

Connecticut's ROUND II Race to the Top Application: Frequently Asked Questions¹

“Every child in America deserves a world-class education. Today, more than ever, a world-class education is a prerequisite for success. America was once the best educated nation in the world. A generation ago, we led all nations in college completion, but today, 10 countries have passed us. It is not that their students are smarter than ours. It is that these countries are being smarter about how to educate their students. And the countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow.

We must do better. Together, we must achieve a new goal, that by 2020, the United States will once again lead the world in college completion. We must raise the expectations for our students, for our schools, and for ourselves – this must be a national priority. We must ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career.”

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

A Blueprint for Reform: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
March 2010

Reframing Connecticut's Race to the Top Round II Application: Academic and Personal Success for All

1. What is the Race to the Top theory of change for comprehensive school reform? How does this relate to ESEA reauthorization proposals?
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1. What is the Race to the Top theory of change for comprehensive school reform? How does this relate to ESEA reauthorization proposals?

The Race to the Top theory of change has four interlocking components that together result in comprehensive school reform: High common standards and assessments; P-20 longitudinal data systems; Great teachers and principals; Turning around low performing schools. These four areas constitute the four goals of every Race to the Top application in the country.

Common Standards and Assessments

This assurance requires statewide adoption and use of national Common Standards (what students should know and be able to do), national Common Assessments and state-specific formative and other assessments of student progress.

Data Systems Development and Use

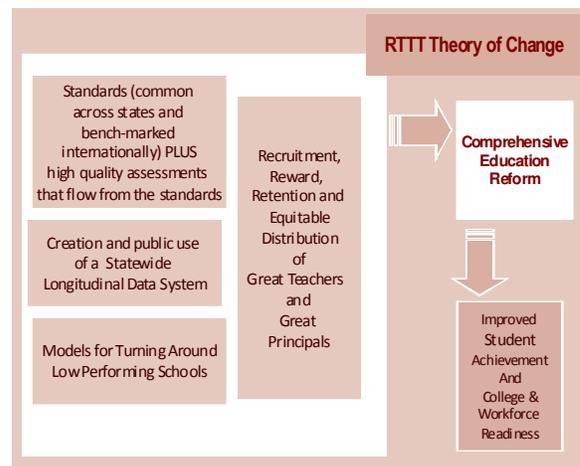
This assurance requires development and use of P-20 longitudinal student, teacher, principal and higher education data to track performance change in real time, provide timely feedback to guide instruction at the classroom level each year for each grade, make data on performance and effectiveness publicly available to parents, practitioners and policy makers, and engage researchers in the use of data to determine what programs and practices contribute most to student, teacher and principal performance. Performance data includes student achievement and growth, LEA teacher and principal effectiveness, and the effectiveness of higher institutions in the preparation of effective teachers and principals.

Effective Teachers and Principals

This assurance requires states to increase the numbers and equitable distribution of effective (and highly effective) teachers and principals, anchored in a performance evaluation system that includes student growth as a “significant” measure. In this new system, “effective” is defined as student growth of one grade level a year and “highly effective” is defined as at least one and a half years of student growth in one year. Race to the Top also expects states to have to develop alternative pathways for individuals to become teachers and principals and to share data on K-12 student performance with the institutions of higher education in the state that have prepared their teachers. Finally, Race to the Top expects states to support LEAs in this work by providing access to a comprehensive, effective system of professional development for all educators.

Turning Around Low Performing Schools

Race to the Top requires restructuring of the lowest 5% of the state’s persistently low performing schools, with resulting student achievement gains, using one of four specified turnaround models: (a) turnaround model; (b) restart model; (c) school closure model; and (d) transformation model. To support the work of state’s in implementing this goal of Race to the Top, federal grants have been



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made available through the School Improvement Grant, just recently awarded to states. NOTE: Connecticut has received just over \$26 million dollars for use over a three-year period to do this work.

