

RACE TO THE TOP AND EDUCATION REFORM PLAN UPDATE

BACKGROUND

Race to the Top Application

At the May Board meeting, the Board passed the following motion requesting the following information as part of the Race to the Top Application:

Authorization of State Board of Education Chair to Sign Race to the Top Education Reform Grant Application

Motion was made to authorize the Board's Chair to sign the Washington Race to the Top Education Reform Grant Application, provided that the Chair deems the following three conditions are met:

1. The Race to the Top application clearly shows:
 - a. How the state education agency will organize itself to implement the state's education reform plan.
 - b. How the state will organize the overall governance structure to oversee the execution of the state's education reform plan.
2. The Race to the Top application contains clear baseline information, action strategies, and ways to measure progress for each of the state's four major reform goals.
3. A final state education reform plan complete with implementation detail will be completed by September 15, 2010 with a more full, robust engagement with our stakeholders. Work plan tasks and timelines will be signed off by each member of the steering committee prior to the Race to the Top application sign-off.

The final application met the Board's requirements in its motion, stated above, with the exception of the date of September 15, 2010 for completion of the Education Reform Plan. The Race to the Top Steering and Coordinating Committees agreed that the feedback and development of the education plan should continue this fall and then be presented to the legislature in 2011 for their approval before the Education Reform Plan is finalized. Attachment A provides an executive summary of Washington's Race to the Top Application, including the timeline for completion of the education reform plan.

Under the State/ Local Partnership Agreement, 265 local districts representing 97 percent of the school districts signed onto the grant application. The Race to the Top Steering Committee (the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and State Board of Education Chair) signed off on the grant application and it was delivered to the U.S. Department of Education on June 1. Mary Jean Ryan represented the Board at the June 1 press conference announcing Washington's grant submittal.

A total of 35 states and the District of Columbia applied for Round Two of the Race to the Top Education Reform Grant. Our grant along with the other states is posted at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase2-applications/index.html>

The U.S. Department of Education will notify applicants if they are in the final pool for interviews by the end of July. If you visit the above U.S. Department of Education website at that time, you will be able to see the scores Washington received. Sometime during the week of August 9, states will go to present their applications and answer questions. Each team will bring five people from their state to present.

The Steering Committee will meet July 6 to discuss the application, preparation for the potential interviews, and the education reform plan. Information from that meeting will be shared with the Board at the July Board meeting.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The Board will discuss its role in advancing the draft Education Reform Plan. This is one item of the Board's strategic plan. A draft of the Education Reform Plan revisions should be available at the July Board meeting.

EXPECTED ACTION

No action is expected.

June 2010 Executive Summary of Washington's Race to the Top Application

On June 1, 2010 the state of Washington submitted a \$250 million, four-year application to the United State's Education Department's Race to the Top competitive grant program, Round Two. The Race to the Top program is funded under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Race to the Top encourages and rewards states that are implementing significant reforms in four education Reform Criteria:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students for success.
- Preparing, recruiting, supporting, and retaining effective teachers and principals.
- Improving the use of data to inform and improve practices.
- Turning around the lowest performing schools.

The 2009 and 2010 Washington State legislative sessions accelerated state education reform efforts on two major fronts: 1) a redefinition of Basic Education and a comprehensive review of the state education finance system through Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2261 in 2009 and Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2776 in 2010, and 2) the passage of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (E2SSB) 6696 in 2010.

These laws are crucial elements of the state effort to ensure high-quality teaching and learning environments for all students in all schools in Washington. A Steering Committee – comprised of Governor Gregoire, Superintendent Dorn, and the State Board Chair Ryan – indicated that if E2SSB 6696 had not passed in early March 2010, Washington State would not be able to make a viable Round Two Race to the Top Program application (it had already made that decision in regard to sitting out Round One of the competition, which awarded competitive funds to just two states: Delaware and Tennessee). When E2SSB 6696 did indeed pass and was signed into law by Governor Gregoire, the Round Two Race to the Top Program application effort expanded as did discussions about developing an Education Reform Plan Framework. In addition, the Steering Committee –with newly elected State Board Chair Vincent– accelerated communications in relation to required and optional/competitive elements of Washington's Race to the Top Partnership Agreement, which is Washington's name for the federally-mandated Memorandum of Understanding with participating districts.

