

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP

GRANT REVIEW

Phase 1 tier 2 State Presentation

The State of Illinois

1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

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

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

1  
2 **(Already in progress)**

3 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Good afternoon, it is a  
4 pleasure to be here. My name is Chris Koch, and I am the  
5 State Superintendent of Education in Illinois. I am going  
6 to introduce my team here in a moment. I'll just give you  
7 a couple of highlights. First of all, thank you for the  
8 opportunity to be here. This is a tremendous opportunity  
9 for Illinois. We are a very diverse state as you know,  
10 and one of our strengths and one of our barriers that we  
11 have work with all the time is the number of districts  
12 that we have, we have a large number of districts in the  
13 state, we feel our application is unique and we've worked  
14 very hard on collaboration as part of our approach overall  
15 and we have a lot of stakeholders as a result of so many  
16 districts. We had over 74% of our students represented  
17 with our partnerships at the local level that signed on,  
18 but over 80% of our students in poverty. We are a strong  
19 union state where the union management collaboration is a  
20 very key piece to our application and our work that we're  
21 going to talk about, and we feel we have a plan that we  
22 can actually implement.

23 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: To start I just want to

1 talk to you a little bit about the reform agenda in  
2 Illinois and how we're viewing reform, where we're at with  
3 it and give you a general overview of that. First of all  
4 the critical focus in our underlying premise here is we  
5 want to get to student instruction and improved  
6 achievement as soon as possible. We know that all the  
7 reforms areas and all the reforms that we're doing, we  
8 know reform is complex it's going to take all that work  
9 and all these reforms to move the needle for student  
10 achievement and we fully understand that. We are going to  
11 empower teachers, provide tools to teachers and principals  
12 as a goal to make sure they can do their job well, and  
13 create systems that define expectations really clearly.  
14 We are targeting the weakest areas of our systems to get  
15 the maximum impact so you're going to hear a little bit  
16 about priority schools, our lowest 5% performing schools  
17 in the state and how we're approaching those. We also  
18 think transition points are critical for students, we are  
19 looking all the way back to birth and we want to start  
20 with college and career expectations and work backwards  
21 and make sure that those transition points are carefully  
22 thought through in our plan of reform, we think that's  
23 critical. We also believe that in order for reforms to be

1 sustainable that we have to work with our partners very  
2 carefully, we've spent a lot of time sitting down with  
3 folks at the table, having very difficult conversations  
4 around moving the needle and making everybody, all of our  
5 stakeholders equally uncomfortable, I think, in order to  
6 do that. I think we have to do that in order to move  
7 reform forward.

8 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Just to talk a little bit  
9 about the momentum we have in Illinois because we are at a  
10 unique spot in Illinois history, we passed four critical  
11 pieces of legislation that we are proud of and one of them  
12 raised the charter cap and is looking at an alternative  
13 charter authorizer an independent authorizer. We have  
14 another one that is dealing with longitudinal data system  
15 and it's enabling us to, among other things, an important  
16 aspect is to link teacher and student data and principal  
17 and student data. WE also have passed legislation to  
18 allow an independent alternate teacher and principal  
19 preparation program and finally we have overhauled the  
20 teacher and principal evaluation requiring student growth  
21 and a standard framework for rating categories with  
22 extensive state supports, we feel that's very important.  
23 We also have an operation P-20 council that Miguel leads,

1 all the education agencies following that as well as other  
2 partners, business leaders, they are varied committees  
3 that encompass the work that we're talking about, they  
4 have an assessment committee, they have a teacher quality  
5 committee, so they are very interested in the same types  
6 of reforms and supporting those same reforms and that  
7 helps us also with the sustainability that's going to be  
8 in place, it's also statutory and all of these statutes we  
9 think help for a sustained effort. In terms of my agency  
10 and the work that we're doing at the state board of  
11 education, we are proud of revamping principal preparation  
12 requirements. We are proud of that because we can reach a  
13 lot of schools by getting to principals, we have about 400  
14 principals a year that turnover in Illinois, we already  
15 have extensive experience in Chicago in replacing 100  
16 principals, we have data showing increased student  
17 achievement in Chicago under that leadership. We know we  
18 can do that statewide with federal support, this is very  
19 scalable and it makes sense to us. We have significantly  
20 raised teacher entry requirements, we realize that as  
21 we're talking about internationally common benchmark  
22 standards for students that require our teachers to know  
23 and be able to do similar kinds of delivery for

1 instructions so we're taking that on in a very forthright  
2 way. We have raised the cut score for all of our basic  
3 skills test in Illinois, we've limited the amount of times  
4 teachers can take the basic skills test, that's actions  
5 we've already taken, we're going to be working on their  
6 standards next as we bring in internationally common  
7 benchmark standards so we're proud of that. This summer  
8 and early fall we issued a request for proposal in the  
9 state and we identified strong lead partners for  
10 turnaround. We had our school districts having so many of  
11 them receive all kinds of messages from vendors all the  
12 time wanting to offer their services and help. We felt as  
13 a state we needed to step in and screen those folks for  
14 their strengths and weaknesses and frankly one of the  
15 criteria we set up very strongly was what's your  
16 experience in being able to raise achievement and  
17 turnaround low performing schools and that narrows down  
18 the pool that we have to work with, but we've already done  
19 that work, we've identified that and we are now ready to  
20 go with that. An important thing we did in working with  
21 the community college board and the board of higher  
22 education, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission,  
23 we set up an interagency agreement for data sharing.

1 We're setting in place now the ability to collect, through  
2 the high school transcript, data about students. We now  
3 have an agreement from all the education agencies in the  
4 state to be able to and insure that alignment are in place  
5 so the cooperation is somewhat impressing and we're happy  
6 to see.

7 MR. KOCH: Moving on to talk a little about our  
8 reform goals I want to talk to you briefly about the  
9 notion of a super LEA, these are LEAs with a cape, they  
10 are stepping forward and saying we want to be bolder and  
11 faster with reforms in Illinois, we are agreeing to have  
12 union and management sign on to take on significant  
13 reforms, we have those listed there, keep in mind that  
14 these districts are ready to move quickly. We anticipate  
15 learning from these districts experiences because they are  
16 going to be the first ones out of the gate followed by the  
17 rest of the state. We understand the turnaround effort  
18 for us is a very important human capital issue, these  
19 districts have agreed to take on the human capital issues  
20 sooner, and they're all of course going to be working also  
21 with the partnership zone. They represent more than  
22 128,000 students in the state but Chicago has made similar  
23 commitments as well while they didn't sign on as a super

1 LEA they have more than 25% of the students combined with  
2 Chicago and the 128,000 that are going to be pursuing  
3 these aggressive reforms. More than anything else these  
4 schools are going to be proof points for us that we intend  
5 to learn from.

6 MR. KOCH: I want to speak briefly also to state  
7 capacity to drive these reform efforts. We of course have  
8 mentioned have very deliberately worked with our education  
9 stakeholders and by that I mean our schools managers, our  
10 business partners, our community members, and our unions;  
11 we have the P-20 council, which I have mentioned. We  
12 really at the state board look at this as our reform  
13 agenda, our board met in August looking at the First Race  
14 to the Top template because it aligned to our state reform  
15 goals. This is becoming our work, all of our managers in  
16 the agency and many of our employees sit down and are part  
17 of these discussions of laying out this reform, it has to  
18 become their work it can't be an add-on additional program  
19 that's not how we view it and we know it won't work if we  
20 view it that way. This similar approach we take with our  
21 stakeholders they all need to understand this is part of  
22 their work and moving the agenda forward in Illinois  
23 that's something that we believe in and we know works, we

1 know that works from taking the time this will become  
2 systemic if we get everyone on board and it becomes  
3 transparent and accountable work. We also, I should point  
4 out, have sought, even last year in our state budget there  
5 were only two new program lines in the entire state budget  
6 and they were in education and they were around two issues  
7 that we feel strongly about, one was the standards work  
8 and the other was longitudinal data work, that's something  
9 that we sought out, we got and we were able to convince  
10 the whole general assembly it was important enough to put  
11 in and become a systemic part of our work and we've been  
12 able to convince others of that. I want to point out the  
13 strong foundation support that we've had we have raised  
14 over 500,000 dollars for the reforms attached to this work  
15 including the work in preparing these reforms but also  
16 folks stepping up. I report on a regular basis to a panel  
17 of foundations in Chicago and across the state who have  
18 stepped up and said we want to know what your work is  
19 doing, we want to be able to follow it so tell us where  
20 you need help, tell us how to move this needle further,  
21 they believe it and they're at the table and they're  
22 demonstrating it with money and I think that's incredibly  
23 important if we're going to drive this long-term.

