

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP

GRANT REVIEW

Phase 1 Tier 2 State Presentation

The State of Georgia

1:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Holiday Inn Capitol Hill  
550 C Street. S.W.  
Washington, D.C.



1 Perdue's policy director. I have led this Race to the Top  
2 effort in Georgia. I served as the executive sponsor of  
3 Race to the Top. Moving forward, I will continue to be on  
4 the Steering Committee, which will oversee the Race to the  
5 Top implementation director along with Superintendent  
6 Cox's Chief of Staff and with Kathleen Mathers.

7 MS. MATHERS: I am Kathleen Mathers. I am the  
8 Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Student  
9 Achievement, somewhat of a unique agency that we have in  
10 Georgia. We are a p-16 research, evaluation, and  
11 accountability agency, and we were very involved in the  
12 development of this application as we will be in the  
13 implementation of the work, as well.

14 I would just like to add to our introduction  
15 here that four of the five of us were also classroom  
16 teachers, so we bring to this work a lot of relevant  
17 experience.

18 GOVERNOR PERDUE: We appreciate very much the  
19 opportunity to visit with you all this afternoon and to  
20 tell you Georgia's story because we think it is something  
21 that we are proud of.

22 Georgia began early, in the early '90s, I think  
23 to begin understanding that educational excellence is

1 really the key to economic prosperity. Governor Miller at  
2 that time as to the Hope scholarship and well as the  
3 universal pre-K, and I think we graduated some of those  
4 first pre-kindergartners there, and we are seeing some of  
5 the results of our high school graduation rates elevation  
6 coming forward.

7           It has been exciting to see. What that has  
8 created in Georgia, I believe is a hunger and a value for  
9 educational excellence for all of our students that is  
10 palpable, and we have benefited from that, and have  
11 encouraged that with Superintendent Cox and her local  
12 school systems, as well as our State policy and  
13 legislature tried to put forth and plow the tough ground  
14 there and changing sometimes educational policies,  
15 flexibility.

16           Alvin and the largest system in the State is  
17 involved in what we call IE-squared, which is investing in  
18 educational excellence, and that trades flexibility for  
19 accountability.

20           Alvin says you give me the flexibility and I  
21 will get the results done, and that has been our theme  
22 there with a robust charter system, as well as  
23 understanding that our teachers having flexibility with

1 math and science, and different things like that, so there  
2 is a hunger that is going on in Georgia over the momentum,  
3 and there is excitement, and irrespective of the outfits  
4 here, there has been no alignment in that [inaudible].

5           This really is a great alignment from the local  
6 systems up through the State effort in that effort, and  
7 really through our higher education system all the way  
8 down to pre-K, there is a particularly powerful education,  
9 alliance of educational heads there that have been  
10 cooperating and collaborating in a wonderful way, creating  
11 a momentum and really a can-do spirit, that goes all the  
12 way down to the classroom teacher, and we are very excited  
13 about the possibility.

14           What has been lacking really as Kathy and I  
15 bemoan the fact over these times in the State budget, in  
16 the times that we have been in office, are the resources  
17 to really help to lubricate those changes, and that is why  
18 we are excited to join. Ever since I heard Secretary  
19 Duncan describe this at NGA over a year ago, I felt like  
20 he had been reading our playbook about the things we have  
21 been trying to do over changing educational outcomes,  
22 moving from an input-based system to an outcome-based  
23 system.

1           I would love for you to hear what Superintendent  
2 Cox has created in the environment with standards and  
3 those things as she tells you specifically some of those  
4 things that have happened in the classrooms.

5           MS. COX: Thank you, Governor.

6           My role today in the presentation is to really  
7 explain to you all why Georgia is truly ready to take on  
8 the challenge of Race to the Top. I want to make three  
9 quick points that I hope stood out in the application  
10 itself, but I want to highlight three important things  
11 about our State that I think are really, really important  
12 today.

13           First of all, in 2004, we began the absolute  
14 daunting task of completely overhauling our K-12 standard  
15 in all areas of the curriculum, and we did it specifically  
16 engineering it to raise rigor. That was the whole intent  
17 and purpose.

18           We did it to raise rigor for all students and we  
19 did it with the intent that we would start this process in  
20 pre-kindergarten. As we developed those standards and we  
21 did it very, very quickly, because we had the work of all  
22 the rest of the country to rely on, as well as all of the  
23 rest of the world who had gone through the standards

1 movement, and we then began extensive training and work  
2 with our educators in a very, very sequenced and  
3 coordinated rollout of those standards, and we began that  
4 work in 2006, and it is still ongoing.

5 We are still working on the rollout of the  
6 curriculum in high school mathematics, and we are working  
7 statewide with high school teachers on that transition.

8 But we also realized that grade level  
9 expectations and raising the rigor grade by grade wasn't  
10 enough, and that we also had to come in with a very strong  
11 end to that whole system with a better diploma for Georgia  
12 students, a diploma that meant more both to the student  
13 and to our communities and to our State.

14 So, we began work in 2007 with the American  
15 diploma project, and I am proud to say that we have  
16 committed our State to a single rigorous diploma for all,  
17 that not only requires 23 units to graduate, but is saying  
18 very loud and clear you have to have four years of math  
19 and four years of science, and that is for all students.

20 So, why is that important for this application?  
21 Well, it means that we are really poised and ready to make  
22 a very smooth transition with the Common Core. Our  
23 teachers, along with our local systems have been at this

1 work of training and professional development and  
2 transition now for several years, and that is why we feel,  
3 with the resources that Race to the Top would give us,  
4 that would enable us to implement the Common Core with  
5 real fidelity, with some of the things that we are calling  
6 for using that money in terms of being able to do  
7 benchmark assessments, and so forth, to ensure that  
8 implementation.

9           The second thing I want to highlight about why  
10 Georgia is ready for this work, is because this work that  
11 we have done on the Georgia performance standards has all  
12 been highly collaborative.

13           Nothing has been in isolation, we have broken  
14 down the silos. We have truly partnered with higher  
15 education, pre-school, technical education, but most  
16 importantly, we have had this incredible partnership with  
17 local districts and local educators who, quite frankly,  
18 were the real driving force in being able to implement the  
19 new standard.

20           We had to set up a network because we had such  
21 an aggressive timeline of implementation. We had to set  
22 up massive networks within those local districts for  
23 training and professional development, and again it

1 positions us now because we have these established  
2 networks to make these transitions and these huge policy  
3 initiatives that we are calling for in our Race to the Top  
4 application, we feel very confident we can actually get  
5 this work done.

6           The third thing I want to highlight is also what  
7 the Governor talked about, the momentum in our State. You  
8 know, when we rolled out this rigorous curriculum, and  
9 especially with the math, we had a lot of naysayers, and  
10 we had a lot of people who just really still couldn't  
11 quite buy into that idea that we could have these high  
12 expectations for all students and really see success.

13           But I have to tell you, if you were to go with  
14 me into some Georgia schools now, we have made believers  
15 out of everybody especially our classroom teachers, and  
16 there is an excitement, and you can see it, and you can  
17 feel it when you walk into schools about what it means to  
18 teach all kids to high standards.

19           Again, it was a difficult transition, because at  
20 the same time we were raising the rigor, we were also  
21 implementing that you had to have accountability for all,  
22 and by the way, we are going to make the tests for that  
23 accountability harder, and we are going to raise the cut

1 scores, but you can do it.

2           You can imagine there are a lot of people  
3 saying, oh, yeah, ha-ha. But you know what, they are  
4 doing it, and I am really pleased to tell you just a few  
5 highlights, for instance, in eighth grade.

6           Eighth grade reading for every subgroup of  
7 students including students with disabilities and our  
8 English language learners, after just three years of  
9 implementation of new standards, our students in every  
10 subgroup are outperforming in eighth grade reading the  
11 levels prior to the change to the GPS.

12           And in eighth grade math, which most of the  
13 outside experts who have looked at our curriculum have  
14 said, you have got some of the toughest, if not the  
15 toughest, most rigorous standards for middle school  
16 students in the whole country.

17           Just after two years of implementation, those  
18 percentages of students who can meet and exceed the  
19 standards are just a few percentage points away, again,  
20 for the subgroups of students, every subgroup of students  
21 from being able to surpass what we were getting on a very  
22 lackluster curriculum before 2007.

23           Again, why is this so important for you to

1 understand about our Race to the Top application? It's  
2 because the key component of what we want to do to take us  
3 to the next level has to do with inspiring and continuing  
4 to grow and inspire these great teachers and leaders who  
5 are getting these results.

6           It is through a bold plan of action to actually  
7 start compensating people for doing this heavy lifting and  
8 doing this great work, and so I am going to turn this over  
9 to Kathleen Mathers who is going to go into some of the  
10 details and highlights of that portion of our plan.

11           MS. MATHERS: Great. As Superintendent Cox  
12 mentioned, we are very pleased with momentum that we have  
13 gained over the past several years in particular, and we  
14 are thrilled to be one of 16 finalists in the Phase 1  
15 portion here. To be perfectly honest, we will be much  
16 more excited about being selected as the winner.

17           To do that, we know that we have to stand out  
18 from other States, and we think that we do stand out from  
19 other States. I am going to take just a few minutes of  
20 your time to talk about how we think we are different from  
21 other States with respect to the way teachers and leaders  
22 and our turnaround efforts.

23           First and foremost, we have a system-wide

1 approach that's based on transparency and better  
2 information at all levels. This is a vertically aligned,  
3 interconnected approach to effectiveness and  
4 accountability. It incentivizes different levels to  
5 support one another.

6           We are not just focused on evaluating and  
7 holding accountable teachers and leaders but also our  
8 district and our preparation programs. The heart of our  
9 system is student growth and closing the achievement gap.  
10 It is evident in all of our measures - our teacher  
11 effectiveness measure, our leader effectiveness measure,  
12 our district effectiveness measure, and our teacher/leader  
13 preparation program effectiveness measure. They are all  
14 built on student achievement, growth, and academic gap  
15 closure.