Following the federal Race to the Top Program and i3 models, Washington decided on an approach to the Partnership Agreement that supports both required and optional/competitive elements. This includes the idea of supporting model programs or research-based local school district efforts that are considered innovative or break-through – evolving into the concept of innovation clusters tied to the four federal Reform Criteria.

The optional/competitive elements, or innovation clusters, represent the only “conditional items” that could extend beyond current collective bargaining agreements. By nature, they are bolder and more ambitious in nature, and necessitate school districts to indicate a specific interest in competing for additional optional/competitive funds.

As foundational elements of the state's Education Reform Plan Framework and its Race to the Top application, four goals reflect the importance of aligning statewide P-20 education practices and systems; shifting from a compliance monitoring to a customized technical assistance and professional support approach; addressing ongoing student achievement gaps; enhancing student and educator prowess in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and preparing students for

success in college and beyond. The four state goals are for all Washington students to: 1) enter kindergarten prepared for success; 2) compete in math and science nationally and internationally; 3) attain high academic standards regardless of race, ethnicity, income or gender; and 4) graduate able to succeed in college, training, and careers.

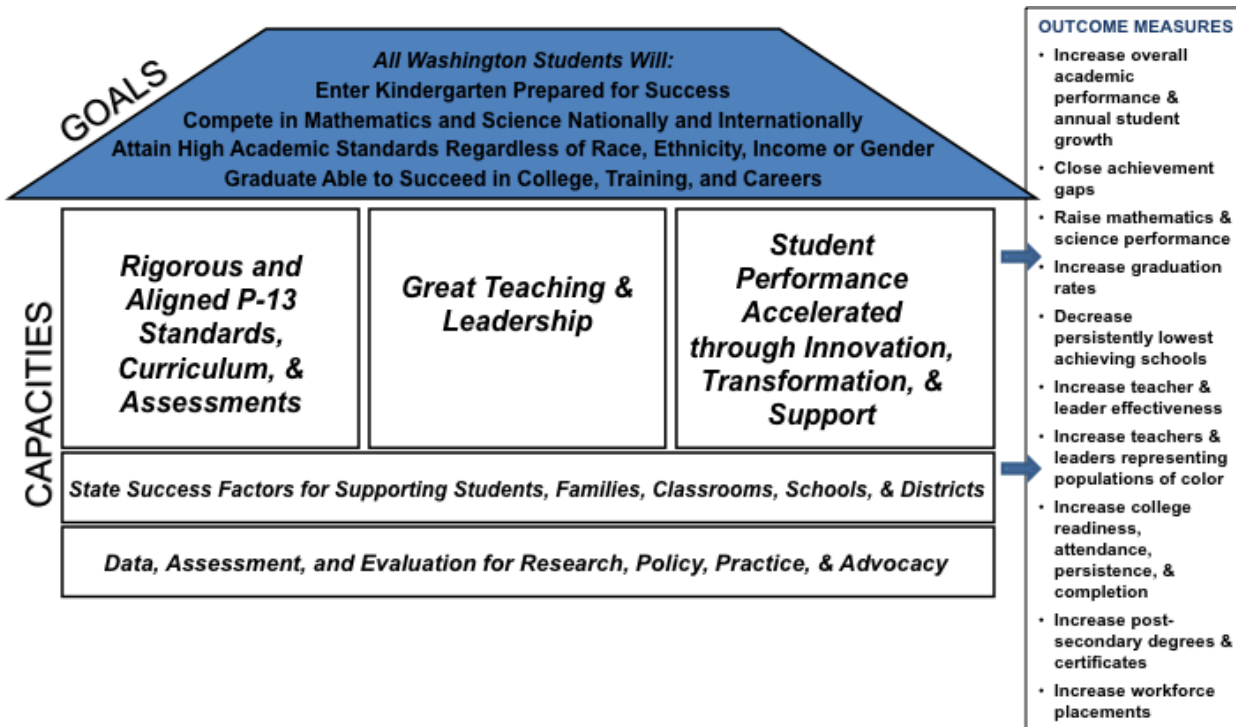
The framework includes a vision, the four goals, five capacities, and nine outcome measures (note that additional development of some strategies and measures, particularly in the post-secondary and early childhood arenas will occur as a 2010 Education Reform Plan is finalized and vetted with stakeholders during 2010). The five essential capacities characterize what school, district, regional, state, agency, board and commission staff need to excel at. Furthermore, the capacities highlight strategies for enabling, or implementing, comprehensive and deep education reform.