Linking Race to the Top to ESEA Reauthorization

Based on the March 2010 US Department of Education's report *A Blueprint for Reform: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, it is clear that the federal government sees a very significant overlap in RTTT goals and theory of change and the framework for reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Indeed, Race to the Top is embedded in one of the six priorities identified for investment of ESEA resources, both formula funding and competitive grants.

The ESEA proposal explicitly supports and continues the four components of the Race to the Top theory of change, and the Race to the Top initiative is itself embedded in the proposed reauthorization of ESEA. Attention to building and supporting effective educators under the Race to the Top definition is explicitly continued in two of the six ESEA priorities.

Notably, four of the six priorities in the ESEA proposal focus on the academic and personal well-being of students, from the years before formal schooling through post-secondary completion and work. This expands the strongly K-12 focus of Race to the Top.

The final two priority areas are dedicated to fostering innovation, excellence and choice in K-12 education, and to the articulation of a series of cross-cutting priorities that include resource expansion and flexibility for successful programs, the promotion and reward of efficiencies, evaluation and knowledge development, and technology.

The bottom line?

The connections between Race to the Top and the ESEA reauthorization proposal are clear and explicit. When ESEA is reauthorized over the next year, all of the voluntary requirements of RTTT will be required under federal law.

Given the opportunity for new federal funding to support the change process now available, it is in the best interest of all Connecticut K-12 teachers, superintendents and boards of education to sign onto Connecticut's Round II RTTT reform effort. Once ESEA is reauthorized, all districts will have to do so anyway.

ESEA Priorities for Investment	
College- and Career-Ready Students Standards/ Assessments; Data systems/ use; Challenge Schools; Turnaround school grants; Resource equity	Successful, Safe, Healthy Students Cradle to Career continuum in high poverty communities Redesign & expand school schedule, quality afterschool, comprehensive supports
Effective Teachers & Leaders RTTT effectiveness definitions Student growth measurement T & P Evaluation Systems Public reports on T & P performance Teacher/Leader Innovation Fund Teacher pathways Transformation leaders for Turnaround Schools	Fostering Innovation & Excellence Race to the Top Investing in Innovation Supporting Effective Charters Promoting school choice Magnet school assistance program
Programs for Diverse Learners English Learner education...Students With disabilities, Migrant education...Homeless, neglected & Delinquent student, Impact Aid	Cross-Cutting Priorities 1 ESEA funding flexibility Expansion funding for success Evaluation and Knowledge Base Cross-Cutting Priorities 2 Technology, Evidence, Efficiency English Learners/ Special Ed/ Rural

2. By what process did Connecticut get feedback on its Round I application?

The Connecticut State Department of Education engaged in a multi-level process to get feedback and critiques of its Round I application. First, it solicited a section-by-section review by two outside individuals within Connecticut and invited CSDE staff to do the same. These comments were consolidated and shared within the Department. Second, it obtained – as did all applicant states – the scoring and federal reviewer comments from the formal Race to the Top Round I review process. This information – available to the general public on the federal Race to the Top website -- was consolidated and analyzed by the department’s RTTT Steering Committee. Finally, the Commissioner of Education hosted two lengthy conversation forums with key stakeholders in later March to solicit ideas and comment that would be used as input to the Round II application.

Based on all of this information, the department’s grant writer began drafting the application incorporating information learned from these various sources.

Results of the Round I Federal Review

Connecticut’s Round I Race to the Top application received a score of 346 out of 500 points. Based on its score, Connecticut’s rank among the 40 applicant states and the District of Columbia was 25th. Points awarded by section are shown below.