16           We are making clear and consistent expectations  
17 known on the front end, while also providing considerable  
18 support for the spectrum of educators. We are going to  
19 use a common evaluation system for all teachers. We have  
20 181 districts in Georgia. We will not have 181 different  
21 evaluation systems.

22           We will be looking at all of our teachers the  
23 same way, measuring their effectiveness the same way. We

1 get great comparability across the State. It tells us a  
2 lot about the talent management work that we need to do,  
3 and also helps inform our equitable distribution plans.

4           Fifty percent of the teacher and leader  
5 evaluations will be tied to student growth. If you look  
6 closely at our district and teacher/leader preparation  
7 effectiveness measures, they will also be focused very  
8 squarely on student growth as well.

9           A bold paper performance plan for teachers and  
10 leaders, this is going to be an opt-in system. It will be  
11 voluntary, so that our teachers and leaders who are  
12 currently in the system have the opportunity to opt into  
13 the performance pay model or opt to stay in the current  
14 system that we have set up for them at this time.

15           This is going to create a value-added model for  
16 the entire State as a basis for quantifying student  
17 achievement. Certification renewal is going to become  
18 dependent upon effectiveness. You have to show your  
19 effectiveness as a classroom teacher, as a school leader  
20 in order to be able to renew your certification and  
21 continue in that instructional role.

22           Compensation will be tied then to performance  
23 rather than using advanced degrees as a direct basis for

1 compensation. We are going to have a deliberate focus on  
2 creating higher earning potential for teachers in high  
3 need, high poverty schools. Very simply, we want to  
4 attract the best teachers to the neediest schools.

5 We are going to do that through that bold  
6 performance pay plan, but also through additional  
7 financial incentives to teachers in those schools if they  
8 can help close the achievement gap at those schools.

9 Strong partnerships to build a quality pipeline  
10 of teachers. We mention them clearly in the application,  
11 Teach for America, the new teacher project, a grow your  
12 own teacher program, you teach, and we are taking a  
13 collaborative approach to working with our participating  
14 LEAs.

15 They are going to help us finalize the  
16 evaluation and performance plan under Race to the Top.  
17 These are not partners in name only. These are partners  
18 that are deeply committed to the work, who will be  
19 actively engaged in the decision-making process with the  
20 State.

21 With respect to school turnaround, we have had  
22 relative successes to date, but we recognize that we need  
23 dramatic change. We started with 533 schools originally

1 on the Needs Improvement list. Of those, only 33 remain  
2 on that list.

3           That is success to be celebrated, at the same  
4 time, we are deeply concerned about the 33 schools that  
5 are on the list, about others that have joined the list,  
6 that have been failing for years. We need bold, intensive  
7 interventions. We think that we have done the right  
8 groundwork to be in place, to put those interventions in  
9 place.

10           Rigorous diagnostic conducted by the State in  
11 collaboration with external experts. They will form the  
12 basis for selecting the turnaround school model. We are  
13 not going to pretend for a moment that turnaround work is  
14 simple work. It is very complex and difficult to do, but  
15 we have the stomach to make the difficult decisions in  
16 recommending specific turnaround models, in recommending  
17 specific support and interventions for those schools on  
18 the lowest achieving list.

19           These will be more intense comprehensive  
20 diagnostics than we have ever used before. We have had  
21 great success with our Gaps analysis. Those experts will  
22 work with experts at the Office of Student Achievement and  
23 external experts to make those even more rigorous and more

1 comprehensive.

2           We are taking a systemwide approach to  
3 turnaround. The district will be the unit of analysis  
4 rather than an individual school. We have seen in a lot  
5 of turnaround work that that work has focused on a single  
6 school in a system.

7           If you look at the schools on our lowest  
8 achieving list, they are all middle schools and high  
9 schools. Those problems didn't suddenly appear in middle  
10 school and high school. They started much earlier. They  
11 started in elementary school, they started in pre-  
12 kindergarten programs. So, our focus will be on that  
13 entire feeder pattern, and also the district as a whole  
14 through our district effectiveness plans.

15           We are taking a portfolio approach. Our  
16 partners are committed to all of the assurances. They did  
17 not pick and choose. They were not given the opportunity  
18 to pick and choose, because we feel that we have put  
19 together a comprehensive plan and, in totality, it will  
20 address the needs of turning around these schools.

21           You can't pick and choose one reform in great  
22 teachers and leaders and expect to turn around a school.  
23 It is the combination of all those pieces that will make

1 the difference.

2           Again, strong partners, Teach for America in new  
3 teacher projects, promising preliminary conversations with  
4 EMOs that will provide human capacity where it is needed  
5 most, effective teachers and leaders. We know that is  
6 where you make the difference with students, and we are  
7 selecting partners that have a proven track record of  
8 success to help us with that work.

9           The single highly visible point of  
10 accountability for school turnaround at the State level  
11 will shine a spotlight on the turnaround issue. This is a  
12 newly created position, the Deputy Superintendent For  
13 School Turnaround. That person will be jointly selected  
14 by Governor Perdue and Superintendent Cox, and their sole  
15 focus will be on the turnaround issue.

16           All of our schools in the State that are NI5 or  
17 higher will be under the purview of this single turnaround  
18 director.

19           I think I would also be remiss if I didn't talk  
20 about STEM for just a minute. Within our great teachers  
21 and leaders, and within our turnaround pooled effort, we  
22 know that we have to have considerable effort in our STEM  
23 areas.

1           We have outlined that I think fairly well in our  
2 application, but if I could just remind you of a few of  
3 our plans requiring our elementary and middle schools to  
4 make science their second indicator for AYP across the  
5 State, providing math/science endorsements for early  
6 childhood education teachers.

7           That would give them a stipend of \$1,000 per  
8 year, per endorsement, and greatly improve the  
9 mathematical and science content knowledge of those  
10 teachers.

11           We have in law, differentiated pay for secondary  
12 math and science teachers, so that those new teachers who  
13 come to us, who prove their effectiveness can begin as if  
14 they were sixth year teachers instead of first year  
15 teachers.

16           We are going to work with some great partners in  
17 You Teach, outreach center at Georgia Tech known as  
18 CEISMC, The Center for the Education Integrating Science,  
19 Mathematics, and Computing. That is a mouthful. They do  
20 fantastic work.

21           We are going to continue to work with our math  
22 and science mentors that are field specialists placed  
23 strategically around the State. We are going to place

1 math coaches in our lowest achieving schools, and we are  
2 going to continue with rigorous professional development  
3 through our math-science partnership across the State.

4 With that, I am going to turn this over to Erin.

5 MS. HAMES: I know that one of the things you  
6 want to come away with today, after our time is over, is  
7 not just that Georgia has a great plan on paper, but that  
8 we are going to be successful in implementing this plan.

9 The implementation structure we have set up  
10 really recognizes the realities in Georgia, and it is  
11 going to ensure that we are successful in implementing  
12 this plan. There are clear points of accountability for  
13 each of the various reform efforts within the plan, and,  
14 you know, Race to the Top is really not work that is just  
15 related to the Georgia Department of Education. It is  
16 really P-20 work.

17 It goes from our pre-K all the way through  
18 higher ed, and we have recognized that in the placement of  
19 the Race to the Top, implementation director at the  
20 Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

21 As Kathleen said, this is a unique capacity that  
22 we have in Georgia. They are really focused on data and  
23 accountability, and they ask many of the tough questions

1 that need to be asked of our education system, and then  
2 drive decisions through the data that they put forward.

3           So, we have placed the Race to the Top  
4 implementation director there at the Governor's Office of  
5 Student Achievement.

6           In addition to ensuring that Race to the Top is  
7 a P20 effort, it also ensures that Race to the Top will  
8 continue to be a priority for the next governor.

9           You know, despite the fact that Race to the Top  
10 is going to go through various agencies and the work will  
11 be done at various agencies, there will not be a  
12 duplication of effort.

13           The Race to the Top implementation director will  
14 report on a day-to-day basis to the Steering Committee, so  
15 that is the Governor's policy director, the head of the  
16 Office of Student Achievement, and then the State School  
17 Superintendent's chief of staff, so they will ensure that  
18 there is no duplication and that the work both within the  
19 Department of Education and in other agencies is very well  
20 coordinated.

21           Superintendent Cox, the Governor, and Kathleen,  
22 they really all mentioned the importance of collaboration  
23 in Georgia. We really wouldn't have gotten to the place

1 where we are in our State in education if it had not been  
2 for the great collaboration, and the importance of the  
3 Alliance of Education Agency heads.

4           We carried that same sense of collaboration into  
5 the Race to the Top process. The process we set up for  
6 developing our plan and our application, we had four  
7 teams, one focused on each of the four reform areas, and  
8 those teams were very diverse, and we brought many  
9 different perspectives to the table with the makeup of the  
10 team.

11           We had current teachers, principals, school  
12 superintendents, higher education faculty, State  
13 policymakers, and people from all seven of the education  
14 agencies in the State.

15           In addition to that work, we had a critical  
16 feedback team, and this was really high-level business  
17 leaders, members of our State legislature, people from our  
18 philanthropic community in Georgia, and we met with them  
19 periodically through the process, went through the details  
20 of the plan with them, and they provided very critical  
21 feedback to help to shape the final plan.

22           We also went directly to leaders in our local  
23 school systems, in our schools. We met with local school

1 superintendents, giving them details of the plan and  
2 seeking their feedback. We also went directly to  
3 classroom teachers, which is something that has been very,  
4 very important to us here in Georgia, anytime we have  
5 tried to move forward with any kind reform.

6           We surveyed classroom teachers and had an  
7 enormous response. Over 20,000 of our K-12 educators  
8 responded to the survey. That was really focused on great  
9 teachers and leaders, and on turning around low performing  
10 schools.

11           That represents about 13 percent of our teaching  
12 force, and so a pretty enormous response from those  
13 teachers, and we used what they said in the survey to  
14 shape the final plan that you have been looking at and  
15 reading in great detail.