The state bases its four goals, five capacities and outcome measures on several research activities: the results from a fall 2009 diagnostic of the state’s various strengths and weaknesses relative to the four federal Reform Criteria; an analysis of current conditions and recent student performance data; input from work teams organized around Reform Criteria and Washington priority areas; current funding and initiatives; and the new education reform legislation. The vision, graphical depiction of the framework, and specific performance targets follow.

Vision

All Washington students will be prepared to succeed in the 21st century world of work, learning, and global citizenship.

Education Reform Plan Framework



Performance Targets

Goal	Performance Targets
<p>1. Students enter kindergarten prepared for success</p>	<p>Increase percentage of Washington public school kindergarten students participating in full-day kindergarten* from 33% of total kindergartners in 2009 to 40% in 2013, and 85% in 2018**</p> <p>*There will be results starting in 2010 from early learning and development benchmarks and a kindergarten readiness assessment process; full-day kindergarten is used as a proxy to reflect state commitment to early learning.</p> <p>**2018 is used because that is the new definition of Basic Education, which includes statewide implementation of full-day kindergarten, is expected to be fully funded as per Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 and Substitute House Bill 2776.</p>
<p>2. Students compete in mathematics and science nationally and internationally</p>	<p>Raise math and science performance levels overall by four percentage points per year between 2009 and 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth grade increase in passing rates on state mathematics exams from 52.3% overall in 2009 to 68.3% in 2013 and 88.3% in 2018. • Fifth grade increase in passing rates on state science exams from 44.9% overall in 2009 to 60.9% in 2013 and 80.9% in 2018. • Eighth grade, increase passing rates on state science exams from 51% overall in 2009 to 67% in 2013 and 87% in 2018. • Eighth grade increase passing rates on state mathematics exams from 50.8% in 2009 to 66.8% in 2013 and 86.8% in 2018. • Tenth grade, increase passing rates on state science exams from 38.8% in 2009 to 54.8% in 2013 and 74.8% in 2018. • Tenth grade, increase passing rates on state mathematics exams from 45.4% in 2009 to 61.4% in 2013 and 81.4% in 2018.
<p>3. Students attain high academic standards regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or gender</p>	<p>Close achievement gaps by increasing subgroup performance on state mathematics, science, reading, and writing exams by four percentage points each year per subgroup (Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Pacific Island students).</p> <p>Increase absolute student performance (and eventually student growth once those measures are in place) by three percentage points per year between 2009 and 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For science and mathematics, see above. • Fourth grade, increase passing rates on state reading exams from 73.6% overall in 2009 to 85.6% in 2013 and 98% in 2018; and in writing from 60.4% overall in 2009 to 72.4% in 2013 and 87.4% in 2018. • Eighth grade, increase passing rates on state reading exams from 67.5% in 2009 to 79.4% in 2013 and 94.4% in 2018. • Seventh grade, increase passing rates on state writing exams from 69.8% in 2009 to 81.8% in 2013 and 96.8% in 2018. • Tenth grade, increase state passing rates from 81.2% on state reading exams in 2009 to 93.2% in 2013 and 98% in 2018; and in writing from 86.7% in 2009 to 95% in 2013 and 98% in 2018.