1           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Now I want to just tell  
2 you the four areas I'm going to have the staff sort of  
3 cover in impacting reform. Susie, Darren, and Audrey are  
4 going to discuss some of these critical pieces, we're just  
5 going to touch on four sections, standards and assessment  
6 section, we're going to discuss the assessments for  
7 learning and systemic changes, in a little bit I'll give  
8 you a little more detail on those. We're going to talk on  
9 the data section system; we're going to discuss learning  
10 and performance management system. This is a critical  
11 infrastructure issue we intend to do Race for the Top  
12 whether we get funding or not. Things like the learning  
13 and performance management system won't happen without  
14 additional federal funding, we know that and I'm going to  
15 be very candid with you it can't happen without support  
16 but it's critical to increasing a culture of data use in  
17 our local schools and in our state agency. We want to get  
18 better at that this is a critical piece. Teachers and  
19 leaders section, we want to discuss the performance  
20 evaluations this is really a critical human capital issue  
21 that we've taken head on and then finally the turnaround  
22 section we want to go a little deeper into the Illinois  
23 partnership zone so that you have an understanding of

1 that. So with that I'll pass this to Susie.

2 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: Good afternoon, first of  
3 all around standards and assessment I just want to make a  
4 clarification some of our critical friends read our  
5 proposal they noted to us, "hey on page 42 you are leading  
6 readers to believe that you are not going to adopt 100% of  
7 the common core or even 85", let me say very clearly our  
8 intention is to adopt 100% of the common core standards as  
9 part of our state standards in fact it was just about a  
10 year ago now at a meeting in Washington in March and Chris  
11 and I were there and we sat across the table from another  
12 chief and began the conversation around, "is this  
13 something we really want to do 50 times over or is there  
14 an opportunity to work together," which led to a meeting  
15 in April in Chicago and the rest, as you well know, is  
16 history. We know that we have the responsibility to make  
17 sure that every teacher and every principal has the tools  
18 and the supports in place so that instructions and  
19 interventions for individual students can continually be  
20 modified. Our classroom teachers need real time  
21 information and real time data to inform their decisions.  
22 Illinois each year spends 44 or 45 million dollars just to  
23 pay for our summative assessment for purposes of

1 accountability it was designed to do that, it's what it's  
2 used for and as Chris said we desperately need federal  
3 dollars to be able to put these kind of tools into  
4 teachers hands so they can make good informed decisions  
5 for their students. We've learned from Illinois Districts  
6 like Bloomington Normal who have a strong partnership with  
7 State Farm as a private sector partner what it looks like  
8 to build a learning and performance management system they  
9 have worked on this for several years, State Farm has  
10 invested significant dollars in this learning performance  
11 management system, teachers actually initiated this and  
12 informed what the learning and performance management  
13 system does, they use it on a daily basis to get real  
14 time, real information back about their students and in  
15 short what we see in Bloomington Normal is what we want  
16 for everyone of our other 868 districts that we have in  
17 our state. We know what teachers want, we've asked them  
18 and they told us. We know what to do and we know how to  
19 do it, we think our students and our teachers deserve to  
20 have this system in place. The system would also support  
21 our STEM learning exchanges, which is a building block for  
22 reinventing high schools in the state and redefining their  
23 purpose. Sometimes as educators it seems that we spend a

1 lot of time and a lot of energy preparing our students for  
2 the next level of education and we forget that all of our  
3 goals, P-20 collectively is to make sure that they have  
4 the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes to be  
5 successful in their chosen career and for our students  
6 today what will likely be chosen careers. The STEM  
7 learning exchanges bring relevance and real world  
8 application and problem solving into the classroom and  
9 allow teachers an opportunity to share that information on  
10 a very cutting edge technology sort of platform which we  
11 think in the day that we're living in is just critical.  
12 These things will help us bridge the gap between just  
13 learning the contents and making those applications toward  
14 real life. There's a lot we can talk about here and we  
15 can later but right now I would like to turn it over to  
16 our friend Audrey to speak to you a little about how these  
17 initiatives really touch the lives of teachers in the  
18 classroom.

19 AUDREY SOGLIN: Good afternoon, I'd like to just  
20 spend a little time telling you a little bit more about my  
21 background before I get into this topic. Prior to being  
22 the executive director of IEA, which has 133,000 members,  
23 I was a classroom teacher and I taught for 25 years.

1 After leaving the classroom I worked for and then became  
2 the executive director of an organization called the  
3 Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) and CEC is a  
4 membership organization districts join, and to join we ask  
5 that the superintendent, the president of the school board  
6 and the president of the union all sign a letter agreeing  
7 to work together to improve student achievement that  
8 organization has been around for 20 years, it's a fixture  
9 in our state and it speaks to the collaboration that we  
10 are all here demonstrating today. We know what's laid out  
11 in the Race to the Top plan around what Susie described is  
12 what's needed for teachers. Our teachers desire, they  
13 need relevant timely data that helps them in a guidance  
14 direction. When I'm walking around talking to our  
15 teachers, the teachers from Bloomington Normal, they pull  
16 me in to their classrooms point me to their computer and  
17 show me what they can do and that's what we need across  
18 the rest of this state for every teacher in order to  
19 impact the kind of change for student achievement that we  
20 desire.

21 MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: I'm going to spend a little  
22 time and then Darren's going to follow up talking about  
23 our performance evaluation. In our organization IEA we

1 shared the vision for Illinois around human capital  
2 strategies, teacher leadership opportunities targeted,  
3 effective professional development and fair dismissal  
4 processes are all in our interest but our decisions, the  
5 decisions we make around these issues are only as  
6 effective as our evaluation systems. That's why we  
7 supported Illinois actions on this front, first and  
8 foremost it's critical that our teachers engage in  
9 meaningful conversation around teaching and learning and  
10 that information includes information on student growth.  
11 Although we really understand that these evaluations are  
12 desired to make key personnel decisions it's also critical  
13 that the system be fair and accurate and that evaluations  
14 be conducted by certified, effective proficient evaluators  
15 and our proposal ensures that. Based on my own work with  
16 districts across the state in working with joint  
17 committees to revamp evaluation systems including in  
18 Evanston and Chicago which are mentioned on the screen,  
19 our plan's aggressive but it's doable because all of the  
20 necessary supports are in place. The super LEAs they'll  
21 be our first implementers not only in the evaluation but  
22 also because the unions and the district have agreed to  
23 work together in Illinois priority schools and the

1 partnership zone and we've already got that commitment key  
2 unions and districts. Darren and I, along with many  
3 others worked really hard on this legislation that we're  
4 going to talk about and I want to tell you why we were so  
5 supportive of this and why we believe this will work and  
6 it's because our union leaders, our teachers, our true  
7 partners working in joint committees at the local level,  
8 there's a lot of people that can talk about lip service  
9 around collaboration and cooperation but truly here in  
10 Illinois this isn't lip service, this is a real  
11 partnership between unions and districts that is unlike  
12 anything we've seen and it's truly ground breaking.

13 MR. DARREN REISBERG: With the performance  
14 evaluation reform act the education community in Illinois  
15 putting the governor and the legislature spoke loud and  
16 clear. We recognize the need to change the way in which  
17 we were evaluating our principals and teachers and so  
18 whether or not the state receives the Race to the Top  
19 award, by law, school districts' evaluations for both  
20 teachers and principals will need to incorporate student  
21 growth as a significant factor. For example if we don't  
22 receive the Race to the Top award by the 2012-2013 school  
23 year the city of Chicago as well as any school district

1 that would be receiving federal 1003G school improvement  
2 grants will need to be incorporating student growth in  
3 their teacher and principal evaluations as a significant  
4 factor and all districts will be needing to incorporate  
5 student growth as a significant factor for their  
6 principals by 2012, 2013. Now if we do receive the Race  
7 to the Top award, the implementation will be more  
8 aggressive, by the beginning of the 2011, 2012, school  
9 year our super LEAs that Dr. Koch mentioned will be  
10 implementing teacher and principal evaluations that  
11 incorporate student growth at 50% at least of the  
12 performance rating and then that next year all  
13 participating LEAs learning these early lessons from the  
14 super LEAs will be incorporating student growth into their  
15 performance evaluations for teachers and principals at, at  
16 least 50% of the performance rating. Now we want to be  
17 very clear and this reinforces the point that Audrey made  
18 early, that we will be implementing these reforms with not  
19 to our teachers and our principals. So for example under  
20 the law school districts and their unions will be working  
21 together in joint committees to try to come up with what  
22 type of performance evaluations will work for them, work  
23 for their district within certain parameters that will be

1 set by the state but to the extent that the school  
2 districts and the unions do not come to an agreement on  
3 certain aspects of the performance evaluation plan there  
4 will be a default to a state developed template where  
5 student growth will be at 50%. Our education stakeholders  
6 throughout this process of revamping our performance  
7 evaluations recognize that the state needs to support this  
8 type of reform if it's going to work and work right so in  
9 addition to the state developing a model evaluation  
10 template the state will also be developing a  
11 prequalification program that all evaluators will have to  
12 go through and these evaluators will include peer  
13 evaluators which for the first time under the new law will  
14 be allowed in Illinois. We also will be contracting for  
15 an assessment of our evaluation systems which will have to  
16 be produced by September of 2014, and the goal of this  
17 will be able to look back over the course of the last few  
18 years and see what worked and what didn't work to help  
19 inform how we're going to build out that system even  
20 further in the future. While as we will be steering this  
21 initiative of performance evaluation reform we won't be  
22 doing this alone, the law requires that we have a  
23 performance evaluation advisory council and we wanted to

1 ensure that was the case because having the stakeholders  
2 at the table during the legislative process worked and we  
3 think that, that will continue to work and this will  
4 involve representatives from school districts,  
5 representatives from higher education, representatives  
6 from the unions. We will also be working with the state  
7 collaborative of great teachers and leaders which will  
8 share information from other states that are moving as  
9 aggressively in this area like Louisiana and Florida where  
10 growth will be measured at 50% or more of the evaluation.  
11 I'm now going to turn this back over to my fellow Deputy  
12 Susie Morrison to talk about the fourth area of reform,  
13 low performing schools.