16           We will continue that same collaborative  
17 approach as we move forward. We have 23 very strong  
18 districts that are going to work with Georgia, and we  
19 understand very well that we are not going to be  
20 successful without the support of our local districts and  
21 without their buy-in, and so we intend for them to be very  
22 strong thought partners with us in working out the details  
23 and the implementation of this plan. When we look back I

1 think on Race to the Top four years from now, I think  
2 there is a commitment among all of us at this table that  
3 we don't just want to simply look back at an infusion of  
4 dollars that really had no long-term impact on the State.

5 We want to look back four years from now and  
6 say, wow, that really changed the landscape in Georgia,  
7 that really changed education and it really catapulted us  
8 forward in a way that nothing else had.

9 So, we have thought very long and hard about  
10 sustainability. I know that is something that is on your  
11 mind, as well. We are going to be asking very tough  
12 questions of the districts that are partnering with us,  
13 and really looking at how they are using their resources,  
14 but we are not going to limit it just to those local  
15 districts.

16 We are going to put the State under a  
17 microscope, as well, really looking at how we are using  
18 our resources and how we can re-allocate existing  
19 resources to really support the reforms that are in the  
20 Race to the Top plan.

21 So, with all of those things, I am very  
22 confident that Georgia is going to be successful in  
23 implementing the plan that we have before you.

1 GOVERNOR PERDUE: Thank you, Erin.

2 Good job, everyone. Is there anything else you  
3 all would like to say before I close here and we open it  
4 up for questions?

5 You said it all. Great. Well, let me begin  
6 closing by again thanking you for the opportunity and your  
7 strong attention. I want to focus really on Georgia as a  
8 whole, why I think Georgia is a good investment, and then  
9 really our partnerships that we have created through our  
10 MOUs.

11 What you will have before you is we believe  
12 Georgia is a microcosm. It has geographical and ethnic  
13 diversity there. We have got rural systems and Georgia  
14 has about 500,000 rural students, as well as many urban  
15 and then a very diverse suburban group.

16 Alvin is the superintendent of Gwinnett County,  
17 our largest school system in the State and very diverse.  
18 It includes the ethnic diversity while the students, about  
19 23 systems out of 181, it represents over 40 percent of  
20 the students, and 46 percent of those students in poverty.  
21 Over half of the African-American students in our State,  
22 almost half of the Hispanic students in our State, so  
23 there is a wide diversity and a great microcosm from the

1 smallest systems to the suburban districts and to the  
2 urban districts, so we think the opportunity for  
3 demonstration projects in each of those areas is  
4 tremendous in the microcosm that Georgia provides for  
5 that. We think it's a great incubator state.

6           While we indicated that we got 23 systems out of  
7 181, and representing almost the majority of the students  
8 in this State, that gives us a workable group. We didn't  
9 want everyone to come here, and we didn't want to insist  
10 everyone join in. In fact, when I spoke to the  
11 superintendents, I said we want true partners, true  
12 believers here who are willing to implement these reforms  
13 in a way that we can demonstrate to the States that the  
14 outcome really does matter, and that is what we have got.

15           We have got strong committed MOUs with our local  
16 systems to make us believers in the systems. Alvin is one  
17 of those and a real progressive leader in that area, but  
18 we reached out to them and understand that we are serious  
19 about this.

20           We thought it was better to have people who  
21 wanted to voluntarily choose to participate in local  
22 systems, and then demonstrate. As Alvin says, many of  
23 them wanted to. They just didn't want to be first.

1           As you know, superintendents and educators are  
2 very busy overall, and it takes someone with real passion  
3 to do that, so we believe this will allow us to manage  
4 those reforms better across the participating districts as  
5 a demonstration project with the ability to make this  
6 uniform across the State as we demonstrate the proactive  
7 effects of this Race to the Top.

8           So, we are excited about that, we are excited  
9 about the opportunity that we have in Georgia to show the  
10 Nation that we mean business, that we are hungry for  
11 educational reform whether it's great teachers and  
12 leaders, beginning there, turning around those low-  
13 performing schools.

14           Kathy and I have been focused on the student  
15 information and data system that has real credibility, not  
16 only to the parents of students, to the teachers, all of  
17 Georgia there that make a difference, so we are excited  
18 about the opportunities. We believe that the resources  
19 will provide us the means to which to utilize.

20           The other thing is that if we had 181 districts,  
21 we don't think there would be the level of resources  
22 within each district to really effect change. So, it  
23 allows us to focus, to focus in a way where

1 superintendents like Alvin, who are believers in this  
2 effort can really make a difference within their local  
3 school districts.

4           So, thanks again. We look forward to putting  
5 these reforms in practice, and we hope we are successful.  
6 We want you to know we are committed whether or not we are  
7 successful or not. We are going to move forward. This  
8 will enable us to do it quicker and more effectively.

9           So, thank you very much for your attention.

10           REVIEWER 1: All right. How are you all doing?  
11 I can tell you are excited to be here, lots of energy.  
12 We have about 12 or so questions for you. I am sure we  
13 will have some follow-up questions that cover the range of  
14 the application.

15           What we want to do to make sure that we make  
16 most effective use of your time, you still have 90 minutes  
17 left, is to make sure that -- we ask every concise  
18 questions -- but that you also give very concise and  
19 specific answers to them.

20           There may be a time or two where I might have to  
21 slow you down, move you on. It's not because we don't  
22 like the answers, it's just that we are trying to keep it  
23 going. I may do that the same to my panel here, and, you

1 know, if you have any follow-up questions, if you have  
2 time left, you know, please ask.

3 So, Reviewer 2, you have the first question.

4 REVIEWER 2: You mentioned quite a bit in your  
5 presentation today, as well as in your application, there  
6 are a host of agencies you mentioned today, as well as the  
7 Deputy Superintendent for School Turnaround, the  
8 Implementation Director reporting to the Steering  
9 Committee, and a number of other staff and new roles  
10 essentially named in your proposal.

11 How will all of this work together, can you give  
12 us a better sense of what that looks like, and, also, name  
13 some of the barriers that you see now that you might  
14 anticipate in making these changes at the State level and  
15 the systemic level that you talked about, Erin, and how do  
16 you plan to overcome those barriers?

17 MS. HAMES: Kathy, you want to talk about  
18 implementation?

19 MS. COX: Yes, I would be happy to talk about  
20 implementation. We are already aggressively at work on  
21 school improvement activities and work, and again I think  
22 it has been mentioned and it's in our application that we  
23 have had some success.

1           So, when we talked about how do we get a  
2 heightened focus for this work, it wasn't about moving  
3 that portion of our work at the Department out. It was  
4 more about pulling it and highlighting it and making a  
5 single person really accountable.

6           So, this Deputy Superintendent of School  
7 Turnaround will be someone that sits on my executive level  
8 leadership team. They will join the Deputy Superintendent  
9 for Finance Data, Deputy Superintendent for Standards and  
10 Assessment, and Deputy Superintendent that will continue  
11 to work in school improvement, and myself, and they will  
12 be a key member of my leadership team.

13           We also know, though, that because this work  
14 with Race to the Top is across departments from the  
15 Governor's Office and myself, that we also wanted to make  
16 sure that who gets hired, really we all agree is the right  
17 person for the job.

18           So, in the application, we propose that this  
19 become a joint effort of the Governor and I to pick the  
20 person, and, of course, the State Board would also be a  
21 key component of saying yes, this is the right person, as  
22 well.

23           Now, that person again will report and be in my

1 organization. The reason it is important to have the Race  
2 to the Top Implementation Director outside the DOE is  
3 because this work is truly P20, and especially because so  
4 much of the work is going to deal with teachers and  
5 leaders, we have to have a professional standards  
6 commission involved.

7 I don't do licensure of teachers. So, all of  
8 these big reforms that we are talking about how we are  
9 going to change teacher licensure, we are going to change  
10 teacher compensation, there is a role for another agency,  
11 and again, that is really where the Governor's Office of  
12 Student Achievement comes in.

13 They can also help us push our university  
14 partners as we talk about changing certification programs  
15 in the colleges and universities. So, again, that really  
16 is not a role that I have, but it is certainly a role for  
17 the Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

18 So, we really feel that it's important to have  
19 this Race to the Top Implementation Director outside the  
20 Department of Ed.

21 Again, the last thing I will say about the  
22 implementation and the way we all plan to work together, I  
23 think that we have a track record of that in our State

1 with what we did with the implementation of the Georgia  
2 performance standards and some of the other key reforms  
3 that we have implemented.

4           It was a total joint effort to get  
5 differentiated pay for science and math teachers passed  
6 through our legislature. None of that was again done by  
7 one agency or one group.

8           It was a total cross-collaboration, the same  
9 with the diploma. We worked for three years  
10 collaboratively to get that change in our diploma  
11 requirements. It was fully supported, not only by the  
12 State Board of Education, by the university system, and by  
13 the technical college system of Georgia.

14           So, we have a great history of really making  
15 collaborative work, work.

16           The last thing, it's kind of a weave, and it  
17 looks complicated, and it is, but the complexity is good  
18 because it puts us like this, so one strand coming out  
19 isn't going to undo the whole fabric, and I think that  
20 that is really important for this work as we know we will  
21 be making a transition in governors.

22           And I think your second question, you asked  
23 about barriers, and what were the barriers in the way of

1 doing this work, and one of the things I think everybody  
2 at this table would agree, and Superintendent Cox really  
3 referenced this in talking about when we changed to one  
4 graduation rule for all students, the importance of  
5 communication, not only to teacher and to local school  
6 superintendents and principals, that they really buy in  
7 and believe in those changes, but also to parents and to  
8 our general stakeholders in Georgia.

9           I know that Superintendent Wilbanks has already  
10 begun some of this important communication work in his  
11 district, and so, Alvin, would you like to talk about some  
12 of the work you are already doing there and the importance  
13 of communication as we move forward?