Table X. Summary of Round I Race to the Top Scores for Connecticut						
Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E	Section F	Section G
State Success Factors	Standards & Assessments	Data Systems & Use	Great Teachers & Principals	Turnaround Schools	General (Ed funding, charters , other reforms)	STEM
88 out of 125	62 out of 70	29 out Of 47	95 out Of 138	35 out of 50	35 out Of 55	0 out Of 15

3. What’s new in the ROUND II Race to the Top application?

Connecticut’s Round II Race to the Top application represents substantial rethinking and improvement over our first application. This process was aided immeasurably by the opportunity to receive internal and external reviews of our Round I application, including those of the federal scorers. In addition, we have examined the solid proposals of other states, and we have carefully reviewed the U.S. Department of Education’s *Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (March 2010).

For Connecticut, the period between January 19th and June 1, 2010 has been a time of intensive work and learning. We believe that the reform agenda outlined below will not only accelerate student achievement gains over the next four years, but also give strong evidence that “public education” in Connecticut is itself capable of learning and change over a short period of time. Important changes that illustrate our interim learning process are summarized below.

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First, we have sharpened our vision for change based on new analyses of student achievement data. We did not include quantitative goals in our Round I application, but we do so here.

Second, we will make our proven instructional improvement process – the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) – accessible to all school districts in the State of Connecticut. CALI was described in the September 2009 Interim Evaluation in this way: “CALI is a strong model for school and district improvement. It is likely that few states have created a statewide system that is as comprehensive, as well thought out, and as intensive in what it does as CALI (see Appendix A-1 for a copy of the Interim Evaluation Report).

Third, we have identified six levers for change through which to implement the required assurances of Race to the Top. Connecticut’s six levers for making comprehensive educational change are: (1) Family and community engagement; (2) Pre-service training and professional development; (3) Teacher, Principal effectiveness and accountability; (4) Curriculum innovation and technology, including STEM; (5) High school, college and workforce alignment; and (6) Financing sustainable change.

Fourth, we have expanded our view of project management from one directed largely by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to one anchored in broadly inclusive, public-private leadership. While it brings the same high level of CSDE fiscal and program administration that characterized our Round I application, the modified framework includes a strong public-private *Shared Leadership Council* responsible for project learning and management and six new public-private *Partnerships for Change*, each of which is assigned responsibility for one of the six levers of change.

Finally, our application includes seven landmark changes adopted on May 5, 2010 by the Connecticut General Assembly. These changes are:

1. Increase the rigor and requirements for high school graduation in Connecticut;
2. Expand the capabilities of the State Longitudinal Data System;
3. Implement a teacher evaluation system linking student and teacher performance;
4. Give the Commissioner of Education the authority to reconstitute local or regional Boards of Education in persistently low-performing districts;
5. Create a fast-track route for principal development and certification;
6. Authorize school governance councils in persistently low-performing schools including parents, teachers and community leaders who may call for school restructuring; and
7. Remove enrollment caps on high performing Connecticut charter schools.

Section (A) of the application requires the presentation of the state’s vision for comprehensive educational reform along with a summary of what we will get there in partnership with educators at the district and school level and a broad group of other essential partners at the family, comment and state level.

The following elements of Connecticut’s agenda for change are outlined in this section of the grant application:

- Connecticut’s Vision for Change
- Connecticut’s Bold but Achievable Goals for Student Achievement
- The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)
- Connecticut’s Six Levers of Change

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- Shared Leadership Council and Partnerships for Change
- Reform Elements: Responsibilities of the State
- Reform Elements: Responsibilities of Participating Districts
- Resource Allocations
- The Context for Making Education Change in Connecticut.

4. What is our vision for coherent, comprehensive reform of Connecticut public education, pre-school to post-secondary?

Connecticut's vision for change is built upon but expands the theory of change set out in Race to the Top. At its heart, Connecticut's plan for comprehensive educational reform is about "success," specifically the academic and personal success of *all* students.