14 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: When Audrey and I started  
15 teaching some 30 years ago we didn't have a lot of data,  
16 we didn't have a state assessment system, we had what we  
17 had in our classroom but we have the data now and we know  
18 that way too many of our more than 4,000 individual  
19 buildings in this state are not preparing students for  
20 their future. The data tells the story, schools where  
21 more than 75% of students do not year, after year meet  
22 state standards. High school data that indicates where  
23 fewer than 60% of the students that enter that high school

1 have received graduation dates. We know there's an  
2 achievement gap that tells us we're not doing everything  
3 that we need to do to meet the needs of our minority and  
4 low-income students in particular. For our lowest  
5 performing most challenged schools we have to do more than  
6 what's traditionally been school improvement, we have to  
7 do more than analyze the data, align the curriculum and  
8 offer professional development. Our lowest performing  
9 schools in our state are broken, turnaround is the people's  
10 strategy and making sure we have the best leadership in  
11 the building and the most effective teacher in every  
12 classroom is at the core of this work, we know the work is  
13 hard, we know there's no silver bullet, we know that what  
14 may work in Chicago may not work in a small rural farming  
15 community where there are 400 students in the district K-  
16 12 but there are lessons to be learned, we have to try, we  
17 have to take those lessons, those learned in Chicago and  
18 around the nation because we must improve outcomes and  
19 opportunities for students that attend these schools and  
20 all of our schools. We have to give these struggling  
21 schools the flexibility the resources and the support to  
22 re-imagine the school day, social support, parental  
23 involvement and effective teaching and learning. If these

1 schools could turnaround by themselves they would have  
2 done that already, they can't. We've issued a rigorous  
3 application process and we have preapproved 14 lead and  
4 supporting partners, we have identified strong partners  
5 like AUSL who are willing to now move from their work in  
6 Chicago and work in our schools throughout the state. We  
7 have 1003G-school improvement grant dollars to support  
8 this work and we have never had funding to support this  
9 work before, it is our time and our opportunity. We also  
10 were selected by mass insights to be one of six pilot  
11 states to be supported in this work. We are ready, we  
12 have the will, the fortitude, the commitment, and now the  
13 resources, to do the right thing for students in our most  
14 challenged school settings. With that I would like to ask  
15 Miguel to talk about the statewide impact of our plan.

16 MR. MIGUEL DEL VALLE: I am chairman of the P-20  
17 Council, the P-20 Council was statutorily created, it is a  
18 permanent body and members of the council were appointed  
19 by the governor of the state of Illinois and the  
20 membership includes educators, foundation representatives,  
21 business and civic leaders as well as legislators it is a  
22 bipartisan effort, we have republicans and democrats on  
23 the council, we have legislators from both chambers on the

1 council in that respect I think we stand out in comparison  
2 to other councils throughout the country. We have  
3 individuals who are fully committed to ensuring that  
4 whatever needs to be translated into a legislative agenda  
5 that, that then gets carried directly to the Illinois  
6 Legislature as quickly as possible and introduced and  
7 implemented as quickly as possible, so we're excited about  
8 the partnership that we've developed, a strong foundation  
9 support for the council is also taking place. We hope to  
10 get resources directly from the foundations for the  
11 ongoing operation of the council. All state agencies are  
12 members of the council, the exofficio members include the  
13 state board of education, the Illinois student assistance  
14 commission, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the  
15 community college board and the department of commerce and  
16 economic opportunity and so the workforce investment act  
17 is part of this process, workforce development is a  
18 critical component of the work of the P-20 council. We  
19 are convening quarterly as a counsel we have the state  
20 agencies meeting regularly as exofficio members and so one  
21 of our main goals is collaboration and coordination  
22 keeping everyone at the table, all the education agencies  
23 at the table and speaking to each other regularly and, of

1 course, collaborating which is the most important part of  
2 this. We know that in order to move along this aggressive  
3 agenda and certainly being able to obtain the Race to the  
4 Top dollars will help us accelerate this process but I'm  
5 proud of the fact that Illinois has been moving in the  
6 right direction. I served in the Illinois Senate for 20  
7 years and I was part of that piecemeal approach on  
8 education reform there was wave, after wave, after wave, I  
9 sponsored legislation to increase high school graduation  
10 requirements, to increase the compulsory attendance age, I  
11 was one of the sponsors of legislation to establish a  
12 statutory goal for universal access to pre-school and  
13 Illinois was the first state in the country to do this.  
14 These are all wonderful things but they weren't done in  
15 concert. This effort that is underway now represents the  
16 most comprehensive, the most intensive, the most  
17 aggressive approach that I've seen in Illinois in over 25-  
18 years to reform education and to ensure that we put an  
19 effective teacher and an effective leader in every school  
20 and every classroom. That is the most important thing in  
21 order to make sure that every student who graduates in a  
22 system that is made up almost of half of students of color  
23 with a significant achievement gap particularly with the

1 African American and Latino populations in this district.  
2 We must address that achievement gap and the only way we  
3 are going to do it is through this collaboration and  
4 ensuring that these reform measures are put into place in  
5 order for us to improve the graduation rate and make sure  
6 that students are properly prepared and I think that  
7 because of our diversity if it works in Illinois I think  
8 that then we can serve as a model for other parts of the  
9 country that have a similar make-up of student population.  
10 We need to deal with our English language learners, we  
11 need to deal with the entire student population of color  
12 that is why we have the achievement gap that we have and  
13 students can learn with the right programs regardless of  
14 where they're at, what their economic background is, what  
15 neighborhood they live in, they can learn, no matter where  
16 they come from they can learn if the schools are operating  
17 the best way they can and in order to ensure that we have  
18 to have an effective teacher in every classroom, that's  
19 number one and that's why the Race to the Top application  
20 will help us get there, thank you.

21 REVIEWER #1: Thank you for your presentation.  
22 We will begin, as my colleagues began to plan for this  
23 section of the question and answer period we realized that

1 many of our questions were around capacity so we are going  
2 to begin with the capacity questions.

3           REVIEWER #2: As you pointed out the critical  
4 ingredient of moving forward it a very solid data  
5 information system, the basis of knowing how your students  
6 are doing, it's a basis of knowing how your teachers and  
7 principals are doing and what decisions you need to make.  
8 It was unclear in your application what the status of that  
9 data information system is, I know you've had some  
10 problems in the past so I would like basically for you to  
11 clarify for us the present status of that system and the  
12 future development of such a system. If you could  
13 describe the critical elements of the system and the  
14 state's capacity to move forward in the system that  
15 relates again to the simple notation, notion, and what you  
16 need to get to the next steps?

17           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Our current status with  
18 our data system we had applied for a longitudinal data  
19 grant a couple of years ago, we actually tried several  
20 years unsuccessfully and then two years ago received it.  
21 The components that we didn't have in place that we still  
22 needed were the ability to connect student and teacher  
23 data and student to administrators, also we were not

1 collecting high school transcript informational high  
2 school transcripts so we couldn't tell you and we can't  
3 tell you today what courses high school students are  
4 taking and how they're doing in those courses. We needed  
5 those components to go be able to then follow, we also  
6 needed the agreement that we just put in place to be able  
7 to follow students from early childhood on through K-12,  
8 community college and four year universities, we now have  
9 that agreement in place, we're using the high school  
10 transcript as the means for making this connection and  
11 data, so that's already required and being collected on  
12 transcripts so we're making progress and that's where we  
13 are in terms of the data elements. We also have started  
14 to build a culture of data use because we're now in our  
15 second year of required risk implementation of response to  
16 intervention. We know at the local level the starts and  
17 stops that come with that and it's been incredibly helpful  
18 though to us, we have many districts that step forward and  
19 say they weren't supportive of that initially but once  
20 they started to actually use data in looking at where  
21 students are performing and providing interventions and  
22 seeing if they work, and if they don't try something else  
23 it started to change the data culture. We still have

1 buildings where we would like to see more time set aside  
2 from administrators in the use of data, and our new  
3 requirements for principal preparations are going to  
4 ensure that because we've taken the credentials for  
5 principal and said you also not just the school management  
6 piece do you need but you also need the instruction piece  
7 so they have to be instructional leaders and that's how  
8 we're envisioning and requiring them to do that. Unless  
9 we hit all the parts including preparation of our teachers  
10 and our principals as well as setting up an infrastructure  
11 for data we're not going to have that use in the  
12 classrooms and schools.