14           MR. WILBANKS: Sure, and just to go back and hit  
15 on a couple of things that has been mentioned, we have had  
16 as a goal in our district, coming down from the State for  
17 some time, really that fits along the lines of Race to the  
18 Top.

19           We are interested in Common Core assessments,  
20 Common Core staff, we are interested in great teachers and  
21 great leaders, and we have been working, those were  
22 established goals that we published well over a year ago,  
23 so when Race to the Top came, that just allowed us an

1 opportunity to work with the State that broadens our  
2 horizons that we feel will benefit us, as well as the  
3 State.

4           But if we look at how that comes down to the  
5 State, we have begun talking with our teachers and asking  
6 them -- my first objective was just to establish a  
7 dialogue. If you could start from scratch and develop a  
8 teacher evaluation system, what would it look like, what  
9 would be the components of that system.

10           We shared with them, the letter from the  
11 Governor that went out to every teacher on this, and we  
12 said how would you go about implementing this, and, you  
13 know, the first meeting we just talked about it, and they  
14 began then to identify, and quite frankly, I was  
15 pleasantly surprised that hardly anybody is opposed to  
16 performance being part of an evaluation, they all agree  
17 with that.

18           But what are those other components, so we are  
19 working with them to do that, and we have had -- I have an  
20 Advisory Committee -- one teacher from every school, but  
21 we also have done this with local school administrators,  
22 and then we will be going out to our community this next  
23 month with their board meetings, and we will be talking

1 about these type goals and objectives of Race to the Top.  
2 Again, that sort of fit an overlay of what we were as a  
3 district already doing, and one end of what the state was  
4 doing.

5 REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Thank you.

6 Do you have another question reviewer 2?

7 REVIEWER 2: Yes. So, you spoke especially to  
8 some, especially to the LEA participation. Can you  
9 describe to us the action that the State took to secure  
10 this participation, how did you go about this process  
11 essentially, and what led to the results of 12.7 percent  
12 participation across the State?

13 If you could, describe both the process and your  
14 own assessment of how that went, and were you satisfied  
15 with it.

16 MR. PERDUE: I am very satisfied as I indicated  
17 in my remarks. We were interested in people who wanted to  
18 voluntarily, in a passion sort of way, move in this  
19 direction, and while the 12.7 percent of districts in  
20 Georgia, about 70 percent of the students in about 14  
21 districts, school districts, so when you look at the  
22 percentage there, it is misleading when you think of  
23 almost half the students in these 23 districts, almost

1 half the students in the State are in that.

2 I actually called the superintendents together.  
3 We sent a letter to everyone, and I actually, you know, it  
4 is kind of like a half-time speech, I said, guys, if your  
5 heart is not in this, if you don't want to, if you are  
6 lukewarm about it, don't sign up.

7 We want true believers, and we want to make a  
8 difference in these districts, and I need your passionate  
9 buy-in, in order to move with us, because I am confident  
10 of the results, and we want people who will demonstrate  
11 that the principles of Secretary Duncan and the president  
12 of Outline regarding stretch goals, and really reaching  
13 for expectation across all student groups and high  
14 expectation, we believe it can be done, and we are  
15 confident, we want people who are believers in that with  
16 us, joint believers, that it can be done, not a burden to  
17 put on you, so that is how we came up as a voluntary  
18 effort.

19 It wasn't that we want it all in the State. I  
20 would have been happy to do that, but frankly, the  
21 resources will be better implemented.

22 The other factors Kathleen and I have talked  
23 about, several of these things will be statewide anyway,

1 the Common Core, the assessments, and the teachers and  
2 leaders, those kinds of things, they will have statewide  
3 impact regardless.

4           It is just that that innovative approach, we are  
5 going to have an innovation fund through these 23 systems  
6 where we will ask the best and the brightest to put their  
7 ideas in there as real pioneers in educational innovation  
8 in Georgia.

9           So, we are excited about the size group that we  
10 have. These, as I said, there is broad diversity,  
11 geographical diversity, ethnic diversity, and we think  
12 that is a very manageable group that we can truly -- and  
13 when you have 181 systems, as Erin said, communication  
14 becomes even more complicated, it is, frankly, exponential  
15 when you move up that.

16           So, we get very focused. You can have a dynamic  
17 discussion with 23 local school leaders in the same room  
18 and everyone feel like they participate. When you get  
19 181, that is difficult.

20           MS. COX: If I could talk to the satisfied  
21 question , when I saw the list, after the Governor had the  
22 kickoff meeting and the talk, and went into some detail,  
23 there was a little bit of lag time between when we heard

1 back from the systems about which ones were going to sign  
2 up for the MOU.

3           Because I have worked so closely with so many of  
4 these leaders, these superintendents, you know, I looked  
5 across the room, and, you know, I saw the usual heads  
6 nodding like I am in on this, and I knew someone like  
7 Superintendent Wilbanks would be right there with us.

8           But what I was really pleased about was that we  
9 had some folks that just, I thought wow, we have got them  
10 coming on-board with us. So, you know, it's not just the  
11 large Gwinnett that has been a progressive school district  
12 that has undergone so much of these great reforms and are  
13 doing this kind of work, but we also saw an emerging  
14 district, Henry County, with a large student population, a  
15 large minority population, and a district, quite frankly,  
16 that in recent years has almost completely gotten rid of  
17 the gap, and they're on board with us, and they have no  
18 school that needs improvement.

19           [Interruption by fire alarm.]

20           REVIEWER 1: In your plan, the data that you  
21 share on student achievement indicates whether or not  
22 students met the standard, and I was hoping you could  
23 explain to us what meeting the standard is in Georgia, and

1 if you use basic or proficient levels of achievement as  
2 your goal for student achievement.

3 MS. HAMES: Kathleen, do you want to take that  
4 one?

5 MS. MATHERS: Sure. I will provide part of that  
6 answer and then I think Superintendent Cox will probably  
7 like to elaborate a little bit.

8 Within Georgia, within our State assessments we  
9 have does not meet, meets or exceeds, so the passage rate  
10 is based on students who have either met or exceeded the  
11 standard, and there are different cut scores set for each.

12 When we try to compare ourselves for national  
13 purposes against NAPE and set those sorts of goals, we do  
14 look at the basic levels as something that is comparable  
15 to the meets level, so when you look at our performance  
16 goals within the application, you will notice that that is  
17 what we focused on, the percentage of our students meeting  
18 that basic level and growing that percentage over time.

19 MS. COX: And note that with the rollout of the  
20 new Georgia performance standards, every test that we give  
21 was also changed to reflect those new standards. Every  
22 test was also, the rigor was up. Then, we used the  
23 modified DOLF [ph], I think it is, or modified method of

1 bringing the teachers in to decide the cut scores, that we  
2 have a technical advisory team that works with us that  
3 brings in national experts to help us decide, after the  
4 teachers look at what that proficiency level should be,  
5 and so we follow all the protocols necessary.

6           And I want to point out that all of our tests  
7 have met the Federal standard of meeting their peer  
8 review, so we are real proud of that for all of our  
9 assessments both at elementary, middle, and high school.

10           MR. PERDUE: Reviewer 1, your question is one of  
11 the reasons I have co-chaired the National Core Standards  
12 and Common Assessments, as well, because I think it is  
13 important for us in the United States to be able to  
14 compare among States rather than having our own separate  
15 types of assistance, as well.

16           REVIEWER 1: Ok, reviewer 3-

17           REVIEWER 3: You have described a little bit  
18 about the ways in which, in the planning process, as well  
19 as the Georgia standards today you have worked with  
20 schools and teachers, but I was curious to know if, moving  
21 forward, if you could provide greater clarity on the ways  
22 you plan to work with staff and teachers at the LEA and  
23 school building level in order to implement your plan both

1 regarding the Common Core standards and the assessments to  
2 come.

3 MS. COX: Well, I will start and then I will  
4 also ask Superintendent Wilbanks to talk about that as the  
5 leader at the local level.

6 One of the methods that we have found to be very  
7 useful when we rolled out the big initiatives, was the  
8 Train the Trainer model, so part of the application and  
9 part of the money that we are going to get for all of our  
10 initiatives, whether it's Common Core or some of the work  
11 that we need to do with great teachers and leaders to  
12 train people on the new evaluation system.

13 We plan to have people at the Department who  
14 would then work with key officials in the districts in the  
15 Train the Trainer model, but we also recognize that some  
16 of the work within the 23 districts needs to be more  
17 intensive, and that is again a positive to having only 23,  
18 because I think as we get into the depths of developing  
19 what this evaluation system is really going to look like  
20 and what this value added is going to look like, and get  
21 teacher input into that, we are going to have to really  
22 go, not just from a Train the Trainer type and have  
23 information flow secondhand, we want to have direct

1 conversations with the people that will be impacted by  
2 these new evaluation instruments.

3           So, that is our plan, to be able to use this  
4 money to ramp up our capacity, to the work within the  
5 districts, and I am sure, as the districts put their  
6 budgets together, part of this money will also be building  
7 their capacity to have people in their districts work with  
8 us, so I will let you talk about that.

9           MR. WILBANKS: Sure. We get funded from the  
10 State for staff development, and obviously, we mirror what  
11 those goals and objectives are, such as Race for the Top,  
12 our main goal is obviously increase student achievement,  
13 close the achievement gap, make sure that we are  
14 increasing our graduation rate, as well as ensuring the  
15 students are prepared, ready for college or careers.

16           So we will be doing everything we can to move  
17 that down to the teacher and classroom level, and I think  
18 by having the system as the unit of change here, this  
19 ensures that every school and every classroom gets looked  
20 at, so we will be certainly delivering that professional  
21 development whether it be for teachers or for principals  
22 or staff, or whomever it happens to be as we have a  
23 structure to deliver that development throughout the

1 districts.

2 I think that is pretty well common throughout  
3 the State except maybe some of the smaller districts, and  
4 that might be done by research for the smaller districts.