Preparation for this success must begin before students stand at the door to kindergarten for what should be, for all, a sustained and grand adventure in learning. And the success we seek does not end as high school seniors walk across the dais to receive their diplomas. Connecticut students must complete their K-12 experience both college- and career-ready, with a base of knowledge, skills and behaviors that will enable them to remain constant learners in a world where dramatic expansion of knowledge is the norm and not the exception. Our current trajectory for educational change predicts that *all* students who enter the 5th grade in 2010 will graduate in 2018 fully college- and career-ready. With financial support from the Race to the Top initiative coupled with the opportunity to become a member of the resulting Race to the Top cohort of educational change leaders, we plan to accelerate the pace of change.

As state data analyses have clearly shown, about a third of Connecticut's young students are thoroughly "ready for kindergarten" when they begin school and eight out of ten progress through the K-12 system with high levels of proficiency on state assessments (see Section (A)(3)). Emerging data from our institutions of higher education indicates, however, that many of these students are not actually "college-ready" at graduation and require an extensive period of post-secondary remediation in order to enroll in credit-bearing courses. Our vision for these students is that achievement performance will progress from proficiency to the state's goal level and beyond and that those with exceptional records and competencies will successfully complete more AP courses, participate in dual enrollment programs that allow college courses to be taken in high schools, and – based on exceptional records, competencies and examinations – actually graduate as early as the end of 10th grade.

This vision of change cannot be accomplished by the state's 166 LEAs, or its excellent charter, magnet or inter-district schools, its fine Technical High School System or the State Department of Education alone. The change that Connecticut seeks for all of its students from their pre-school years through post-secondary education must be anchored in an expanding set of partnerships -- inclusive in membership, focused on outcomes, and willing to share leadership, resources and accountability for results – coupled with public confirmation of a higher set of expectations and much more rigor at all levels and among all partners.

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How will we make this vision real for all students and all educators?

First we will adopt the four “assurances” that serve as the Race to the Top Theory of Change

These assurances – common standards and assessments, data systems and their use, the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, and models for restructuring persistently low-performing schools -- were described earlier. See Question #1.

Second, we will require and support LEA participation in the CT Accountability for Learning Initiative

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) brings school districts and schools into a continuous change process based on altering the culture, beliefs, behaviors and leadership of teachers and administrators. Core elements of CALI include data-driven analysis, goal setting and decision-making supported through intensive professional development and coaching. The goal of CALI is to change *adult* behaviors which lead to where increased student achievement can flourish. CALI has been employed with 15 of Connecticut’s most challenged school districts over the past three years, supported by strong accountability legislation passed in 2007. Connecticut’s Round II Race to the Top application will enable *all* districts who sign on to receive the technical, human resource and fiscal supports necessary to implement CALI in their districts and communities. See Question #9 for more detail.

Third, we will employ six public-private partnerships to support implementation of Connecticut’s reform agenda. Each of these partnerships represents one of Connecticut’s six levers of change.

To assist the State Department of Education in building and managing this complex process of education reform, the Commissioner of Education has established a leadership structure that includes six “Partnerships for Change.” Each Partnership consists of a highly competent team of leaders who, with their host organizations, have made a multi-year commitment to helping to implement Connecticut’s comprehensive education reform agenda.

In addition to its work on supporting the six levers of change, each partnership operates as an analytic and knowledge resource to the Department of Education, examining the progress of the initiative, recommending solutions to the inevitable challenges and barriers that we will face, providing advice on the uses of Race to the Top and other funding, and representing Connecticut’s Race to the Top initiative to key stakeholder audiences. Members of each partnership will include statewide and local leaders from inside and outside of the K-12 education sector in Connecticut. Sectors represented on the partnerships include the business and employment sector, philanthropy, higher education, early childhood, local government and the nonprofit human service sector.

The partnerships – and, thus, the six levers of change – are:

- Partnership for Family and Community Engagement
- Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development
- Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability
- Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology
- Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment
- Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change.

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Fourth, we will pay special attention to four key Connecticut reform themes.

