9 landed, probably upwards of 10 million dollars.

10 Using the example of City of Miami Beach, the
11 first ever that I'm aware of in the nation. A city that
12 developed a compact with the school board that decided to
13 take an international baccalaureate education program to
14 every one of its schools within the municipal boundaries,
15 not just to the expense of the school district but also
16 at the expense of the city. So we staff. The city pays
17 for the professional development.

18 We're getting to a point where to get to where
19 we need to be at in terms of proficiency, in terms of
20 teacher quality, in terms of extension of program, and
21 most importantly the guarantee of equitable access to
22 high quality programs no matter where children live
23 requires not only a school district or a state

1 investment, it requires the coming together, all hands on
2 deck as far as elected officials and city and county
3 participation.

4 Reviewer #1: Mm-hmm.

5 MR. CARVALHO: Look at the Miami-Dade example.
6 Nine cities negotiated individual compacts with the
7 school board to guarantee just that, a high quality of
8 education in their schools, safer schools, more engaged
9 parents, before and after school programming, tutorial
10 programs, investment in scholarship opportunities for
11 these children.

12 If we begin to look at the education of our
13 children as a need of paramount importance that needs to
14 be delivered on not just by teachers, or principals, and
15 Superintendents, or Commissioners of Education, it's, in
16 fact, everybody's responsibility. Then the
17 sustainability of the goals declared in this grant are,
18 in fact, real and are, in fact, very, very viable.

19 Reviewer #1: Thank you very much.

20 Reviewer #3: Can I do another followup?

21 Reviewer #1: Sure.

22 Reviewer #3: So this reference that Dr. Smith
23 something you said about, this is the push for -- you're

1 using the money to develop new ways of working. Is four
2 years long enough to institutionalize that, again going
3 to sustainability, particularly given you have a slow
4 start here.

5 DR. SMITH: Right, right. I think it's enough
6 time to get all the components on the ground and
7 operational. It is enough time to -- four years is
8 enough time to change the way we think. But, again, it
9 goes with the dollar request, why so much? This is not -
10 - this is not done on the cheap. If we're going to do
11 this, we have to hit it hard. We've got to commit to it.
12 We have to put the resource to it and get a state the
13 size of Florida to move forward on it.

14 So, yes. I think there is not only the
15 opportunity to ramp up and make the changes but to truly
16 change the culture of the way we work and the way we
17 think about education in Florida.

18 Reviewer #3: Thank you. So you do have
19 letters of support from a variety of stakeholders. It's
20 not clear the role they're going to play besides
21 providing support. Can someone shed light on that?

22 DR. SMITH: Well, again, I won't go through all
23 80 letters or whatever it is that we have. They're not -

1 -well, I'll tell you what they're not. They're not just
2 accidental letters that we thought would be nice to put
3 with the application.

4 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

5 DR. SMITH: These are letters from
6 organizations that have longstanding commitment to what
7 we're doing and understand what we're doing. They
8 understand whether it be the Council of 100, the Florida
9 Chambers, or the State PTA.

10 Reviewer #3: So what does commitment mean? I
11 mean, what does support mean?

12 DR. SMITH: It means a variety of things,
13 whether it's subsequent legislation that might be needed.
14 The willingness to stand at the podium and support
15 legislation, whether it be support on the ground. One of
16 the letters is from our state association of community
17 foundations, school district foundations.

18 Reviewer #3: Right.

19 DR. SMITH: And so part of this is commitment
20 on the ground. Part of this is commitment at the state
21 level. Part of this is commitment to do the joint work.
22 Our university has signed on, and that's important in
23 this venture because Governor Crist signed the

1 participation the American Diploma Project several years
2 ago that engaged our K-12 with their higher ed. That
3 conversation to make sure that alignment works. All
4 these pieces in their own specific -- it is not a passive
5 kind of we support this. We hope it happens. We go
6 away. These are long-term partners, each and every one
7 of them.

8 MS. ELIA: And I think one of the things -- for
9 instance, the Council of 100 is a group of business
10 people throughout the state not associated with any one
11 party, just very, very focused. Well, they came out with
12 a strong statement in support of this. They also are
13 voices that are heard in every one of the communities.
14 So when Alberto is talking about compacts, then you have
15 people, as Eric said, on the ground who can support and
16 say, yes, this is part of our agenda in Florida.