5 REVIEWER 1: Thank you.

6 REVIEWER 2: What is the mechanism for  
7 communication to go both ways? You talked about the  
8 teacher building the training that you are giving them,  
9 how do they communicate with you their needs and -- yes.

10 MS. MATHERS: There is actually opportunity that  
11 we describe briefly in the application for feedback, that  
12 we are going to be, at least on an annual basis, perhaps  
13 more likely providing surveys for those teachers that are  
14 in participating districts that are part of the evaluation  
15 models to provide feedback to the State, not only on the  
16 evaluation model and how it serves their need and the  
17 timeliness of feedback they are getting, but also on those  
18 sort of ancillary pieces.

19 The Common Core standard resources, and  
20 assessment resources we are making available to them, are  
21 they helping to lighten their instructional load.

22 Using our data system, are they getting timely  
23 feedback from instructional improvement reports that can

1 help inform their instruction going forward rather than  
2 having sort of just the annual snapshot of what  
3 performance looks like and having the end safe, so to  
4 speak, but really talking with them several times  
5 throughout the year, so that we have a chance for the  
6 State to step back and make adaptations to our plan and  
7 put material into their hands more quickly and more  
8 efficiently.

9 MR. PERDUE: I would expect with 23 systems you  
10 have the opportunity for face-to-face meetings on a  
11 regular basis. Obviously, where we can exchange in a  
12 dynamic way, in almost a round-table type of thing of what  
13 systems are learning from one another where the barriers  
14 are, what the problems are, and how we can work together.  
15 That is the other advantage of having almost half the  
16 State students represented with just 23 local leaders.

17 REVIEWER 1: Okay, great. Now, Reviewer 4, I am  
18 going to let you go next. I will give my question after  
19 Reviewer 5 in case they answer within that time, so you  
20 are next.

21 REVIEWER 4: All right. If you would please  
22 clarify how your State plans to use longitudinal data on  
23 individual students and formative assessments to inform

1 instructional practices by teachers and effect change in  
2 the classroom.

3 MS. COX: I will speak to that, and I will  
4 speak, first of all, in terms of all schools, not the ones  
5 that are going to be the lowest performing, are going to  
6 be working intensely, but our plan for all schools.

7 We have already done a crosswalk of our  
8 standards compared to what has been released as Common  
9 Core to see differences in what our plan would be with the  
10 Race to the Top money coming, to be able to take and  
11 develop a bank of assessment items that we can develop a  
12 robust system, so that teachers all across the State have  
13 a place to go to do more standardized benchmark  
14 assessments, but if we are not working directly with that  
15 school, we have got to leave it up to school leadership  
16 and within the school itself to figure out from their  
17 curriculum standpoint how they want to use those  
18 benchmarks, what kinds of questions, and so forth.

19 But we want to at least make this available to  
20 all teachers all across our State no matter what district  
21 they are in. The schools that we are going to work with  
22 specifically, we have had great success in being more  
23 prescriptive with the ones we are currently working with

1 by mandating more formative assessments and mandating  
2 benchmark assessments that we develop in collaboration  
3 with the school leadership and the curriculum leadership  
4 of that school.

5           What we would envision with the Race to the Top,  
6 because we are also trying to work within systems and work  
7 with feeder patterns, so we are not just working in  
8 individual schools. We would work with them to be more  
9 proactive and more prescriptive, and come up with a  
10 system, using the same bank, but have uniform,  
11 standardized benchmark assessments that we can have  
12 comparability, as well.

13           So, it's really a hybrid model of how to use  
14 formative assessments. We would also use the Race to the  
15 Top money to train all teachers in better use of these  
16 formative assessments. You can't just say oh, here it is.  
17 You have to make the assessment to provide the training,  
18 so teachers really know how to use it, how to develop them  
19 if we leave it up to them to do it on their own.

20           So, there has to be a key component of that  
21 also, and again, these are the types of things the  
22 Governor and I have talked about for years wanting to do,  
23 and we just haven't had the resources, and this will be a

1 great opportunity for us to be able to harness that and  
2 really make it happen.

3 MS. MATHERS: With respect to the longitudinal  
4 data system, we are going to get every bit out of that  
5 system that we can possibly get out of. We are firm  
6 believers in measurement, and not just collecting that  
7 data, but organizing it, analyzing it, and using it going  
8 forward to do a better job for kids.

9 I think with respect to that data system, we are  
10 going to be focused very clearly on high school to  
11 college, or to work toward transitions. We have got  
12 plans, as we described in our application for those  
13 instructional improvement reports, but also those  
14 dashboards that are at first going to focus exclusively on  
15 the high school to college transitional piece, and the  
16 effectiveness of the work that we are doing there, made  
17 available to parents, to students, to researchers at the  
18 school level, and then, of course, to researchers more  
19 deeply at the student level.

20 We are going to be using the evaluation measures  
21 for teachers and leaders to help inform the appropriate  
22 professional development choices for those folks, really  
23 look at the effectiveness of instruction through the

1 benchmarks that we are going to be making available to all  
2 teachers, no stakes benchmarks, just look at how that  
3 instruction looks at different points throughout the year,  
4 and most especially look at student growth.

5           We are talking about a statewide value-added  
6 model. We want to look at the degree to which we are  
7 helping students grow, and the degree to which we are  
8 closing and achieving gap across the State.

9           REVIEWER 1: Ok, Thank you.

10           MR. PERDUE: Which after a period of time, it  
11 becomes circular, because the longitudinal data will also  
12 inform our colleges of education over the product that  
13 they are producing in our schools, and we will tie that  
14 back to the colleges of education, as well.

15           REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Alright, Reviewer 3-

16           REVIEWER 3: You mentioned that one of the ways  
17 you will be assessing teacher effectiveness is not only  
18 using qualitative rubric-based evaluation tools, and  
19 value-added scores, but quantitative measures using such  
20 things as methods of surveys.

21           Could you provide greater clarity on what these  
22 quantitative measures are intended to assess and how you  
23 plan to use those results?

1           MS. MATHERS: We know that we face a challenge  
2 similar to all other States when we get into value-added  
3 measures. You are limited with that respect to the  
4 teachers of tested subjects. We don't necessarily want to  
5 grow the number of tests that we are administering in our  
6 schools and extend those two areas like PE art, music, but  
7 we do want to have an objective quantitative measure that  
8 we can include with a qualitative measure for teachers of  
9 non-tested subjects to get a really comprehensive look at  
10 their effectiveness in the classroom.

11           We've spent a bit of time with the research and  
12 looking at the effectiveness of student surveys especially  
13 in Grade 4 through 12, they seem to be particularly  
14 effective. Go below that, and the kids in Grade K through  
15 3, it is not as reliable data.

16           So, we commit to looking at the student surveys  
17 we commit in K through 3 for looking at parent surveys.  
18 We also commit to peer surveys, and those are the three  
19 that we chose to focus on within our application for  
20 teachers of non-tested subjects.

21           We also make a very strong commitment to  
22 continuing our investigation of additional quantitative  
23 measures. I think, quite frankly, this is an issue that a

1 lot of States struggle with when you try to put together a  
2 robust, comprehensive system of evaluation and so we  
3 intend to be very good friends with other States who are  
4 entering into this work with us, look at lessons learned  
5 from the field, and incorporate those lessons into the  
6 work that we do.

7           At the leader and district levels, we are also  
8 talking about climate surveys that would be available to a  
9 wide variety of stakeholders to make sure that those folks  
10 are meeting expectations as part of their evaluation  
11 levels.

12           MS HAMES: And, you know, this really comes down  
13 to defining the best way to determine effectiveness, which  
14 is something that I know so many States are looking at,  
15 and while we believe that student achievement is the most  
16 important piece of that, and student academic growth, we  
17 want to find other measures, and we hear consistently from  
18 teachers, and we have had a lot of conversations with  
19 teachers around the State about doing this in a fair and  
20 equitable way. And so we're trying to find, you know,  
21 really create the best system for really determining  
22 effectiveness, and these are some of the things we are  
23 going to look at.

1           The other thing that I would add to that,  
2 Kathleen mentioned student surveys, and when I talk to  
3 teachers about this, I get a lot of funny looks like what  
4 is that student survey, so you are going to ask the  
5 students, did your teacher get a bonus, and, you know,  
6 it's really getting at questions about does the teacher  
7 explain things in multiple ways when you are having  
8 difficulty understanding, so really getting at whether the  
9 teacher is differentiating instruction, things like that.  
10 Those are the types of things we are looking at.

11           MS. MATHERS: And the last thing I would jump  
12 back in on with, too, is that we are going to be working  
13 very closely with our Technical Advisory Committee, so  
14 that we are approaching this in an appropriate way, we are  
15 modifying instruments appropriately, we are using them  
16 appropriately, and we are looking at the reliability and  
17 validity of the reports we are getting from those  
18 instruments.

19           MR. PERDUE: But it will be one of the most  
20 inclusive aspects of the plan, because there has got to be  
21 credibility and trust from the classroom teachers.

22           REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Reviewer 5-

23           REVIEWER 5: My question has to do with

1 professional development for school principals. Could you  
2 kind of highlight what you plan to do to build the  
3 capacity of school principals in these districts you will  
4 be focusing on?

5 MS. COX: Well, we are going to continue and  
6 expand the opportunities that we have started with, our  
7 summer leadership academies. Right now those summer  
8 leadership, we bring principals and teams in, in the  
9 schools that we have identified through school improvement  
10 that are the most desperate, but with this Race to the  
11 Top, we will be expanding that, and I think it will  
12 actually enhance that opportunity, because some of these  
13 districts that we are working with don't even have schools  
14 on the Needs Improvement list.

15 So, they will have any opportunity to actually  
16 be with a group of differentiated leaders in the room, so  
17 we are excited about that potential.

18 The other thing that we plan to do with  
19 leadership is again more extensive professional  
20 development with the system.