13 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: The only thing that I would  
14 add is with regard to the learning and performance  
15 management system which really gets that on time data back  
16 to the teachers we have issued a request for information  
17 and have gone through that process so we know what  
18 assessments, formative interim, are being used in the  
19 district, we know what sort of management systems are  
20 being used by our districts right now so that we are ready  
21 to create the platform that again not forces them to use  
22 something statewide but allows them to continue to use  
23 what they are currently using or adopt something that we

1 have a statewide contract for, we have all the pieces in  
2 place, we are ready to issue an RFP to be able to build  
3 that system, we just right now don't have the state  
4 dollars as Chris said earlier to be able to support that.

5 MR. DARREN REISBERG: In our state fiscal  
6 stabilization funds application we have committed to  
7 actually fulfilling the last two aspects of the America  
8 Competes Act, the student, teacher linkage, student  
9 administrator linkage as well as the transcript data by  
10 September 30, 2011, and we have plans in that application  
11 to get both of those done. We've actually contracted  
12 internally, we contracted with a data sort of a project  
13 manager who's come in from the outside and is now working  
14 closely with our staff and also coordinating a data  
15 advisory council that's made up of the various agencies  
16 across the state so that's the community college board,  
17 the board of higher education, the student assistance  
18 commission and all of that is designed to make sure that  
19 we stay on task in terms of meeting these requirements by  
20 September 30, 2011, and we feel confident we'll get there.

21 REVIEWER #1: I neglected to tell you that we  
22 have about 13 questions and so you're managing your time  
23 well and I just want you to continue to be concise and

1 clear.

2           REVIEWER #1: Please describe your planned  
3 leadership and organizational structure for implementing  
4 the states reform agenda and would you include in that  
5 response to center for improvement, fiscal improvement.  
6 Who is directly responsible for the decision making  
7 process and the overall oversight of the implementation of  
8 the reform agenda.

9           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: The state board of  
10 education as a K-12 agency has a lot of responsibility for  
11 the implementation of a number of elements in there  
12 obviously so the management team that I talked about in my  
13 senior team are all involved in the discussions of the  
14 implementation of all aspects of the reform that we do and  
15 of course answer to the state board of education. We also  
16 though have other government structures such as the panel  
17 that Darren described on data and we have similar advisory  
18 councils built in and a lot of outside folks helping to  
19 steer us we feel that's incredibly important anytime we're  
20 implementing policy or involved with folks impacted by  
21 policy in those decisions. In my regular meetings with  
22 stakeholders and folks too that help guide our thoughts  
23 and structure around that. The P-20 Council you've

1 already heard about is another structure that of course  
2 brings us all together; we've talked about these very  
3 implementation issues at that council.

4 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: I think it's also worth  
5 noting too that we've been in a process for the last 18  
6 months. We currently are partnering with ED council to  
7 really look at our structure as an agency, as an  
8 organization and repurpose ourselves, we are bringing  
9 staff along to have that understanding that just because  
10 we did something 20-years ago one-way and it was important  
11 then isn't necessarily what the expectations are of us  
12 today so they have been very involved in that as we  
13 repurpose the agency, by going through that process it led  
14 us to the point to know that we don't have all the  
15 expertise of staff that we need in the agency and likely  
16 we will not. We don't have the funds to support that and  
17 we can't pay the people with that expertise the kind of  
18 money, quite frankly, that they can command. That led us  
19 to the formation of a school improvement center, we will  
20 be letting our RFP in the next 30 days for a school  
21 improvement center, it will be a contractual arrangement  
22 with our agency, they will be working on our behalf but  
23 will be providing really, oversight to our statewide

1 system of support another area where we have gone through  
2 both an internal and an external review of our statewide  
3 system of support and it's not all that we wish it would  
4 be, the school improvement center will provide some  
5 oversight and direction as well as professional  
6 development as well as research and analysis but we don't  
7 have the capacity within the agency to do and there will  
8 also be one unit devoted just to the support of our  
9 turnaround work in the state. So that in a nutshell is  
10 what we're planning.

11 REVIEWER #1: What specific strategies will be  
12 utilized to build the capacity of the local LEAs to  
13 implement the specific reform initiative, what support  
14 should the LEAs expect from the state?

15 MS.SUSIE MORRISON: Clearly much will come  
16 through our statewide system of support as well as our  
17 regional office of education. We have 45 regional  
18 offices, we have 10 areas now with the statewide system of  
19 support that we really help to coordinate, but they work  
20 on behalf by way of professional development, we are  
21 having data analysis coaches available to them. Really,  
22 the ongoing school improvement work that we've been doing  
23 in the past but at a different level of support from the

1 school improvement center.

2 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I'll just add again back to  
3 the super LEA model one of the strategies that we've tried  
4 to implement here is sort of a concentric circles approach  
5 where you're going to have your select group of LEAs that  
6 decided to move forward more boldly we're going to be  
7 learning from them as well as the rest of the  
8 participating LEAs which would be the second circle in the  
9 concentric circles. They will be able to take advantage  
10 of what's been learned and the goal then will be that,  
11 that information would be able to be spread with our  
12 partners that we've been setting up here statewide.

13 MS.SUSIE MORRISON: Actually in the school  
14 improvement centers built on the premise that there are  
15 different tiers and levels of support so the more help you  
16 need the more help that you're going to get, plus some  
17 others don't need quite as much.

18 MR.CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Just to add two things, we  
19 did set aside 10% of the state portion of funds to work  
20 with the super LEAs to make those reforms because we knew  
21 that would also be a resource issue, we also have a strong  
22 principal and teacher mentoring program in the state, we  
23 feel it's critical that when you, and first of all being

1 selective about the folks that are going in schools  
2 particularly lowest performing schools would offer them  
3 supports, it's not enough to just train them well, but  
4 also we believe very strongly in the opportunities for  
5 folks to have guidance as they're doing their work and  
6 supports from the outside so we have that structure in  
7 place already.

8           REVIEWER #2: I have a question related to the  
9 state plans for ensuring sustainability of all these  
10 reforms over time. The application has a heavy focus on a  
11 lot of external partnerships that will help supplement the  
12 limited capacity of the FCA's and the LEAs so I just  
13 wanted to get a little clarification on the organization  
14 structures or policies or political commitments that are  
15 going to be necessary for long term success of  
16 implementing all these plans as people come and go and  
17 organizations come and go and all that kind of stuff?

18           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: I'm going to have Miguel  
19 speak to this in a moment. But I guess I would say the  
20 evidence of being able to pass legislation that's going to  
21 be in place is a good marker for sustainability I've been  
22 in the state and working for this state board for a while  
23 and I know those things have lasting impact. I think

1 again, the bipartisan approach that we've had to passing  
2 that legislation is important and we have a lot of folks  
3 ready to move. I think the external partners to us are  
4 not a difficult coordination because it's built into how  
5 we do our work and we meet regularly with external  
6 partners as part of a matter of course. I'm not doing  
7 that just because of Race to the Top I've been doing that  
8 since I've been state superintendent because I know it  
9 works, I'm evaluated on my ability to do that well, it's  
10 part of my evaluation before the state board and I think  
11 that, that practice whether I'm here or not is something  
12 that's going to be needed and can be guaranteed through  
13 mechanisms like the P-20 council. Miguel I'll have you  
14 just speak to that a little bit more.

15           MIGUEL DEL VALLE: It was one of the reasons for  
16 the creation of the P-20 Council to ensure that continuity  
17 no matter who was elected governor or who ends up  
18 controlling the general assembly, and also ensuring that  
19 we have all the different state agencies at the table and  
20 that as changes occur within the state agency there is  
21 institutional memory that will help us ensure that  
22 continuity and so it's not the only structure that will  
23 facilitate that but I think it goes a long way. In

1 addition to the fact that the development of the  
2 longitudinal data system, the adoption of core standards  
3 and a number of other steps that we're taking I think are  
4 going to ensure that for the next several years we will  
5 stay on track.

6 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: I would just also say  
7 we're leveraging existing federal state money to do this  
8 work and we're making that a very cognizant part of our  
9 efforts and in our budget we built a start-up year for  
10 year one, year two is our largest year, we're going to  
11 invest something like the cloud computing format that we  
12 cannot have all districts assume costs for software and  
13 hardware that can be done at the state level and  
14 accessible through the web, our costs that are up front  
15 but will be sustained once that's in place, we know as we  
16 add applications the districts will use that because we've  
17 seen that with the interactive report card that we use in  
18 the state that we've used for years. The more we build in  
19 this application the more districts want them as they  
20 become agile at being able to use data locally.

21 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: I think just to add to that  
22 to reinforce something Chris said earlier; really we're  
23 not looking at Race to the Top as a program but as an

1 opportunity to institute our reform agenda. This is the  
2 work we are charged to do and the work we are responsible  
3 for, we have to do it, it's the work of the agency.

4           REVIEWER #2: A second question, leads back to  
5 part A of the application. I wanted to get a little bit  
6 more explanation on how the state determined all the  
7 timelines and all the projected yearly progress for  
8 decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates,  
9 increasing college enrollment, all that's going to go over  
10 a number period of years. You've got a lot of work that  
11 has to be done both overall and by subgroup. So I wanted  
12 to get a sense of just how you link from the reality of  
13 where you are now to your aspirations of where you want to  
14 get and how you think you're going to get there?