Goal	Performance Targets
<p>4. Students graduate able to succeed in college, training, and careers</p>	<p>Increase AP course and exam participation rates of students of color by five percentage points in each subgroup each year between 2009 and 2018.</p> <p>Increase AP exam passing rates of students of color with scores of 3, 4 or 5 by two percentage points in each subgroup per year between 2009 and 2018.</p> <p>Raise cohort (four-year) graduation rates from 73.6% overall in 2009 to 80% in 2013 and 87% in 2018.</p> <p>Reduce cohort dropout rates from 19.4% overall in 2009 to 16% in 2013 and 10% in 2018</p> <p>Raise number of students going to postsecondary education and training within one year of high school graduation from 63% in 2008 to 71% in 2013 and 81% in 2018.</p> <p>Increase first to second year retention in Washington’s four-year colleges from 83.6% in 2008 to 86% in 2013 and 89% in 2018.</p> <p>Raise Washington’s rank status among states for students going right to college after high school graduation, from the bottom quarter in the nation in 2008 to the US average/national midpoint in 2013, and to above the national average by 2018 (based on NCHEMS data).</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Post Secondary degree completion for Washington high school students will be included when the longitudinal data system is fully implemented.</p>

These data and targets demonstrate the need for Washington to accelerate its progress and increase trends so that students of color and those living in poverty are performing at much higher levels in all subject areas. Additionally, all Washington students need to perform at higher levels in mathematics and science. Furthermore, tremendous disparities exist among rural, urban, and suburban communities, and among racial and ethnic groups in terms of how well K-12 graduates are prepared for life after high school. College and career readiness is essential to students’ future life, work, and earnings. However, in many Washington communities far fewer than half the students go on to any form of post-secondary education. And many who do go on require considerable remediation before beginning college-level courses – and then they quickly drop out. Additional challenges include: preparedness of kindergartners for success; achievement gaps, particularly in mathematics and science; and graduation and dropout rates. Washington’s Race to the Top Program application outlines strategies for redressing achievement gap and performance issues.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is the primary organization for leading, supporting, and overseeing the K-12 education system in Washington State. However, there are also a variety of legislatively mandated-departments, boards, commissions, and committees that possess a policy, legislative, governance, professional standards, or delivery role in relation to education in Washington State. Washington’s model for governance and implementation of Race to the Top builds on the strengths of Washington’s educational system and takes a staged approach to addressing systemic organizational and performance challenges. There will be dedicated offices and functions within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction devoted to Washington’s Race to the Top implementation. “Education Reform and Innovation” is used in the titles and offices responsible for education reform governance, oversight, coordination, leadership, and implementation. Furthermore, there will continue to be a shared governance structure (the Steering Committee, which will expand to include Professional Educator Standards Board Chair Rushing) to keep Washington leaders apprised of and

making strategic decisions about Washington's Race to the Top/ Education Reform and Innovation progress and deliverables.

The state of Washington applied for federal Race to the Top funds in support of specific portions of the Education Reform Plan Framework in conjunction with its "participating school districts". Signing on to the Partnership Agreement to become a participating school district entitles a school district to a proportionate share of one-half of the state Race to the Top grant funding should Washington State receive a Race to the Top grant award and eligibility to apply for optional/competitive funding.

The Race to the Top application budget model focuses on the level allowed for the State of Washington (\$250 Million) and the support of a combination of state *and* locally driven strategies. The Title I formula allocations to school districts were reviewed based on the current dollar limit. This review guided the decision to adjust downward the state's 50% grant portion (\$125 Million) by \$12.3 Million to create an equalization factor resource that was allocated to districts with little or no Title I funding.

Efforts across the state to involve districts in the Washington Race to the Top Partnership Agreement required *and* optional/competitive elements were overwhelmingly successful and demonstrated significant levels of commitment to the four Race to the Top Reform Criteria from across the state with 90% of districts in the state (265 of 295) signing the Partnership Agreement. These districts represent 95% of schools across the state, 97% of Washington's K-12 students, and 98% of Washington's students in poverty. Of those districts that signed the Partnership Agreement, 90% included a local school board president signature; 69% a teachers' union president signature; and 86% a principals' representative. These percentages are derived from those districts with teachers unions and and/or principal representative groups.