21 Again, right now our State directors that we  
22 assign go into a school, but what we want to do with the  
23 Race to the Top efforts working with leadership is work

1 with the system, and really bring the cadre of leaders  
2 especially from the feeder schools.

3           Again, if you have a problem, an instructional  
4 problem that pops up at a middle school, it probably  
5 didn't start there, so another key component is being able  
6 to use these Race to the Top funds to really again go in  
7 and provide opportunities for that larger group of  
8 principals to work vertical teaming and work with the  
9 State, and there will still be a State director that is  
10 working with the school that is the lowest achieving, but  
11 they will have the opportunity again in that vertical  
12 teaming setting.

13           MS. HAMES: I was just going to say we have also  
14 really looked at best practices that are already going on  
15 in our state, and the development of principals in Atlanta  
16 public schools and particularly in Gwinnett County  
17 schools.

18           Alvin, do you mind telling us just a little bit  
19 about the process that you guys have had in training  
20 leaders?

21           MR. WILBANKS: Sure. We have what we call  
22 leadership academy that we, first of all, look at who we  
23 want to bring into the academy. We do a very elaborate

1 screening job. What we are trying to do is make sure that  
2 we have leaders to lead schools that know how to be the  
3 instructional leader. They also know how to manage all  
4 the other things that have to be managed at a school, but  
5 their number one priority is the instructional leadership,  
6 and that is that the thing that we focus on.

7           They become very astute at knowing how to look  
8 at data. In other words, they just don't try to use the  
9 data they have, but they try to get the data that they  
10 value, and then take that data to really make the changes  
11 whether it's in leadership or whether it's in our  
12 development with teachers, as well.

13           But I think the big key there is to make sure  
14 that you have a process of getting the right people in, do  
15 a good screening job, and we also have in Georgia some  
16 alternative certification routes that people outside of  
17 education can even be considered in a principalship, and  
18 we certainly would look at some of them.

19           REVIEWER 1: Thank you.

20           MR. WILBANKS: But the curriculum is pretty well  
21 built around making sure that that principal really is  
22 looked at as the instructional leader, all the procedures  
23 at that school.

1           REVIEWER 1: Okay. I think we are going to have  
2 to move on.

3           MS. MATHERS: May I add just one quick sentence  
4 to that?

5           REVIEWER 1: Sure, go ahead.

6           MS. MATHERS: I would just remind you that this  
7 is part of the systemwide interconnected approach that we  
8 are taking, as well, that within the evaluation program  
9 for the leader preparation program, and for the district  
10 themselves, we are evaluating them based on their ability  
11 in talent management, what are the teacher and leader  
12 effectiveness scores leading those programs and folks  
13 within those schools, so you are sort of putting  
14 appropriate pressure in different places, as well, for  
15 growing the ability of those leaders and schools across  
16 the State.

17           REVIEWER 1: Okay. Reviewer 2, thank you.

18           REVIEWER 2: Can you share with us more in the  
19 application there is -- it discusses a decline in the  
20 number of charter school applicants between 2008 and 2009,  
21 and there are a number of schools that actually pulled out  
22 of the application process. Again, this is what we  
23 understand from reading your application.

1           Can you talk with us more about perhaps this,  
2 these statistics and also share with us how you fill up  
3 more and hold charter schools accountable, and again  
4 explain the factors that contributed to that reality?

5           MS. COX: Yes, I will take that one. I think  
6 some of the decline for charter applications came twofold.  
7 One, we had a pretty nice incentive for systems to  
8 consider going to charter systems where every school in  
9 their system would become a charter. There was a  
10 financial incentive to do that to help pay for the  
11 training that would be necessary at the school level to  
12 have a conversion charter.

13           With budget constraints, those financial  
14 incentives have gone away, so I think some of the  
15 districts decided maybe not to pursue that route. So,  
16 that is one reason, but the other reason is also because  
17 we have another way of getting flexibility. It is not  
18 just through chartering.

19           We also have these IE-squared contracts in our  
20 State where a system can come and negotiate with the State  
21 flexibility over rules and regulations, and relief from  
22 some of those rules and regulations in exchange for higher  
23 accountability.

1           So, we also saw some of those districts that we  
2 are considering chartering and have indicated maybe they  
3 will go that route, pursue, and look at IE-squared.

4           I think another factor is the landscape of  
5 chartering changed significantly, and we had a new route  
6 through the Charter Commission, which became an alternate  
7 authorizer in our State. I think they are mentioned  
8 briefly in the application, and I think again that kind of  
9 put a little nuance in what was happening with the charter  
10 applications as people realized they also had another  
11 route, they didn't have to go through their local system  
12 and come through the State Board of Education.

13           I can say personally from just the sheer number  
14 of applications we have processed this year, it didn't  
15 seem like much of a decline from our work at the State  
16 Department. We had numerous applications still pursuing,  
17 and, in fact, as we opened up another route, another  
18 authorizer, what we found coming to the State Board were  
19 more charters that were being supported by their local  
20 school system and more conversion type charters which have  
21 thus far been our most highly successful charter schools.

22           REVIEWER 1: Thank you.

23           MR. PERDUE: I think, in addition, when people

1 become aware that a charter was not an escape route from  
2 rules, but an expectation with accountability, that also  
3 softened some of the desire just to escape rules. They  
4 realize that we were serious, that we wanted quality  
5 charters with outcomes determined.

6 REVIEWER 2: And I just have one quick follow up  
7 which is just a little more on that accountability piece,  
8 so how do you hold them accountable at either level?

9 MS. COX: Well, they are subject, of course, to  
10 the same rules and regulations at our single statewide  
11 accountability. We publish an annual report on every  
12 charter school, as well as publish a compiled report on  
13 charter school in the State of Georgia, that then is made  
14 available publicly, as well as sent to every member of the  
15 State legislature.

16 Our contract terms, when they get ready for  
17 renewal, we have an extensive overview of the progress  
18 that is being made, and we retain the right as the State  
19 Board of Education, at anytime in the length of that  
20 charter term, to go in and shut a school down if  
21 performance is lacking.

22 So, there is a keen eye from the State Board,  
23 and the State Board actually, as one of their three

1 operating committees, is a charter committee. So, we have  
2 State Board members who are specifically targeting and  
3 looking at the performance of our charter schools.

4 MS. HAMES: In addition to that, I would just  
5 add, for the Charter School Commission, which is a  
6 separate authorizer in our State, they have just really  
7 been around for about a year, and they have had a very  
8 high bar in approving charter schools at our state, and  
9 are looking specifically at student achievement.

10 One example, there was an existing charter  
11 school, local charter, that they really weren't certain  
12 that they were getting the student achievement results  
13 that they should be, and so they only gave them a two-year  
14 charter to make certain that they proved those results  
15 before extending the charter any farther than that.

16 So, not only are those high standards held at  
17 the State Board of Education, but they are also held at  
18 the new Charter School Commission within our State.

19 REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Reviewer 4, you had  
20 another question?

21 REVIEWER 4: Yes, I do. This goes into educator  
22 preparation, and I just wanted a little bit of  
23 clarification. I know that you all have alternative

1 certification programs there, and I just wanted to know  
2 how those programs are held accountable and what  
3 consequences do you have for ineffective programs, in  
4 other words, how do you observe them, what happens if they  
5 are not doing their job.

6 MS. MATHERS: I would say the answer, quite  
7 frankly, right now is that we are not doing enough, and  
8 that is why we included quite a bit in our application,  
9 and all the language that is within our application  
10 talking about preparation programs, we are talking about  
11 both traditional and alternative programs.

12 So the same rigorous expectations that we are  
13 putting in place for our teacher preparation programs  
14 through traditional routes like institutions of higher  
15 education where we are looking at their content knowledge  
16 of their graduates, their succession rate from an  
17 induction specific into a clear renewable, those sorts of  
18 standards will apply to the alternative programs as well  
19 as to the traditional programs. Same standards and  
20 expectations for all.

21 MS. HAMES: We have a very robust system of  
22 alternative preparation routes in the State, and that was  
23 really a necessary first step. Prior to that, there were

1 many needless hoops that people wanting to enter the  
2 teaching profession had to jump through, and we have  
3 removed those, and now are ready to go to that next step,  
4 as Kathleen said, and hold all of our preparation programs  
5 accountable.

6 MS. COX: In the Professional Standards  
7 Commission, again, not an arm of the Department, a  
8 separate entity with their own standing committee and  
9 rules appointed by the Governor, they are the ones that  
10 look at these alternative programs, and they give them  
11 permission to certify teachers for a period of years, and  
12 so they are the group that holds responsible those  
13 preparation programs.

14 And to their credit, we know we have a lot of  
15 work to do in terms of accountability for all these  
16 programs, but to the credit of the university system, a  
17 few years ago, some of those educator prep programs in the  
18 university began offering money back guarantees.

19 They told systems if you hire one of our  
20 teachers and you are not satisfied, you know, we will  
21 basically give you your money back for what you paid that  
22 teacher. That is not all across the university system,  
23 but we did have some that took that bold step.

1           MR. PERDUE: That is why the longitudinal data-  
2 driven system is so important. The value-added model will  
3 be across all types of schools and all types of educators,  
4 and they will be appraised on the common standards.

5           REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Reviewer 3, do you want  
6 to [ask your question] --

7           REVIEWER 3: Yes. We would like greater clarity  
8 on some of the strategies you plan to use for turning  
9 around your lowest achieving schools.

10           Specifically, your proposal mentions using -I'll  
11 use your phrases from the proposal, a process of intensive  
12 and rigorous diagnostics, as well as tool kits on key  
13 strategic program issues.

14           If you could say a little bit more about what  
15 those two would entail?

16           MS. HAMES: Kathleen, why don't you kick that  
17 one off.

18           MS. MATHERS: Sure. I think Kathy and I will  
19 probably tag team this one a little bit. The turnaround  
20 strategies that we are talking about, you had mentioned  
21 specifically, the diagnostic work, and currently, within  
22 our school improvement division, we have what is called a  
23 gaps analysis.