15           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: One thing, just setting  
16 up the timelines and goals, we can't wait, for some of  
17 these schools that are lowest performing it's not okay to  
18 wait, they have to move and they have to move soon. We  
19 have seen with interventions that have happened in Chicago  
20 when we get the right leadership in place and when we  
21 start to focus on human capital that they have moved the  
22 needle upwards for achievement, we've got the data to show  
23 that in a hundred schools with principal leadership it's

1 happened. We know we can do larger jumps initially and in  
2 part we calculate that, whenever you go in with a reform  
3 that's working you're going to see initially especially if  
4 you're very low performing greater gains initially and  
5 then it gets harder, of course, as the performance goes up  
6 in the school and that's our experience. That's in part  
7 how we did this, they are aggressive timelines, and they  
8 have to be because we have students waiting that are at  
9 risk.

10 MR. DARREN REISBERG: I just wanted to reinforce  
11 the point of our partnership zone and the concept that we  
12 will be looking to leverage these federal resources with  
13 respect to our lowest performing schools in very  
14 deliberate ways that will target improving the achievement  
15 gaps so we will be looking for schools that will be  
16 engaging with lead partners to also ensure they have  
17 supporting partners that can work with English language  
18 learners for example to increase the achievement in that  
19 particular area so all of these will need to be submitted  
20 to us in a plan that we will have to accept and it all  
21 will be looking through the lens of getting to those  
22 aggressive goals that we set out.

23 MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: I would just like to add

1 that because of our involvement and our support we too  
2 have committed to supporting our locals who are involved  
3 in this work and what that means is helping them to  
4 achieve those goals. So I want to add that, around the  
5 sustainability issue as well that we're not going to sit  
6 back now and say okay we did this, we got Race to the Top  
7 see ya. We're committed to helping in partnership with  
8 the district and helping our locals achieve these goals so  
9 it's not just one group that's going to be working, we  
10 have committed to supporting them too.

11 REVIEWER #2: Who's going to oversee keeping  
12 track of the LEAs and the school level meeting these  
13 targets, these timelines, what kind of supports would you  
14 anticipate to the schools that are not making the annual  
15 progress?

16 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: What we've already started  
17 to set up, we have project managers around, for example,  
18 we have someone that helps with the standards, we have  
19 someone that looks at the longitudinal data that works  
20 internally with our folks. Susie described the center for  
21 school improvement and the work that's going over the  
22 partnership zones. We also again have a key partnership  
23 here with experience and mass insight. They obviously

1 have an evaluation component that they are already using  
2 and that is what we're planning to use in Illinois to help  
3 us to set that structure in place so we are relying on,  
4 for example, the turnaround with the partnership zone,  
5 some of their expertise in setting up those measures and  
6 they've already been helpful in that regard.

7 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: I think that's part of our  
8 partnership with mass insight and certainly an evaluation  
9 and outcome base measures are part of that. We have also  
10 agreed to partner with the federally funded center for  
11 innovation and improvement to be one of the states that  
12 looks at all of our 1003G grant recipients, our turnaround  
13 schools so that we can learn, set those outcomes data  
14 upfront but really learn those lessons and share those  
15 lessons across the state.

16 REVIEWER #3: I appreciate the comments you made  
17 Audrey and want to quickly follow up. What specific  
18 strategies are you pursuing or will pursue to increase  
19 teacher union and individual teacher buy-ins, in the  
20 reforms of the application. The second question is how  
21 will the state work to ensure that the changes made  
22 outside of the classroom are complimented by changes  
23 inside the classroom.

1 MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: Our strategy even in Race to  
2 the Top was to work in collaboration at the very top of  
3 IEA, which by the way was a very open transparent  
4 collaborative process led by ISBI and the governor's  
5 office. Our strategy was to have as much input work in  
6 partnership come together and we did that. Then what we  
7 did is we made as much information as possible to everyone  
8 of our local leaders so that they could make good informed  
9 decisions around whether or not they wanted to  
10 participate. We felt like part of our job is not only to  
11 help our teachers be successful in the classroom but also  
12 to be an advocate around different bargaining rights as  
13 well, so we felt like we could very safely say to our  
14 locals you are making a commitment when you sign this to  
15 move forward in good faith around these reforms, but it  
16 was their decision whether or not to sign on. Our set up  
17 and what we do is now to work with the people who have  
18 agreed to make sure that they can talk to, give them the  
19 information, the strategies, network them together so that  
20 everyone of our union leaders isn't working alone around  
21 these pieces, let them learn from some of our super LEAs,  
22 and those unions. We have fairly good networking systems  
23 in place; we just need to leverage those around this work.

1 That's our plan. We will not abandon our locals and view  
2 this as part of our work to help our people move forward  
3 and to help the teachers understand too.

4 REVIEWER #4: Quite a few local unions did not  
5 sign; can you tell me why that is?

6 MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: There's a lot of reasons for  
7 that, as you know we have 869 schools districts, many more  
8 locals than even that because we might have more than one  
9 local in a district. It depended a lot on a lot of  
10 pieces, one is really the relationship, so where we had  
11 collaborative relationships between administration and  
12 unions that was a more natural partnership. We need to  
13 continue to work with both sides to build those  
14 relationships, but that was a key piece around what the  
15 relationship is at the local level as to how ready people  
16 were to be able to move together. In some cases the  
17 locals didn't feel like they had the capacity to be able  
18 to move this and in some cases it was time. Our MOU was  
19 released and we have structures for people to make  
20 decisions and they simply didn't have enough time to go  
21 through a decision making process that would I'm sure buy  
22 in, I think that was part of Reviewer #3's question. If  
23 they didn't have time to go through the right structures

1 then they couldn't ensure buy-in and it would be an  
2 individual signing on which would not mean that there was  
3 the commitment that we know we needed.

4 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Something that answers  
5 both those is getting folks involved so there's ownership  
6 as a strategy having folks own the work, and the only way  
7 you do that is getting them involved. We are so ready for  
8 internationally benchmark standards with implementation in  
9 Illinois. We have had K-12, community college and higher  
10 education teachers sitting together for the first time in  
11 history of the state talking about those standards. We're  
12 going to see alignment to the standards. We had the  
13 review with Achieve. The outside view of that, we have  
14 folks reflecting on it, they're ready to move. The  
15 systems like the learning and performance management  
16 system is an outside system that again will be used to  
17 support the local work of districts once they start to see  
18 that working and again they have to be involved. If the  
19 state came up with that on it's own and just threw it out  
20 there it wouldn't work, if we involve them like  
21 Bloomington Normal where they involve the teachers, the  
22 teachers drove what's in there it works, they want it and  
23 they will do a lot to try to get those tools to be able to

1 do the work, we really believe that.

2 MS.SUSIE MORRISON: Just to add on to that we  
3 understand, it's not just what happens within the four  
4 walls of that building and that really is the reason that  
5 we've reached out to our supporting partners. We know  
6 it's necessary to have all the social support, the wrap  
7 around services for kids in that school in order to make  
8 real significant changes in that school building so we are  
9 very much cognizant of that and again we're going to work  
10 with people who have had those experiences.

11 REVIEWER #5: Your plan includes a qualitative  
12 assessment of 49 teacher preparation programs what percent  
13 does the 49 represent of all of your teacher preparation  
14 programs and will your assessments relate teacher  
15 preparation to student growth?

16 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: We have 54 I believe  
17 teacher training institutions total and those are public  
18 and private comprising both, so I'm not sure what  
19 percentage that is, that's a good math question. That's  
20 approximately how many. Then the second question is will  
21 our assessments connect student growth? In general our  
22 goal is to be able to connect to student and teacher data  
23 for performance assessments of teachers. We were careful

1 in working with the unions about timing of that and with  
2 our partners and making sure that we actually had them in  
3 place. Our advisory group that the legislation sets up is  
4 going to be making determinations about multiple measures  
5 for doing that and we feel it's important to have those  
6 again buy-in for what those measures will be.

7 MR. DARREN REISBERG: I think we have committed  
8 the application by 2013-2014 to be able to be utilizing  
9 the performance of teachers and tying that back to the  
10 preparation programs from where they came in order to then  
11 evaluate the teacher preparation programs. So to us that  
12 is going to be a critical component of our reform with  
13 respect to holding these teacher preparation programs and  
14 principal preparation program accountable and they  
15 recognize that, that is coming, that's not a question from  
16 our perspective.

17 MR. MIGUEL del VALLE: We want to provide through  
18 our data system as much information to these teacher  
19 preparation programs as possible. We do have some weak  
20 teacher preparation program in the state of Illinois and  
21 we have them in other parts of the country as well. We  
22 know that the most critical piece of all this the training  
23 for teachers and making sure that they are adequately

1 prepared before they start in the classroom, that's why  
2 we've raised our cut scores for our basic skills test  
3 because we want to make sure that we get effective  
4 teachers in every classroom. A critical component of that  
5 is the partnership with higher education, the P-20 Council  
6 will play a significant role in that, we have other  
7 statewide education advocacy groups like Advance Illinois,  
8 they're conducting the survey of our teacher training  
9 programs throughout the state in order to provide  
10 feedback, we want to be partners, we're not just going to  
11 attack our colleges of education, we want to provide them  
12 with as much information on how well their graduates  
13 perform and that is down the road and it's coming, it's  
14 just a matter of time.