Throughout our Round II application and as part of our ongoing reform agenda, systematic attention will be given to each of these four themes:

- Establishing a PreK-3 framework for early education in Connecticut to assure young children's readiness for school and their early learning success
- The integration of STEM experiences at all levels of Connecticut's preschool to post-secondary education system
- Targeted attention to the special needs of English Language Learners and other subgroups that constitute Connecticut's significant achievement gap, and
- Development of a "knowledge network" with Connecticut's vast but often under-utilized higher education research community.

Finally, we will implement a new shared leadership and management structure to guide and support Connecticut's comprehensive reform agenda.

While much of the responsibility for creating a culture of learning with high expectations, high standards and high accountability resides at the school district and community level, statewide policies, resources and institutions can also support or hinder the change we seek. To assist, the Department of Education will draw upon the Shared Leadership of the state's P20 Council. The Shared Leadership Council represents stakeholder groups essential to make the policy, practice and program changes necessary for dramatic improvement in student achievement. The Council is chaired by the Connecticut Commissioner of Education. Connecticut is committed to learning from our successful LEAs, other states and stakeholder sectors (particularly around innovation) and then disseminating this knowledge in a persistent, consistent and compelling way. These two functions – knowledge development and knowledge dissemination – are the core functions of Connecticut's Race to the Top *Knowledge Network*.

5. What will LEAs and SDE/other statewide organizations do to implement Connecticut's agenda for change?

Race to the Top Reform Elements: Responsibilities of the State

Over the period January through May 2010, we have assimilated and considered hundreds of comments from our original signatories - from LEAs to stakeholder groups - from internal and external reviews of the Round I application (including the highly useful federal review released in late March 2010), and from groups representing vulnerable populations of our student population, preschool through postsecondary. We have also read the applications of the finalist states, learning where we have strengths and where our application needs to change. The information below summarizes the core components of our Round II application.

Standards and Assessments

Connecticut will adopt both the Common Standards (July 2010) and Common Standards (once they have been developed and reviewed nationally). In addition, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted legislation increasing high school graduation credits from 20 to 25 beginning with the freshman class that enters in the fall of 2014. Legislation was also enacted authorizing pathways to early high school graduation including implementation of the Board Examination System. We aim to become the 32nd

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state to adopt College- and Career Ready Standards and we will also align our K-12 standards down to reach into preschool and up to achieve concordance with college entry requirements.

We will support the vital work at the local school district and school levels with comprehensive professional development to assist in the transition of existing curricula to content, activities and expectation more in line with both the Common Standards and emerging research on next generation learners. Training on CALI and SRBI will be available to all districts. We will also provide LEAs with training and technical support for the development and increased use of formative and benchmark assessments that flow from the Common Standards. Finally, the state's curriculum website will be enhanced to carry the Common Standards, aligned curriculum modules and activities for LEA use and standards-aligned home learning materials for parents and the community.

Data Systems to Support Instruction and Guide Decision-Making Related to Student Success

Connecticut fully supports the ever-improving *collection and use* of data as one of the core areas of educational improvement infrastructure. To support this, Connecticut's education reform agenda and state reform plan ensure compliance with the three core components explicit in the RTTT data systems assurance. First, Connecticut's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) will be completed to include the final work on the remaining six America COMPETES requirements that are in progress but not completely accomplished. Second, the CSDE will implement a series of outreach and data access strategies to make data more accessible to a broad group of RTTT defined constituencies, as well as improve timely access to data essential to improving educational policymaking, operation and research. Third, Connecticut will continue its current track efforts — implemented most fully through CALI — to use data-driven decision making at the LEA level to build and operate formal instructional improvement systems.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Connecticut's plan for great teachers and leaders will integrate all the innovations contemplated for the statewide reform plan as well as Departmental support for school and district improvement, including CALI. It will build upon nationally recognized programs and practices that have historically placed Connecticut as a leader in teacher quality, and it will build and implement a new framework for training teachers and administrators among the next decade. The RTTT opportunity comes at a time when Connecticut is already building and implementing a comprehensive teacher quality system.