17 Remember the question that came up on the four-
18 years and is that long enough?

19 Reviewer #3: Mm-hmm.

20 MS. ELIA: It's long enough if everybody is on
21 that page. It's long enough but not if you have
22 disjointed groups and some of them not understanding. So
23 part of this opportunity for us is to get everyone on the

1 page so that they all understand their piece in it. And
2 I think then you're four years and the funding that we're
3 asking for is well-justified.

4 GOVERNOR CRIST: I think this is -- if I might,
5 an extremely important question. And you ask what is the
6 level of commitment? What do these support groups really
7 represent? And I think what they represent is the will
8 of Florida, and, you know, without that we can't have
9 success. With it, there's nothing we cannot do. And to
10 have that kind of will from, you know, not just the
11 Council of 100, which are the largest businesses in the
12 State of Florida, but the Florida Chamber of Commerce,
13 small and medium-sized businesses, the Florida NAACP,
14 Hispanic groups. I mean, across the board there is buy-
15 in if you will.

16 And so when there are challenges, which
17 inevitably there always are, or bumps in the road that
18 may come after we hope we receive the grant, you've got
19 this level of support, this sheer determination and will
20 to get it done in the long-term that is essential to
21 success in any endeavor, particularly in this field.

22 Reviewer #1 : Governor, I wanted to take off
23 on your words just now, challenges. It's important to

1 understand, what do you perceive your team as probably
2 the two most significant challenges and barriers that
3 you'd have to face in getting the results that you want
4 out of this investment? I picked up because you said it,
5 but anybody can answer the -- provide the response.

6 GOVERNOR CRIST: Well, I'll start.

7 Reviewer #1 : Okay.

8 GOVERNOR CRIST: If I might, well the first
9 challenge is to win, you know, to get the grant, to
10 convince you that we're worthy of your investment, and I
11 hope that we're doing that because the people of Florida
12 have great hopes. You know, we're a state of almost 20
13 million people. We're the fourth largest state in the
14 country, soon to be the third largest state in the
15 country, and just like the rest of America, and frankly
16 the world, we've gone through economic challenges like
17 everybody else has.

18 So what does this represent to us in terms of
19 overcoming challenges in the future? It's enormous.
20 Education is everything. You know, I'm a proud product
21 to Florida's public school system and our state
22 university system. You know, my dad is a doctor, but he
23 served on the school board, you know. Two of my three

1 sisters have been public school teachers in my state, and
2 I'm a Republican, you know, but I understand education's
3 the key.

4 And so if we have an opportunity to win this
5 grant, you know, there's nothing we cannot do, and we're
6 the state where the country reaches for the stars at
7 NASA.

8 Reviewer #1: Yeah.

9 GOVERNOR CRIST: Another reason I'm up here
10 today. But, you know, achieving these goals, meeting
11 these challenges, moving forward takes momentum. You
12 will give Florida enormous momentum to already add on to
13 what these great people have already achieved.

14 Reviewer #1: Well, we like your spirit.
15 There's no question about that, but I'm going to turn to
16 the Commissioner and say what do you feel is the most
17 significant area? We have every confidence that, you
18 know, you'll put every effort in to, you know, to meet
19 the goals, but you're going to be bumps along the way to
20 the stars.

21 DR. SMITH: I'll be as specific as I can on
22 that. One, the Governor is right. An underfunded
23 proposal would be a problem for us in drawing the

1 commitment of the districts as we wish to do. It would
2 be -- that would be a problem, and the U.S. Department
3 needs to think about how that translates in our work in
4 Florida. But the level of funding is not incidental to
5 this.

6 The second is there are technical issues that
7 need to be worked through that are significant. How do
8 you, in fact, develop this kind of an evaluation process,
9 growth models that make sense? I can't tell you the
10 countless hours that the Superintendents and we have been
11 engaged in the nuance of that, which I won't go into, but
12 that nuance is going to spell success or failure at the
13 end of the day, how well we can in fact use this as a
14 tool to improve the quality of classroom instruction and
15 teaching.

16 There are technical issues around, you know,
17 some of the data systems that sometimes gets glanced over
18 as terribly important perhaps in this whole process but
19 are very, very complicated. We want to build a much more
20 robust system and data system. We want to be develop a
21 data system that is so much more accessible by districts
22 and parents and district information, and technically
23 that's complicated. And just as this process requires a

1 lot of thoughtful work upfront to have this day happen,
2 happen successfully without bumps in the road, we have to
3 engage in sort of the technical side of the work I think
4 is going to be -- that everyone needs to be doing
5 correctly.