15 REVIEWER #5: Okay but specifically are you  
16 saying that you're not sure yet that student growth will  
17 be a part of it or that you do think it will be?

18 GROUP: It will be.

19 REVIEWER #5: Your plan includes LEAs evaluating  
20 the effectiveness of professional development programs,  
21 how does your plan measure these programs and what is  
22 needed to improve them?

23 MR. CHRISTOPHE KOCH: Run that by me again.

1           REVIEWER #5: In other words you say in your  
2 proposal that the LEAs will evaluate the effectiveness of  
3 your professional development. What we were looking for  
4 was some more clarity about what your plan will measure,  
5 how it will measure these programs and what is needed to  
6 improve them?

7           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: The part of the plan and  
8 so that I'm clear and I'm answering the right thing, we  
9 have for example even as pure evaluators are conceived as  
10 part of our work in terms of teachers working in schools,  
11 that's going to require also though that we prepare  
12 evaluators and determine that proficiency even among those  
13 folks so I'm not sure if that's what you were asking about  
14 that?

15           REVIEWER #5: No this is going towards  
16 professional development.

17           MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: Again, as with all of our  
18 professional development we have ongoing evaluations every  
19 time we sponsor professional developments, every time a  
20 regional office of education sponsors professional  
21 development it's required as part of our state plan to  
22 have an evaluation and that feedback and again not only  
23 the process of the professional development but ultimately

1 did it change outcomes for students and behaviors in the  
2 classroom it's what we're looking towards.

3 MR.CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Student achievement in our  
4 estimation has to be a measure of the effectiveness of  
5 everything we do. All of these programs, the tools, the  
6 LVS, the standards are all tools to get to improved  
7 student achievement, so every evaluation is going to have  
8 to look at that and be reflective, that's part of the LEA,  
9 super LEA outcome that's going to be evaluated, it's  
10 either going to be working or it's not, we're going to  
11 have to be able to isolate the variables around what  
12 caused that in the super LEAs and that's conceived with  
13 how we will be looking at their implementation otherwise  
14 we can't use those folks as a test case. We've got to  
15 know what we did in those because we're going to be doing  
16 a lot, we've got to be able to isolate the various things  
17 were doing in order to know what impacted the student  
18 achievement, we envision that for teacher prep  
19 institutions for the teacher as well.

20 REVIEWER #5: My last question is would you  
21 please clarify what the Illinois legislative stance is on  
22 permitting teacher evaluation to be factored into the  
23 granting of tenure?

1                   MR.DARREN REISBERG: There is no prohibition at  
2 this point in terms of factoring in your teacher  
3 evaluations to tenure, one of the rationales really for  
4 when we were discussing legislation and performance  
5 evaluations, of course, the issue came up as to whether or  
6 not for example you would want to be requiring a certain  
7 number of effective evaluations in order for an individual  
8 to be able to be granted tenure for example. We discussed  
9 this with our stakeholders and in particular I think  
10 school management was concerned about that type of change  
11 to the school code actually reducing their flexibility in  
12 order to take action to remove particular teachers from  
13 the classroom or to not grant them tenure because they  
14 have the flexibility as much as they want right now up  
15 until four years of an individual being in the school to  
16 choose not to remove that teacher. So there was not a  
17 momentum at that point to actually try to have specific  
18 evaluation results in form whether or not an individual  
19 would actually be able to obtain tenure. Right now school  
20 districts have as much flexibility as they want in terms  
21 of making that decision as to whether or not to grant  
22 tenure.

23                   MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: I would just add and this is

1 something I said in my remarks is that our approach to  
2 this is that first we really want to get evaluations right  
3 and then if we strengthen the evaluation system which  
4 we've done, then I think we can begin to look at making  
5 those decisions that are based on a valid, fair, accurate  
6 evaluations done by proficient evaluators. So I think  
7 we're moving there but our whole approach is to fix the  
8 evaluation system first.

9 MR.DARREN REISBERG: Just to add one more point.  
10 I think again with the state fiscal stabilization fund  
11 we've made comments in terms of the transparency of our  
12 data for all school districts, the school districts will  
13 be providing to us the information on the specifics about  
14 the evaluations of non-tenured teachers, even though the  
15 Race to the Top or even though the statute doesn't require  
16 the four rating categories that we'll have for tenured  
17 teachers to also be the case for summative evaluations of  
18 non-tenured teachers. With respect to non-tenured  
19 teachers there will be a requirement to provide that level  
20 of specificity to the state and that information will be  
21 out there very public so school districts will be  
22 accountable to the extent that they are not making the  
23 right decisions with respect to actually retaining their

1 non-tenured teachers, we felt that was an important step  
2 to be making right now because right now that data is just  
3 not available to the public. So I think the combination of  
4 the data transparency as well as trying to get some of our  
5 evaluation systems on course will probably inform us in  
6 the future as to some additional changes that we'd be  
7 making to our school code.

8           REVIEWER #4: Just maybe a real quick technical  
9 question. Are you going to put this data up for me as a  
10 parent to know, do you have alternatives, will you be  
11 providing this data in Spanish, will you be providing this  
12 in non-digital forms for individuals who don't have  
13 computers or access to them or don't have access to  
14 English, it wasn't clear in your application when you  
15 addressed that technical aspect. Just real quick will you  
16 do that or not?

17           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: Yeah, we currently provide  
18 a paper copy as well as the information on line to parents  
19 for example, report cards are an instrument to do that, we  
20 will continue to do that. We have several materials in  
21 Spanish, I'm not even sure, and I believe it might be, we  
22 certainly could do that.

23           MR. MIGUEL del VALLE: We must do that.

1           REVIEWER #3: The question I have for you has to  
2 do more with your history with regard to achievement gaps  
3 in the state. You have challenges in Illinois, you've  
4 admitted those in your application, and we want to look  
5 forward to addressing those challenges, but history to  
6 some extent predicts future so the issue here is do you  
7 have the capacity, and particularly what elements of the  
8 plan that you put forward speak to this issue of reducing  
9 achievement gaps and doing that statewide because that is  
10 a challenge for your state and with history somewhat  
11 muddled, so you're going forward and your saying you can  
12 do this, help us understand what's going to be different  
13 and what figure elements in your plan are going to ensure  
14 achievement gap reduction?

15           MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: One key element if you  
16 look at our lowest performing 5% schools you're going to  
17 find a lot of high schools on that list, you're going to  
18 find a lot of schools with high concentrations of African  
19 American and Latino students particularly in Chicago makes  
20 up a number of ours on the list. We've never had the  
21 capacity before of funds to leverage as we have now with  
22 those orchestrating with the partnership zone, an  
23 orchestrated attempt to really expand state capacity with

1 outside folks to bring them in to the degree that we are  
2 looking to do with folks who have experience and being  
3 able to do that. I would say that's one critical means by  
4 which we will see achievement move. We also have  
5 experience in capacity building with the leadership in  
6 those schools. We know we can get to capacity in Chicago  
7 with 100 new principals that were trained very carefully,  
8 that are being supported in turning around achievement in  
9 those schools, we have the data to show it, for 100  
10 schools, that's quite a number and given the number on our  
11 list of the lowest 5%, that easily can be replicated  
12 statewide we think we can do that. Again, we have 400  
13 school years that might change over every year, as each of  
14 those are an opportunity, not all those are in the lowest  
15 performing schools by any means. But, the lowest  
16 performing schools are the focus and those I think a  
17 couple of examples of how I think we now have capacity  
18 that we didn't have before and we're building on the  
19 assets that we have in place to expand, we're not starting  
20 a lot of this from scratch, we have been doing response to  
21 intervention for two years, we know where it's pitfalls  
22 are in implementation but the foundation is there and  
23 we're building on it.

1                   MR.MIGUEL del VALLE: It is a challenge  
2 especially these days when our state as well as many other  
3 states are facing fiscal crisis. That is what makes the  
4 Race to the Top even more important to us today, that is  
5 without these resources we're not really going to make the  
6 type of dent in the achievement gap that we need to do.  
7 We need to extend school days in some of these high  
8 schools, we need to change staff in some of these high  
9 schools, we need new leadership in some of these high  
10 schools, we need to bring technology into some of these  
11 high schools, we need to be able to put people to work,  
12 put our kids to work in business sectors, in gaining  
13 experience through work study programs, and collaborative  
14 education. We need a very intensive kind of approach that  
15 is going to be very different from what we've done in the  
16 past we cannot have more of the same. Absent The Race to  
17 the Top dollars we'll get the data, we'll do a whole bunch  
18 of things, but what good is the data if it's going to tell  
19 us that the achievement gap continues to be huge and  
20 that's what I'm afraid will happen if we don't follow up  
21 with this intensive effort that is going to call for  
22 radical changes in these low performing schools.

23                   REVIEWER #1: I just want the panel and my

1 colleagues to know that we have about 22 minutes left.