Our Round II plan for great teachers and leaders includes the following reform elements:

- Implementation of 2010 state reform legislation authorizing fast-track development of alternative pathways for principal development
- Expansion of Connecticut's Grade 3-8 student growth measurement model up to grades 9-12 and down to grades K-2
- Exploration of an earlier completion date for the data architecture to connect student records to teachers, principals and the Connecticut public institutions of higher education that prepare our in-state educators
- Development of a proxy "effectiveness performance model" created in a small set of pilot schools while statewide work is completed on a new evaluation system for all teachers and administrations that includes student growth measures
- Development and adoption of a new formal process to determine the "effectiveness" of schools of education based on the performance of their teacher and principal graduates in advancing student learning
- Extensive statewide professional development for school and administrators/principals and teachers

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- Support for full implementation of the CT Accountability for Learning Initiative coupled with expansion of Scientific Research Based Interventions (serving as an early warning system for students in need of additional support and intervention).

Turnaround Schools

CSDE will continue to expand the use of CALI as a core intervention process. In addition, the Department is expanding support for the use of Scientific Research Based Interventions for low performing districts (and, indeed, for statewide use through our Round II Race to the Top application). In April 2010, Connecticut received a federal School Improvement Grant of \$26 million dollars that will be allocated, based on approved districts' plans, to the state's lowest performing districts (Tier I). The work to implement the SIG grant will be tightly coordinated with Connecticut's Race to the Top efforts in districts with Tier I schools. In addition, Connecticut will continue its strong emphasis on the expansion of choice programs and high performing innovative charter, magnet and inter-district schools.

Reform Conditions: Responsibilities of Participating Districts

Each LEA that agrees to participate in the Round II Race to the Top reform effort agrees to each of the following activities, listed below by reform category.

Standards and Assessments

Each LEA will support the transition to and implementation of Common Standards and high quality assessments and participate in activities designed to create high school, college and workforce alignment. Districts will also collaborate with the State Department of Education to design and provide input on initiatives concerning high school, college and workforce transitions. On an optional basis, LEAs may elect to participate in a pilot of the Board Examination Project sponsored by the National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE).

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Each LEA will participate in the on-going development of the State's integrated PK-16 Student Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS). LEAs agree to and participate in professional development on the use of data and use data to improve instruction. LEAs will also participate in the expansion of the state longitudinal data system to include student schedule, staff modules and other indicators as specified in the new education reform legislation passed by the Connecticut General Assembly. LEAs will integrate the CMT vertical scale results as a component of local accountability to measure student growth. LEAs will use and provide data to the Connecticut Education Data and Research (CEDaR) to support evaluation of the RTTT initiatives and make available appropriate data for research and program evaluation.

Great Teachers and Leaders: 21st Century Teaching, Learning and Assessment

21st Century Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Each LEA will implement aspects of the Connecticut Eight-Year Plan for Secondary School Reform. LEAs may elect to pilot the NCEE Board Examination Project (see above) but must expand access to Advanced Placement opportunities for students. LEAs will initiate or participate in projects promoting innovative instructional practices promoting STEM innovation initiatives. LEAs will be called upon to participate in projects and professional development programs to enhance parental and community involvement; while promoting strong school cultures and that foster equity, diversity, and respect for individual differences as integral components of effective classroom instruction.

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Supervision and Evaluation. Each LEA agrees to implement a new, comprehensive system for supporting, supervising and evaluating teachers and principals, to be developed by CSDE in collaboration with external partners and LEAs. LEAs will use the new evaluation system to conduct annual evaluations that will inform professional development and personnel decisions around compensation, retention, tenure and removal.

Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals. All LEAs will collaborate with CSDE to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals via competitive grants and state-sponsored incentive programs. Grants will assist districts in recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly effective teachers and principals in shortage areas and disadvantaged communities (*LEAs must apply for these incentive funds from CSDE*).

Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). Each LEA will implement – over a period of four years – the core CALI training modules: Data Driven Decision Making; Making Standards Work; Effective Teaching Strategies; Common Formative Assessments; and School Climate to Support Student Achievement. LEAs will develop a measurable District Improvement Plan and school improvement plans with limited focus and annual targets for improving student achievement. Each LEA will implement the three-tiered system of accountability through district, school and instructional data teams.

Turn Around Schools

For eligible schools in the following districts -- Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Windham and the Stamford Academy, participating districts will implement all of the requirements of Section 1003 (g) of the ESEA Title I School Improvement Grants. For each approved school, the LEA will implement all of the federal requirements of one of four reform models: turn around schools; transformational schools; restart schools; and closure. The principals of SIG schools will participate in a professional learning community with the State Department of Education.

6. How will we measure progress?

A series of processes and formats will be developed, with LEA input and input from the six Partnerships of Change, by which Connecticut will track (a) the implementation process, and (b) specific outcomes to be documented with data over time.

7. How will we use RTTT funds and sustain the RTTT fiscal investment at the end of four years?

If funded under Race to the Top, Connecticut will receive up to \$175 million dollars over the four-year period, 2010-2104. Our Round II application budgets for and requests the maximum amount. A requirement for use of half of the funding is specified in federal law. As required, half -- \$87.5 million -- will be allocated directly to Title I LEAs to support the state's education reform agenda as outlined in the ROUND II application and in the LEA Memorandum of Understanding signed by participating LEAs.

In addition to their Title I allocation described above, Title I LEAs that participate in Race to the Top and operate grades Kindergarten through 12 schools, will each receive an additional \$140,000 over a four-year period. All other LEAs that opt to sign onto the Race to the Top application will each receive \$100,000 over a four-year period. Regional Educational Service Centers and the Connecticut Technical High School System will also receive \$140,000 in this additional allocation of the state portion of Race to

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the Top funds. This use of funds from the state's portion is equal to \$23.9 million. The total amount of Race to the Top funding allocated directly for LEA use is \$111,360,000 (64%).

Of the remaining funds, roughly \$12.5 million will be retained by the Connecticut State Department of Education for staffing and other support required to accomplish its responsibilities in each of the four assurance areas. The balance, \$50.8 million will be guided by recommendations of the six partnerships described earlier.

Please note: The exact dollar amounts may change prior to submittal of Connecticut's Round II application and then again in negotiations with the U.S. Department of Education when Connecticut has been selected as Round II grantee. Despite the possibility of some change in resource amounts, the general distribution of funds outlined above will give you an idea of current State of Connecticut intent.

Sustainability through State Funds Repurposing

In Connecticut's Round I application, we committed to a multi-year process, beginning in 2010-2011 to develop a plan for sustainability without the reliance on new state, local or federal funding. While we believe that the conditions for change instilled in the Race to the Top will be substantially included in the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we do not anticipate that large amounts of new federal funding will become available through this process.

Knowing this, the Commissioner of Education has established a Partnership for Financing Sustained Change, to be co-led by a senior leader at the State Department of Education with one or more co-chairpersons from the higher education and private business sector. This group will convene first in September 2010 to develop a plan of action and analysis that will result, by December of 2011, in a set of findings describing Connecticut's current educational funding patterns and a set of recommendations for change, including repurposing existing federal and state funding across agencies to focus on expanding and sustaining the conditions resulting in dramatic improvements in student achievement as predicted in this application. Second, the State Board of Education created an Ad Hoc Committee to review and recommend changes in the state's funding methodologies for charter and magnet schools. That report is due later in 2010.

Taken together, these steps will move Connecticut closer to a better strategy to finance its public schools.

¹ **Please Note:** Connecticut's Round II RTTT Application is still in development and these FAQ's are subject to change.