6 Reviewer #1: We're just going on 11 minutes.
7 You can see the clock.

8 Reviewer #4: How confident are you that the
9 stakeholders that you have listed here will assist you
10 with leveraging the political support and negotiation
11 power that you need to move your initiatives forward,
12 both statewide and locally?

13 GOVERNOR CRIST: Well, I'll be brief. Very
14 confident because I don't think they would have signed on
15 if they didn't have that level of support in their
16 process in supporting what's being done here and what
17 we're trying to achieve. You know, I work very closely
18 with the head of the NAACP, and she is strong. And if
19 she says she's going to do something, by golly she'll do
20 it. I mean, all of these groups are committed I believe.

21 MR. CARVALHO: I think key the success of any
22 initiative of this magnitude and time of regress of the
23 economy is the power of collaboration and partnership.

1 The 80+ individuals or entities listed in support of this
2 grant bring forth the most important ingredient, quite
3 frankly, to its long term sustainability. It will force
4 it to root and root well. They bring advocacy and
5 political leverage, and that's what you need. I can
6 speak specifically to what that has meant to Miami-Dade.

7 Miami-Dade County, when we were taking on
8 tremendous challenges when the system was nearly bankrupt
9 when I first became Superintendent. It was the power of
10 the business community, invited to participate to review
11 our books, to actually provide advice, and testify to the
12 truthfulness of the proposal. It was the power of
13 communities, PTA organizations and share hold groups
14 around filling schools that brought about the support we
15 needed to radically transform the teacher makeup in these
16 schools. It was the power of think tanks and
17 philanthropic contributors to our school systems that
18 agreed with us when we said you need to look beyond race
19 and ethnicity as you select the very best possible
20 principal to turn around the failing school; and, yes,
21 deliver the principal of the year for Miami-Dade, who
22 became the principal of the year for the State of Florida
23 to the most challenging high school in the whole state.

1 So it is that network of support that in fact,
2 in my opinion, provides you the buffer, provides you the
3 opportunity not only to plant the seed but to force it to
4 create roots and gives you the political and advocacy
5 leverage that you will need if, in fact, you are to
6 provide a sustainable delivery of the plan as presented
7 to you.

8 MS. ELIA: I think that's a huge part of this.
9 You have to know that in your community there's more than
10 just the educators speaking, and that when you speak
11 there is a level of support and commitment from the
12 various agencies that they're going to support and make
13 sure that things happen to get you where you need to be
14 to move this ahead. That's what influences what happens
15 in those negotiating sessions and what happens in the
16 community, and we see it all the time.

17 I think that this is an opportunity when, in
18 fact, because things are tight, those collaborations of
19 funding of after school programs of things that are
20 overall we need to become much more efficient in how we
21 provide for our students. But bottom line, and the
22 Governor knows this more; he's been a strong supporter of
23 education in Florida and the moves that we've made.

1 Bottom line is people will support what is necessary for
2 the children of their community, and I think we have to
3 make sure that everybody understands that.

4 And that's why it's powerful that people have
5 all signed on and said we will do it with you, and
6 they're organizations that we all have. The Governor
7 meets with the head of the NAACP, and we have a very
8 active NAACP group in Tampa; and we meet regularly as
9 well. So it is really setting the model I think for what
10 happens across the state.

11 Reviewer #1: I know we want to get in one
12 major question, and we have just a short amount of time.
13 So I'm going to ask to go to the focus on the data.

14 Reviewer #4: Dr. Smith mentioned the student
15 data system, and assume I'm a teacher in one of the most
16 rural isolated schools. What's a student data system
17 going to do for me in a classroom, and what kind of
18 equipment will I need? What kind of support software,
19 etcetera?

20 Dr. HAITHCOCK: That's a good question because
21 there's been a lot of talk about Florida having a great
22 longitudinal data system, and it does. Up until this
23 point though that longitudinal data system has been

1 focused at the state level for more policy and research.
2 This grant would give us the opportunity to do two
3 things. Number one, refocus that data system so that it
4 is more customer friendly at the school level and at the
5 district level so that they can access data quickly. For
6 example, we turn over that data now maybe six times a
7 year. This plan would be to turn that over in a more
8 adjusting time every two weeks.

9 Now that's not instantaneously like districts
10 will have, but the second part of the grant would be
11 connecting to a learning management system in each
12 district. Many of our large districts they have very
13 complex learning management systems, which this data
14 would hook into in other areas. We have consortiums
15 already built up in Florida, small rural districts that
16 we have planned for them and already talked to them, if
17 we're fortunate enough to get this, that they will
18 develop those learning management systems for the
19 consortium states, the small rural states.