2           REVIEWER # 2: I have a two part question  
3 regarding the new teacher and principal evaluations that  
4 you're anticipating. In the application the state is  
5 fairly non-committal on whether or not those evaluations  
6 are going to be used for employment decisions. You talk  
7 about an advisory committee that will address those issues  
8 so I wanted to get a little bit more clarity on what  
9 instructions you expect to possibly give the advisory  
10 committee when they're going to be examining these issues  
11 at some future point. In some ways you didn't make a  
12 decision, you said we're making a committee to study the  
13 issues. So I wanted to get a little sense of where  
14 you're, going?

15           MR.DARREN REISBERG: I think the initial task of  
16 the performance evaluation advisory council that's set up  
17 in the statute is going to be focused primarily on  
18 determining the appropriate measures of student growth  
19 etc. as we build the systems out. I think that in time  
20 everything is obviously going to be moving quickly, those  
21 more difficult questions are going to need to be a focus  
22 of that committee. I think as Audrey pointed out before  
23 we want to be able to build the confidence in all of our

1 stakeholders that these evaluation systems are actually  
2 doing well and that's why we have that statutory  
3 assessment that will need to be done with this in  
4 September 2014, at that point I think we've all shown our  
5 cards, if you will, at the state level that we think with  
6 the right evaluation systems in place we think it's  
7 important that those systems inform key personnel  
8 decisions and we will be continuing to beat that drum as  
9 we move forward. We also do have at the state  
10 superintendent level and I think we referenced this in the  
11 application the state superintendent currently right now  
12 has the ability to actually take action on teacher  
13 administrators teaching certificate or the educators  
14 certificate based on incompetency as the term set out in  
15 the statute and the state superintendent has made clear  
16 also that he is intending to utilize these new performance  
17 evaluation systems once he has the appropriate confidence  
18 in those to make those important licensing decisions with  
19 respect to our teachers.

20 MR.DARREN REISBERG: Two years of unsatisfactory  
21 performance and that would be the measure of incompetence.

22 REVIEWER #2: I think you probably at least  
23 partially answered my follow up which that the growth

1 measures for the evaluations won't be developed until  
2 2012-2013, so I wanted to just make sure I understood why  
3 the sort of protracted timeline where you'd get there. Is  
4 it related to it can't be done until the work of the  
5 advisory committee is done or is there some other  
6 explanation?

7 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I think that our goal  
8 actually would be to have these growth measures in place  
9 significantly before 2012-2013, in fact we will, in our  
10 minds have them in place in advance of the super LEAs  
11 moving forward with their performance evaluation reform.  
12 So the performance evaluation advisory council is going to  
13 need to be moving forward very quickly with the national  
14 experts and will be utilizing these other states that are  
15 moving forward as quickly as well to develop these growth  
16 measures hopefully significantly in advance of September  
17 2011.

18 REVIEWER #3: Question in reference to charter  
19 school finance, it's a wide variance by the state law for  
20 the level that LEAs must finance charter schools and it  
21 ranges from less than 75% of traditional public schools  
22 with as much as 125% of that level. Can you provide some  
23 context or historical reason for this range and how does

1 this work out, what percentage of your charter schools are  
2 at or above the traditional funding levels for traditional  
3 schools and what percent are below that?

4 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I honestly don't have that  
5 data that we can provide in terms of that range. I know  
6 Chicago where we have, of course the majority, the large  
7 majority of our charter schools in Illinois tends to be I  
8 believe around the 100% of funding range. Historically, I  
9 don't know, Miguel has more of a historic vantage point as  
10 to why and when the charter school law was passed, I  
11 believe it was 1996, that range was there. We know that  
12 we have one state funded charter school. Our system is  
13 such that if the local district does deny the charter it  
14 gets a deal to the state level and the state then actually  
15 is the authorizer of that charter school for that charter  
16 school we're at 100% but I apologize I don't have the data  
17 for the others.

18 REVIEWER #3: With out knowing the specific data  
19 point from a general sense what do you think the range is  
20 just not within CPS but across the state?

21 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I would think the range  
22 would be closer to 100%.

23 REVIEWER #4: Some timeline issues, we tried to

1 map the different things that you have that's actually  
2 moving forward, you have new standards assessments that  
3 are going to be developed, you've got your zones that are  
4 going to managed and identified and move forward on those  
5 things. There are some concerns about how these  
6 timetables mesh, how they map one on top of another. Can  
7 you speak to logic of the timetables themselves and how  
8 they all mesh to sort of create this wonderful thing in  
9 Illinois that you don't have now?

10 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: You know there are a  
11 number of factors that are going into our timelines right  
12 now. In part we are a state that does rely heavily on  
13 fiscal stabilization dollars and there's all sorts of data  
14 and timelines associated with that, that we must meet that  
15 we're going to meet, we have to, we desperately needed  
16 those funds, for the last two years we've taken advantage  
17 of them and we're going to meet the timelines required to  
18 ensure we don't have to pay those back as a state. With  
19 things like standards and assessment and the timelines  
20 there and how that gels, again we had, and our strategy  
21 was to join a number of consortiums as you saw and we  
22 believe we wanted to do that because we wanted to make  
23 sure we weren't going to miss an opportunity that might be

1 available to us and now in time these are starting to  
2 coalesce together and there's probably going to be a few  
3 that emerge but we feel the timing for us on that, we're  
4 betting, will probably add an advantage because of our  
5 assessment system and the problems we've had with it.  
6 Candidly we've got a whole state that's ready to move, so  
7 a lot of folks have been building up towards understanding  
8 that need and moving. I feel that we can move on that  
9 timeline very aggressively, folks can't wait until we get  
10 the new assessments in place around the common standards.  
11 But we are also taking the approach of once the  
12 internationally common standards are done we want to get  
13 them in the teachers hands right away; again they're a  
14 tool. Unless teachers start using them, becoming familiar  
15 with them, they're not going to have any impact. So our  
16 approach is to get them in schools right away even before  
17 the assessments are done and making sure that they can  
18 start to become aware of them and using them and  
19 incorporating them into the curriculum and I mean the  
20 timeline, I don't know if you want to speak to any of the  
21 timelines around the partnership zone or those kinds of  
22 reforms, but we have been careful of starting this work  
23 early even in the summer of reviewing vendors, of looking

1 at what school districts are using so that we will be  
2 ready to run the minute that we would hear about whether  
3 or not the application was funded so we have calibrated  
4 these fairly carefully. We know how long it takes  
5 Illinois to adopt standards, we know it has to go through  
6 the general assembly and we've calculated what that would  
7 be. We tried to work backwards from where we wanted to be  
8 and look at the various factors impacting timelines to  
9 come up with those. We know some are aggressive.

10 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: Honestly we're going to  
11 have a lot of things happening at the same time. Our  
12 intention is to adopt the common core standards in August,  
13 we're going to notify school, yet before school is out  
14 this year whether or not they will be part of a  
15 partnership zone, whether they'll be pursuing 1003G  
16 grants, with those kind of professional development and  
17 onsite opportunities and in cooperation happening in the  
18 summer, so we know even in the next six months that we're  
19 moving and moving aggressively irregardless of what  
20 happens.

21 REVIEWER #1: I guess as we think about capacity  
22 and recognizing this aggressive timeline and the number of  
23 initiatives that will be taking place and what we know

1 about reform, can you speak just a little more about that  
2 kind of coordination and the management of this in terms  
3 of building capacity at the local district level to be  
4 able to receive the components the moving pieces and how  
5 do you insure that continue engagement and the balance  
6 that needs to occur through this filtering?

7 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: One the things we've  
8 learned from working with the number of districts that we  
9 have in Illinois is they don't all do the same thing at  
10 the same time, we have districts that are out there in  
11 terms of database decision making all sorts of systems in  
12 place and we have other districts that complain about  
13 submitting data electronically. There's a lot of variance  
14 and thus anything that we roll out in Illinois experience  
15 tells us that we need to phase it in. Our approach takes  
16 that into consideration. We also know the issues that the  
17 high schools on that list are encountering, we have a huge  
18 disconnect between a high school that might have 10 or 12  
19 feeder elementary districts coming in where kids are  
20 getting Algebra in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in one school and not in  
21 another, there's a lack of alignment there. The only way  
22 we know that we can reform that is taking that on directly  
23 but it's because we've been listening to the school

1 district in working with these issues over time that we  
2 know that's the place to focus and start, it's a problem,  
3 we know it's a problem let's deal with it. That's our  
4 approach at how we know working with local districts we  
5 can turn them around and that we can get the impact that  
6 we want over time.

7 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I think we were very  
8 deliberate in putting together the application that we  
9 were structuring a system that would be more partnership  
10 oriented than actually building out the state agency right  
11 away. We recognize that, that was a choice, we saw that  
12 as an advantage, in each of our major reform areas, I'll  
13 take two examples, we have the performance evaluation  
14 advisory council for performance evaluations, we have the  
15 partnership zone advisory council which will be there to  
16 share our best practices amongst all of those school  
17 districts that are in the partnership zone. Those will be  
18 sort of the beacons to get these ideas, be able to provide  
19 information back to other LEAs that will be involved, we  
20 will then be managing all of those at the state agency  
21 level and we're not by any means adverse to building the  
22 right positions at the state agency in order to manage  
23 that correctly, that's why we have education counsel right

1 now looking at our agency structure, but we didn't feel  
2 comfortable with building that out in an application when  
3 we really just didn't know at that point how it was going  
4 to work best.