1           It is out of Superintendent Cox's School  
2 Improvement Division. It is an alternative to the SACS  
3 model, and it is a rigorous evaluation based on eight  
4 standards within our schools.

5           We think that that work, that instrument has  
6 been very effective for us to date, but again we point to  
7 those 33 schools that have still not come off the needs  
8 improvement list, and we know we need to go deeper and  
9 look more comprehensively at those schools.

10           So, OSA, from a research capacity, and an  
11 external expert to be named, will be working with those  
12 experts in the gaps analysis process to see what we can  
13 add to that analysis that is going to really help us  
14 target perhaps what is wrong with those schools, what is  
15 not going the way we want them to go, and develop action  
16 plans to start to turn those things around. If you'd like  
17 to add on.

18           MS. COX: You are right, and again we have had  
19 success with these GAPS analysis. It's another acronym,  
20 Georgia Assessment of Performance. But again what is also  
21 different about Race to the Top and the strategies we want  
22 to use to enhance these current analyses, is adding some  
23 expertise from National, but also adding expertise, peer

1 expertise.

2           Right now currently, there are peers who go and  
3 are part of this, but we want to really ramp that up, and  
4 bring it to a system level analysis. Again, when you are  
5 dealing with those low performing schools, you go in and  
6 you do a real school focus, but what we want to do is the  
7 expansion, is look district, and add the component of  
8 looking at allocation of resources.

9           That is, you know, you are stepping in some  
10 territory there of local control and things like that  
11 where, you know, local systems decide their Title I  
12 budget, they decide their teacher quality budget, and we  
13 plan to use this as an opportunity to go in and push the  
14 envelope, and do it from a systematic standpoint, because  
15 again, you can tell a school until you are blue in the  
16 fact, you know, you really need to invest in hiring a math  
17 coach, but if they can't get the system to agree to that  
18 math coach, it is not doing you any good to talk about it.

19           So another key component of ramping this up is  
20 going to be having those tough conversations about  
21 budgets, resources, and what is the system doing to help  
22 that school.

23           MS. MATHERS: And that is part of what they

1 agreed to --

2 MS. COX: In the MOU.

3 MR. WILBANKS: Or not just that school, but the  
4 feeder schools. You know, high school didn't get a low  
5 performing school after they got to high school, the  
6 students that came there were not prepared. So, the  
7 system would then look at that feeder pattern, as well,  
8 not just that one school.

9 So, your unit of change under Race for the Top  
10 is simply the system, that is the unit of change.

11 REVIEWER 1: Thank you all, thank you. I  
12 believe, Reviewer 4, you had another question.

13 REVIEWER 4: Yes I do. You all have said that  
14 you are moving to a single statewide accountability  
15 system, and what interim measures do you have right now  
16 that you are going to use until that is fully implemented?

17 MS. COX: No, we have it, we have a single  
18 statewide accountability, the diploma? --

19 MS. MATHERS: If I can clarify, I think what you  
20 are talking about is, in my remarks, I mentioned that we  
21 were using a common evaluation system for all teachers.

22 MS. COX: Oh, okay.

23 MS. MATHERS: We have got too many acronyms

1 going on, so if something is different, I think that is  
2 really more the direction that we are talking about, so if  
3 you want to talk about the existing evaluation model and  
4 how it is used across the State.

5 MS. COX: The evaluation?

6 REVIEWER 4: Yes.

7 MS. COX: Okay, for teachers.

8 REVIEWER 4: Right.

9 MS. COX: All right. Great. Right now it's  
10 required by law obviously for local systems to evaluate,  
11 and there is a statewide instrument, but it is not  
12 mandatory, so it is used in some places, and not used in  
13 others, and many systems have taken their own initiative  
14 to ramp up what is the State's instrument.

15 Quite frankly, several years ago, about four  
16 years ago, the work began on changing what that State  
17 instrument looked like, because it was just not  
18 sufficient, so in the Department, again, utilizing a lot  
19 of our Federal Title 2D money, teacher quality money, we  
20 began a process of taking all of the national work, as  
21 well as the work of our own university system, a lot of it  
22 is based on Marazono [ph] and Darlene-Hammond, as well as  
23 Tomlinson and Danielson, and a lot of the seminal work

1 that has been out there about what works in schools.  
2 Marazono has been a key component of all of the work we  
3 have done with standards.

4           Because we had rolled out performance standards  
5 for students, we needed to create a rubrics-based  
6 performance standards for teachers. In other words, we  
7 needed to clarify for teachers what do we expect you to  
8 know and be able to do as a teacher.

9           We are saying it for students, now, we are going  
10 to -- and we call it class keys -- and we have been  
11 implementing class keys on a pilot basis up until now  
12 across the State, and validating the results of those  
13 evaluation systems.

14           That has been going on for two years. So, we  
15 are really poised and ready to go to this next step with  
16 Race to the Top, which will take the work that we have  
17 done with class keys in terms of having a rubrics-based,  
18 multi-tiered, look at what a teacher does, but ramping up  
19 the portion that focuses on what have the students  
20 learned.

21           So, that is our plan and that is how where a lot  
22 of this resource allocation is going to come in is taking  
23 the work we have done and pulling it and highlighting the

1 portion where we are linking it to do performance.

2           That is going to be a lot of the work over the  
3 next two years, and then what we will have is the  
4 requirement, at least in the MOU of these 23 districts,  
5 that that instrument must be used in those 23, and then we  
6 will go the next step of saying that this will be the  
7 expectation, the instrument statewide.

8           MS. MATHERS: Class keys is a big jump up. Most  
9 of our districts are using something called the GTEP.  
10 They have been using it for years and years, and it is  
11 just not a rigorous instrument. I had it when I was a  
12 classroom teacher.

13           It's a binary rating system. It's satisfactory  
14 or unsatisfactory, and that is what gets us to those sort  
15 of statewide statistics of, oh, 99 percent of your  
16 teachers are effective, because we don't have the depth  
17 within the instrument that we need to really differentiate  
18 effectiveness among our teaching work force.

19           MS. HAMES: That kind of instrument is also not  
20 very helpful to a teacher, as so many of us have been  
21 classroom teachers. I mean you are basically always rated  
22 as effective, and not given really concrete feedback on  
23 what you can do to improve. So, we are asking a lot of

1 teachers in this plan, and we also want to provide the  
2 support that they need, and one of those things is setting  
3 very clear expectations for them and giving them  
4 appropriate feedback in a tailoring professional  
5 development based on the weaknesses that they may have.

6 MR. WILBANKS: I would just say it sort of makes  
7 a sea change from a focus on teaching to focus on  
8 learning. Are the students learning, that is what is  
9 important. Right now we do most of our evaluation by  
10 observation. You are lucky if you do two or three, which  
11 is sometimes just one.

12 That certainly is important and still needs to  
13 be a part of it, but that is what does the teacher do, if  
14 you really want to evaluate what is going on in the  
15 classroom, what does the student do, and are they  
16 learning, and I think that is the big move here, move from  
17 folks on teaching, folks on learning.

18 REVIEWER 1: Great. Reviewer 5, I wanted to ask  
19 you if you had any follow-up questions or anything for  
20 them.

21 REVIEWER 5: Yeah, I do. Well, I don't know if  
22 this is a follow-up question.

23 REVIEWER 1: Just a different, additional

1 question?

2                   REVIEWER 5: It's kind of what I call almost a  
3 capstone question. I would just be curious if you could  
4 tell us what you think the student experience in a  
5 classroom, say, in a high school, would be like four years  
6 from now if you had this grant given to you.

7                   How would it be different than what is currently  
8 happening, the student experience in the classroom, in  
9 high school, for example?

10                  MS. HAMES: I will take a stab here, and you can  
11 jump in. I mean I think one of the things that would be  
12 dramatically different for a student if we win Race to the  
13 Top is just that teachers are going to have so many more  
14 resources to really be better teachers.

15                  Primarily, and we have all talked about the  
16 importance of the data system, and that data system is not  
17 only important at the State level, but it is important to  
18 classroom teachers, that they have that real-time data,  
19 they have benchmark assessments, they have formative  
20 assessments, so they are not just getting to the end of  
21 the semester and realizing that this student is really  
22 struggling and really doesn't understand the concepts that  
23 he or she needs to understand.

1           So, I think a student is going to have far  
2 better instruction from their teachers because we are  
3 going to provide the necessary resources for teachers to  
4 really help them improve their instruction throughout the  
5 period, you know, rather than only realizing that at the  
6 end for so many.

7           MR. WILBANKS: I would say that the student  
8 would see greater alignment between the curriculum, the  
9 Common Core standards, instructions, and their  
10 assessments, but more importantly, you would see more  
11 engagement in the classroom, and I think teachers are  
12 going to realize that they really need to engage the  
13 student more in the work of the class, and they will have  
14 strategies and methods to do that.

15           MR. PERDUE: I think, again, preparing these  
16 students for life-long learning with the alignment that we  
17 have in our higher educational system, allowing them to be  
18 confident of their ability to move into either the  
19 workplace, into technical careers, technical college, our  
20 university system, to whatever level they choose to  
21 achieve, and give them that confidence that their  
22 educational system from K-12 through their high school  
23 career has prepared them to jump into the real world of

1 life-long learning.

2 MS. COX: Can I add something to that, too? I  
3 hope in four years, that the students, first of all, are  
4 in a much more crowded high school, because a few of them  
5 have dropped out. That is still our number one goal, our  
6 number one priority is to keep kids, not just keep them,  
7 but truly have kids earning a meaningful diploma and get  
8 more of them to earning that diploma.

9 So, the first thing is not their classes to be  
10 crowded, but their school to be more crowded, because  
11 there is more students in their school. So, I hope that  
12 looks different for them.

13 I also hope students have a clearer  
14 understanding of what they want to pursue. I think we  
15 have a single diploma, but that doesn't mean a single  
16 option. We have designed this diploma in a way, and  
17 engineered it in a way that it is very flexible.