Fifty percent of the participating districts also indicated interest in competing to participate in one or more innovation cluster: 30% (79 of 265) of participating districts are interested in the Teacher and Leader Development and Effectiveness Innovation Cluster; 18% (47 of 265) of districts in the Struggling Schools Innovation Cluster; 40% (106 of 265) of districts in the College and Career Readiness and Closing the Achievement Gap Innovation Cluster; and 38% (100 of 265) of districts in STEM Innovation Cluster. These optional/competitive innovation clusters are designed to promote and support local district and partner initiatives and spur improvements in student achievement through shifts in practice in classrooms, schools and districts.

The State's Commitment to Districts (which include the required elements included on the "State" column of the Partnership Agreement) **is as follows:**

- If identified as a finalist, form a presentation panel and present to and answer questions from federal evaluators.
- If an award recipient, form a transition team, provide technical assistance to districts and create selection teams for 90-day plans and innovation cluster competitions.
- Submit its own 90-day plan.
- Build the infrastructure, systems, organizational capacity, procedures, and staff to support grant implementation at local, regional and state levels.
- Implement and provide support to districts to implement:
 - Common Core Standards.
 - Aligned Formative and Summative Assessments and Systems.
 - Instructional Improvement Data System and Technical Assistance.
 - Improved Mathematics and Science Instruction and Comprehensive STEM Models.
 - Model Teacher and Leader Evaluation Systems.
 - New, District-based Teacher Preparation Models.

- Regional Professional Development Delivery Network and New Professional Development Cooperative.
- Math and Science Specialty Endorsements (elementary) and Credentialing (middle and high).

Districts that sign the Partnership Agreement are required to:

- Implement required elements of plan outlined in Partnership Agreement.
- Participate in Race to the Top sharing activities.
- Follow U.S. Department of Education guidelines for posting products developed through the Race to the Top competition and completing evaluation requirements.
- Be supportive and committed to working on all or a significant portion of the state reform plan.
- Provide a “Final Scope of Work” to the state no later than 90 days following the awarding of the grant.
- Align provisions of Race to the Top with applicable district/association collective bargaining agreement.
- In regard to the **Standards and Assessments** reform area (Section B of application):
 - Adopt and implement the Common Core Standards in mathematics and English/Language Arts.
 - Use state-provided formative and summative assessments.
 - Align Early Learning Development Benchmarks to Kindergarten programs.
 - Provide access to college readiness exam (Transition Math Project).
 - Increase student participation in courses that earn college credit.
- In regard to the **Data Systems** reform area (Section C of application):
 - Districts with local instructional improvement systems will enhance usefulness through state-developed tools.
 - Districts without local instructional improvement systems will implement a system developed by the state.
 - Districts will, as appropriate, use regional data coaches supplied and supported by the state.
 - Districts will make instructional improvement data available for research purposes.
- In regard to the **Great Teachers and Leaders** reform criteria Section D of application:
 - Under the 2010 education reform law:
 - Implement the new principal and teacher evaluation system.
 - Participate in annual regional work force planning session.
 - Choose one or more reform priorities for a local improvement initiative:
 - Turning around low-performing schools.
 - Closing the P–12 achievement gap and reducing dropouts.
 - Enhancing P–12 STEM instruction.
 - Improving college and career readiness.
- In regard to the **Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools** reform criteria (Section E of application):
 - Districts (with lowest achieving schools designated for required action and that are funded) are required to implement one of four federally approved intervention models.
- In regard to improving **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** (Competitive Preference Priority of application):
 - Ensure adequate preparation for mathematics and science end-of-course assessments
 - Increase science exposure in elementary grades.
 - Support integration of STEM instruction across grades and subjects.

- Create a STEM support mechanism using resources of Educational Service Districts (ESDs); practitioner experts; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Partners; museums; and researchers.

Washington has adopted the optional/competitive innovation cluster concept to catalyze and accelerate statewide education change in four distinct areas: improving Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); developing great teachers and leaders; jumpstarting improvement in struggling schools; and improving college and career readiness, as well as reducing achievement gaps.