5           REVIEWER#2: One last sort of timeline question.  
6 The timeline that you chose for initiating all the four  
7 school improvement models I wanted to get a sense of how  
8 that was decided, to what extent did your state and your  
9 local LEA play into that, in terms of how you chose to be  
10 aggressive, or how aggressive, or how many schools were  
11 going to be chosen to be looked at for those kind of  
12 models?

13           MS.SUSIE MORRISON: Really we were driven in  
14 large part by the availability of the 1003G funds  
15 expecting that personally, professionally vehicles can't  
16 wait any longer, that's the reason we pre-identified the  
17 lead in supporting partners so that just as the  
18 application is going out to schools so that they would be  
19 there, be ready to hit the ground running because we  
20 expect that these schools when they submit their  
21 application to tell us which one of the four intervention  
22 models they're going to use and which partner or partners  
23 they anticipate using so they know in the spring so that

1 when school begins in the fall they spent the summer  
2 preparing for this evolution, perhaps not a revolution.

3 REVIEWER #4: I'm a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher somewhere  
4 in Illinois, do I have access to a growth model database  
5 for my kids? Can I digitally access the growth model, for  
6 student achievement?

7 MS.AUDREY SOGLIN: Today? No.

8 REVIEWER #2: What are major differences in your  
9 application or your approach to the reform in your very  
10 heavy urban areas versus your very rural areas. I just  
11 want to get a little bit more sense of the diversity of  
12 what's going to go on in your very diverse state?

13 MR.CHRISTOPHER KOCH: I guess the urban areas  
14 one of the issues that you have is personnel differences  
15 and the availability of personnel to meet the needs of  
16 students that's a large difference you find between rural  
17 areas and urban areas and you find and I'm sure our data  
18 on high schools once we have it will show you this,  
19 there's a lot different even course offering or  
20 opportunities for students that will be taken particularly  
21 at the high school level when you compare urban areas to  
22 rural areas of the state where they're having trouble  
23 attracting, for example, constant expertise for Chemistry

1 II or some of the more advanced classes those are a couple  
2 kinds of differences that we have in terms of the two and  
3 of course there's a difference in the student population.  
4 We do have low areas of the state that are high poverty,  
5 high poverty in the city, Chicago is dealing with violence  
6 issues that are not seen in a lot of rural areas of the  
7 state that very much impact the students day to day  
8 learning, how they're getting to school, whether they feel  
9 safe, whether they're going to drop out of school,  
10 disengage from school, and really those have to be taken  
11 into consideration when you're looking at meaningful  
12 reforms.

13 MR.DARREN REISBERG: I'd add, you know there is  
14 sometimes more focus on the rural areas with respect to  
15 certain initiatives like dual credit with our community  
16 college board and Miguel's organization P-20 Council is  
17 obviously very helpful in coordinating that type of  
18 interaction between our community colleges and our Pre-K  
19 to 12 institutions. We also have the virtual school and  
20 the only virtual school that will allow our rural areas to  
21 have access. The last thing I would just note is that one  
22 of the major initiatives in the application is this  
23 learning performance management system which we do think

1 allows us to level the field with respect to our rural  
2 areas so that they will have the ability to have these  
3 same resources as some of our urban or suburban areas  
4 especially because they won't have to be buying hardware  
5 etc. for their schools.

6 REVIEWER #2: One more sort of very broad  
7 question. Let's say you have a Race to the Top grant you  
8 implement it for several years, you're coming back at the  
9 end of the grant program, let's say I was here and I asked  
10 you this question, what do you think you might be able to  
11 say? What will schools in Illinois look like at the end  
12 of your grant period, how will that be different than  
13 where they are now, and also particularly for Audrey what  
14 will you be able to say is driving new or experienced  
15 teachers to Illinois?

16 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: I think well what would  
17 schools look like we would expect very much to see  
18 differences in achievement, our lowest performing will not  
19 have the same number that would have on the schools will  
20 not be at the level of performance where they are, not  
21 with an intervention that we're talking about with this.  
22 I would also expect schools the climate in those schools  
23 to have changed and to want data use, and the reason I can

1 anticipate that with a fair amount of certainty is because  
2 we already started that culture in Illinois, we have seen  
3 schools transform and starting to use data and asking  
4 those secondary and tertiary questions versus acting on a  
5 hunch about what you're doing in the classroom. We want  
6 to see that, I would expect to see far more reflective  
7 professionals in the school building, there are  
8 opportunities for personal reflection, there's  
9 opportunities for them to be able to talk to other folks  
10 as part of their development and that culture is also  
11 growing in schools, so those are some changes I would  
12 expect to see for certain.

13 MS. AUDREY SOGLIN: Well I think we would have  
14 teachers moving to Illinois because they would be working  
15 with effective leaders, they would be in a culture that  
16 embraces a professional learning community approach, where  
17 they have meaningful data, they're sharing with their  
18 colleagues, their classrooms are open, they are excited  
19 about the voice that they have around decision making and  
20 autonomy that doesn't shy away from the accountability  
21 because once they have the systems that they need and we  
22 create the environment in which they can thrive, that's my  
23 hope, of what I'll be able to say in front of you in three

1 years, and that we've got people climbing the walls to get  
2 into Illinois.

3 MS. SUSIE MORRISON: I think also at the end of  
4 this time we would expect to see an alignment of our  
5 system with very clear defined expectations of what does  
6 it mean to be college and career ready in Illinois and  
7 that we have a system that start really at birth, early  
8 childhood, that aligns to get students toward that end so  
9 that they really are prepared for non-remedial course work  
10 as they leave the K-12 system and are prepared for success  
11 beyond.

12 REVIEWER #3: I wanted to follow up to one of  
13 the earlier questions in reference to how do you sustain  
14 reforms. One of the strategies you all outlined was the  
15 inclusion of the P-20 Council, role of meeting and  
16 collaboration. As I read your proposal they are  
17 identified as playing as only an advisory role. How do  
18 you ensure that, that group will have the peak of the  
19 political capital to actually sustain the reforms that are  
20 listed?

21 MR. MIGUEL DEL VALLE: We are technically an  
22 advisory body, we will make recommendations to the  
23 governor and to the general assembly, but we have strong

1 leadership on the council and we are going to play a very  
2 active role and are playing an active role in facilitating  
3 that kind of collaboration that we talked about for some  
4 time now. The collaboration translates into increased  
5 accountability. We will have less finger pointing, the  
6 community colleges will not say that the reason so many  
7 kids have to take developmental courses when they start is  
8 because the high schools are not adequately preparing and  
9 then the high schools say well the reason we're not  
10 adequately preparing because when we get them from 8<sup>th</sup>  
11 grade after 8<sup>th</sup> grade or from middle school they're not  
12 adequately prepared and then the middle schools well if we  
13 had more access to early childhood education opportunities  
14 in Head start, etc, kids would be better prepared,  
15 everyone points the finger at another level. The colleges  
16 of education will say well if we had a better trained high  
17 school graduate, a better pool of people to draw from for  
18 our teacher training program we would be in better shape.  
19 All of those things are true to a certain extent, but what  
20 the P-20 Council does is, it has everyone speaking around  
21 a table, literally speaking around a table on an ongoing  
22 basis and being part of a plan that supports our higher  
23 education agency as they implement their public agenda

1 which they've developed, our community colleges have  
2 developed a work plan but rather than having those operate  
3 in silos they are connecting and we are looking at  
4 transition points and making sure that, transition points  
5 beginning with making sure that we have kindergarten  
6 readiness standard in place and a process for assessing  
7 kindergarten readiness all the way through graduate  
8 school. That type of collaboration in Illinois is  
9 unprecedented; I can tell you it's never happened before.  
10 What kind of results will that yield, will it yield all  
11 the results that we're looking for. My guess is it won't  
12 produce everything we want it to but it's a big giant step  
13 in the right direction and that's what I think we want to  
14 highlight today.

15 REVIEWER 1: Thank you. We're at about 56 seconds so if  
16 you would like to make a closing statement.

17 MR. CHRISTOPHER KOCH: The research consortium  
18 is another thing we haven't talked about, but it's a model  
19 where we have two pockets of research in the state, we  
20 don't have to do this all at the state agency, why can't  
21 we use the expertise of universities in Illinois we have  
22 many good ones. Here's an example, handing them over, let  
23 them look at the data and by having that outside

1 accountability of folks raising and using data, that's  
2 also a means of compelling the state to change, again  
3 we're not afraid of that we want to see our data used. We  
4 want to know what's going on in the local schools. We  
5 have education reform groups in Illinois that are looking  
6 at us, again I don't mind the critics as long as it's data  
7 and as long as we're looking at making decisions on policy  
8 in a forward way for the state and we have a lot of folks  
9 as Miguel said right now aligned to that vision and I  
10 believe it can work and will work in our state.

11 REVIERWER #1: Thank you very much everyone.  
12 Meeting ended.

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