20 And then with the assessment parts of it which
21 you were talking about earlier, all those tools about
22 interim assessment, formative assessment, diagnostic
23 assessment, etcetera, will run through those systems.

1 And then the main thing is it will provide a sandbox for
2 researchers all over the United States to come in and
3 actually use our longitudinal data system to do specific
4 research that has been approved.

5 MS. ELIA: I think one of the other things about
6 rural schools is the availability of some of the
7 coursework that they might not have, the teacher, a
8 power, or enough students really to get a teacher in.
9 And we have in Florida the Florida Virtual School and a
10 number of other partners who have come in to be virtual
11 providers. So we have access to that. We have it in our
12 schools, and we have students all over the state that are
13 taking advantage of it.

14 Reviewer #4: This is all web-based. I can get
15 it with my --

16 MS. ELIA: Yes.

17 Dr. HAITHCOCK: One of the advantages of that
18 data system is that it is one unit. In other words, a
19 lot of states can bring in data on K-12, data on
20 colleges, and data on work, but it's so complicated
21 because they're in different systems this is a unitary
22 system. And so it really does provide great access if we
23 can get it more customer friendly to the district.

1 Reviewer #3: Quickly, can you explain how --
2 maybe it was clear and I just didn't get it -- the
3 relationship between the state data system and the local
4 data system? What's kept locally? What's at the state?
5 How does information move back and forth? What
6 information moves back and forth?

7 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Is the district interested in
8 that or --

9 DR. SMITH: There's an upload. Florida has got
10 this wonderful network where we upload the information,
11 teachers on student achievement.

12 Reviewer #3: So you would push out the main
13 test data, that sort of thing? You would push that out
14 to districts?

15 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Right.

16 Reviewer #3: And they would upload the interim
17 assessments and that sort of thing.

18 Dr. HAITHCOCK: Right. We right now have, you
19 know, the big data on the FCAP.

20 Reviewer #3: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

21 Dr. HAITHCOCK: It's bunched in several ways.
22 It can be sent out to districts for them to manipulate
23 and develop their own reports. One of the processes in

1 this grant is to develop a series of reports that is
2 customer friendly and the districts have to buy.

3 Reviewer #3: Okay.

4 Reviewer #1: Any more questions on this data?

5 Reviewer #2: Yeah. Just one clarifying
6 question. You said that the data, diagnostic, formative,
7 those things will be available at the district and school
8 level. Does that mean the data and the assessments?
9 You're going to be able to administer assessments,
10 diagnostic assessments through this?

11 Dr. HAITHCOCK: The great news is we already
12 have just piloted the last year and implemented this year
13 the best reading diagnostic system K through 12. It's
14 diagnostic, predictive, and adaptive. We want to,
15 through this money, to spread that to the areas of
16 science and math to get those same type of diagnostic
17 assessments in there. It's connected to strategies for
18 teaching and that's connected to models for professional
19 development that are online. So we have a good example
20 to build from, but it's just in one area. And it really
21 needs emphasis on the total curriculum to be moved
22 forward.

23 Reviewer #1: Well, can I just interrupt

1 because we're at the close down here. It's a very short
2 amount of time, but I'd like somebody to precisely speak
3 to, given all this, what are your thoughts about how
4 you're going to evaluate this so in fact all these
5 partners, and community, and student parents know that
6 there is -- they're getting the bang for the buck?

7 DR. SMITH: As Dr. Haithcock indicated, we have
8 a very, very well-defined strategic planning project
9 management charter development program in the Department
10 of Education. We would have charter leads and teams of
11 individuals in the Department of Education to be
12 responsible. We would benchmark results as we doled that
13 out so we would be able to report back annually, every
14 six months about are we hitting the benchmarks? Are we
15 getting the work done that needs to get done in order to
16 drive that result? So we -- we have currently in place
17 the mechanism and have experience around that. We use it
18 on our state strategic planning program. We would use
19 the same process to report back here.

20 MR. CARVALHO: If I may?

21 Reviewer #1: Yes. You may.

22 MR. CARVALHO: This proposal is dramatic, but
23 you need just this. You need sort of that ballistic

1 thrust to overcome the gravitational pull of status quo.
2 We cannot afford as a nation to accept failure in our
3 schools, and I believe that if we live up to the
4 provisions embedded in this grant, Florida's children
5 will become the global competitors they need to be.

6 MS. ELIA: And a model to the nation.

7 Reviewer #1: Hey, that's pretty good, right to
8 the second. Thank you very much.