18 Now, we have high expectations that you will  
19 take four science classes, but that fourth science might  
20 be your horticulture class being taught in the Ag  
21 Department. It doesn't have to be AP biology.

22 I also hope that with our move to the Common  
23 Core and the high expectations for all students, and we

1 are getting more and more feedback about where their  
2 strengths and weaknesses are, we will have students who  
3 have a better understanding of their strengths and  
4 weaknesses, and a more focused plan of study.

5 I have a high schooler right now, and I know we  
6 have got data systems that I can log in and check my  
7 child's grades, but I also hope in four years that as a  
8 parent, when I log on and check a grade, and check that  
9 computer, that I have actually had input from the teacher  
10 about a grade that comes more than every four weeks.

11 Nothing is more frustrating as a parent, to know  
12 that your child is working, working, working, but because  
13 of the workload we have put on teachers, that part of  
14 making the assessment, grading the assessment, recording  
15 the assessment, there is such a lag time.

16 So, I am hoping with Race to the Top, and  
17 developing some of these tool kits, and developing things  
18 that make the teacher's workload more efficient, we can  
19 get feedback, a lot more feedback on the work that our  
20 students are doing in high school.

21 REVIEWER 1: Thank you. Now, Reviewer 2, you  
22 had a question that got skipped over, I wanted to give you  
23 an opportunity to ask another one.

1                   REVIEWER 2: No, I think it has been responded  
2 to.

3                   REVIEWER 1: You are good?

4                   REVIEWER 2: Thank you, yeah.

5                   REVIEWER 1: Anybody else?

6                   REVIEWER 5: I have one other thing. I know  
7 that you have this commitment from 23 of your school  
8 systems to work on the Race to the Top grant. I also know  
9 that you are doing things that you say that will affect  
10 them and also the rest of the State.

11                   So, my question is how will those 23 districts  
12 impact the rest of the State, what is the likelihood of  
13 having statewide impact if you only have 23, how do you  
14 take that to scale? That would be the question.

15                   MR. PERDUE: Really, you only have to scale  
16 another half, because these 23 districts represent half of  
17 the students. But again the leadership, that is why we  
18 want passionate leaders, such as Alvin and some of his  
19 colleagues that represent a huge cross-section of  
20 microcosm not only of Georgia, but of the Nation with  
21 rural, suburban, and urban systems with that university.

22                   Over half of our African-American, over almost  
23 half of our Hispanic students performing in a way we

1 believe the results will sell themselves. As Alvin says,  
2 many of his colleagues are not opposed to this, but they  
3 just didn't want to be first, because I found that  
4 educators sometimes don't embrace change that readily, but  
5 I think when people are passionate to this effort, and you  
6 have almost half the State demonstrating through a broad  
7 cross-section, the results will sell themselves.

8 I am confident of that. These are the  
9 principles that we have strived for, for the last 8 and 10  
10 years now, and that's why I was so excited when Secretary  
11 Duncan outlined them. I said, wow, that's right up our  
12 sweet spot, and let's go for it.

13 So, I think the very fact that this concentrated  
14 effort, a manageable group of 23 leaders will then be the  
15 real sales team to go across the State.

16 MS. MATHERS: And I would add to that, that the  
17 instructional resources and assessment resources we are  
18 developing are going to go statewide. All of the  
19 longitudinal data system capability is going to go  
20 statewide. There is quite a bit of policy work to be done  
21 and policy work means full State, not just parts of the  
22 State.

23 When you talk about a new requirement that new

1 teachers start with an induction certificate and  
2 demonstrate effectiveness before earning a clear renewable  
3 certificate, that's across the State.

4           When you decide to evaluate the effectiveness of  
5 teacher and leader preparation programs, you can tie that  
6 back to student achievement, do the growth to succession  
7 rate from induction to clear renewable, that is a policy  
8 decision that you goes across the State.

9           So, while on the surface you might say there are  
10 23 districts, as Governor Perdue pointed out, that is  
11 nearly half of our State population. There is a  
12 considerable amount of heavy lifting that is going to be  
13 done, put into policy and rule and applied evenly across  
14 the State, so when we do go to scale across the State, we  
15 don't have as much to do as you might think, and within  
16 those 23 districts, my office is going to be studying that  
17 work very, very closely.

18           Any way we can measure it, we are going to  
19 measure it, and so that we then have the ability to say to  
20 other districts we now have a collection of data, and we  
21 can show you how if you make these changes, these  
22 turnaround strategies become real in your school, what  
23 change that is going to mean for the students in your

1 school.

2 MR. PERDUE: That is what I meant to say.

3 MS. COX: Can I add just one clarifying point?

4 In my role as State Superintendent with the State Board of  
5 Education, they have shown the courage in the past to make  
6 these hard decisions, and I have seen that you can impact  
7 a lot of change with a courageous Board of Education, a  
8 courageous board that voted to implement these rigorous  
9 math standards, and we went statewide, a courageous Board  
10 of Education I believe is also going to take what we are  
11 learning in all of these 23 districts and say it's time.

12 We have got the model right, we know it's going  
13 to work, it's time to implement the policy that requires  
14 this statewide. I think we have a history in the last  
15 five or six years as a State that has been willing to make  
16 those tough calls, including the diploma, which was also a  
17 very courageous vote by the Board of Regents, State Board,  
18 and Technical College to say it's time we did this  
19 statewide.

20 So, I think our history speaks to how we are  
21 going to do it, too.

22 REVIEWER 1: Thank you now. Now, Reviewer 2, I  
23 just want to add one thing to what you are going to ask,

1 is just if you could define student growth, and we will  
2 let her ask her question, and then after you answer that  
3 question, use the remaining time to wrap up.

4 REVIEWER 2: So do you want me to ask or you?

5 REVIEWER 1: I want them to respond to how they  
6 measure student growth, and then the question that you are  
7 going to ask, and then they can use the remaining time to  
8 wrap up.

9 MS. MATHERS: How we plan to measure student  
10 growth? -through race to the top?

11 REVIEWER 1: Yes.

12 MS. MATHERS: We are going to be working with a  
13 value-added model vendor. We have had very encouraging  
14 conversations with two vendors. For State procurement  
15 reasons, we didn't want to name any vendor in an  
16 application or make that decision ahead of the time that  
17 we had earned the money.

18 But working with that value-added vendor to look  
19 at multiple data points and student history, to estimate  
20 the growth that they would have and be able to determine  
21 the effectiveness of a single teacher on a single student.

22 The vendors that we worked with both have  
23 significant experience in the field. We are leaning

1 towards one more than another. It would not have to be a  
2 bid, so I don't think there is any problem there.

3 But the one that we talked with more extensively  
4 is a vendor that has done this work in very large  
5 districts has already encountered the difficult types of  
6 implementation questions that we would be likely to  
7 encounter, like in an elementary school, if I am a fourth  
8 grade teacher, and I am teaching mathematics, and I have  
9 Erin in my classroom, and three-fourths of the way through  
10 the classroom, Erin is pulled out to go in another  
11 teacher's classroom for remediation or gifted instruction,  
12 how do you account for those types of things, what systems  
13 do you put in place, so that you can say I had that  
14 student 75 percent of the time, she had the student for 25  
15 percent of the time, how do you account for growth in  
16 those circumstances?

17 It is then limited to teachers of tested  
18 subjects in that student growth aspect, and that is why we  
19 have made the commitment to look at additional  
20 quantitative measures that we can add to the rubric that  
21 Kathy described a little earlier.

22 REVIEWER 1: All right. Thank you.

23 MS. HAMES: We are also working with the Gates

1 Foundation to really look at linking teachers to students,  
2 and what is the best way to do that when we are one of  
3 five States, that is really going to help us along with  
4 working the value-added vendor, as Kathleen said, is  
5 really going to help us get this right.

6 REVIEWER 1: Ok, now Reviewer 2 is going to ask  
7 her question and you can use the rest of the time to wrap  
8 up.

9 REVIEWER 2: I have two parts of it, but the one  
10 that we didn't talk much about the achievement gap, that  
11 was actually something you were going to ask, so I would  
12 to ask a question about that.

13 REVIEWER 1: Go ahead.

14 REVIEWER 2: You talked that there is some  
15 narrowing of the achievement gap, you have spoken to it  
16 today, but it is clearly not where you would want it to  
17 be, and I wonder, I know there is limited time, but if  
18 there is anything else you can add about what it is you  
19 really plan to do given a very mixed record, and one other  
20 thing is if you want to weave it in, you are going from  
21 the lever rate to the cohort rate on graduation, and what  
22 do you anticipate the impact of that, both around the data  
23 collection, and what that means for your students.

1 MS. HAMES: I will take a stab at the first one.  
2 One of the things we are really going to try to do in  
3 decreasing the achievement gap is getting the best  
4 teachers we can get in every classroom in Georgia.

5 Within our great teachers and leaders plan, we  
6 have a plan for teachers that are willing to go to high-  
7 need schools. They can get a tax-exempt bonus if they go  
8 there, and that is contingent on a certain teacher  
9 effectiveness measure on keeping that.

10 In addition to that, they have a greater earning  
11 potential over the left of their career if they go to a  
12 high-needs school and are successful in closing the gap  
13 once they get here.

14 REVIEWER 1: Okay. I want to move that, because  
15 I want give the Governor a chance to wrap up. I can see  
16 you are anxious. You have a couple words to say in a few  
17 seconds.

18 MR. PERDUE: Well, I hope you can sense the  
19 energy that we have, and really, we view this alignment.  
20 When I heard this Race to the Top described by Secretary  
21 Duncan, it excited me because as Kathy and I have talked  
22 about, this is the vision that we had with limited  
23 resources, so we are excited about it. It's a fulfillment

1 opportunity for us, and all we would ask that you do, like  
2 we do, and just keep Georgia on your mind.

3 REVIEWER 1: Thank you.

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