A short summary of each of four innovation clusters follows:

1. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Innovation Cluster will use a customized competitive grant and technical assistance approach to identify and support projects designed to narrow the achievement gap in STEM content areas; prepare underrepresented students for college in STEM careers; increase the availability of opportunities for students to apply and integrate STEM content areas; and enhance elementary and secondary school STEM offerings, programs, coursework, rigor, and teacher and leader skills. These schools and districts will be provided in-depth technical assistance and additional funds to implement innovative and evidence-based models designed to significantly increase student achievement in STEM areas that can be used by other schools and districts. (See Section A and Competitive Preference Priority of Application.)
2. The Struggling Schools Innovation Cluster targets just those districts with schools in the bottom 6-10% of persistently lowest-achieving schools. Up to 15 schools in the bottom 6-10% of persistently lowest-achieving schools and their districts will be eligible for technical assistance and support focused on the required and permissible elements of the federal intervention models. The intent is to prevent those schools that have the potential to become persistently lowest-achieving schools in the future. Participants will receive technical assistance and support to implement rapid improvement and turnaround practices consistent with required and permissible elements of the federal innovative intervention models, including implementing rigorous and aligned curricula; using assessments and interventions; building teacher and leader capacity for effective and rapid school turnaround; using student data to inform and differentiate instruction; and creating district/school structures and conditions for ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers, leaders and other resources. The lessons learned will enable the state to scale up practices effective in closing persistent achievement gaps and turning around student achievement. (See Sections A and E of Application.)
3. The emphasis of College and Career Readiness and Closing the Achievement Gap Innovation Cluster has the broadest scope of the clusters because the concept of "readiness" covers the P-20 spectrum. Innovative solutions to problems such as closing an achievement gap for a specific subgroup of students may be very different than increasing college access for that same subgroup. Interested school district applicants will be given great leeway in outlining a project design that produces measurable outcomes and targets specific transition points of the P-20 system: pre-k; early grade levels to middle school; middle to high school; high school to post-secondary education; and alternative pathways. (See Section A and B of Application.)
4. The Teacher and Leader Development and Effectiveness Innovation Cluster encourages a bold accelerated opportunity for districts to design systems that challenge current policy to address compensation and evaluation linked to the placement of teachers and principals in rural, high-poverty and/or low-achievement schools. These may include compensation-related career ladders and differential pay. Districts may also join the state's evaluation pilots. These pilots will lead the state's efforts to define and implement new evaluation models for teachers and principals. Districts in this cluster may also partner with an alternative route provider to create

and implement a residency-model teacher preparation program designed to serve a district's – or groups of districts – workforce development and school improvement strategies. These alternative route partnerships will place priority on the preparation of teachers in STEM subject areas. (See Section A and D of Application.)

If Washington State is awarded a Race to the Top grant, each participating district will have 90 calendar days to develop a specific plan for implementation and explain how it will use Race to the Top grant funds. Similarly if the district has indicated interest in participating in one of the optional/competitive components, participation and additional funding will be determined following the district's response to a separate grant application for the optional/competitive activities.

The following timelines and actions are demonstrative of Washington's state leaders commitment to education reform and the implementation of an ambitious and cohesive 2010 State Education Reform Plan.

Timeline for Washington's Race to the Top Restructuring

June - December 2010	January - June 2011	July - December 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create RTTT transition team to support districts as they develop their District Race to the Top Implementation Plans and RTTT staff is brought on board. • Establish Office of Education Reform and Innovation, hire key project staff, and develop common protocols, practices, reporting tools, and communications. • Launch District Race to the Top Implementation Plan planning guidelines and review district plans. • Establish team leads and project teams and integrate existing functions with the RTTT work. • Establish centralized Education Reform and Innovation professional development function. • Establish Education Reform and Innovation Data Management Office. • Finalize 2010 State Education Reform Plan, including recommendations for offices, departments, boards, commissions, committees and councils. • Develop approach to performance management, evaluation, and knowledge management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve and analyze District Race to the Top Implementation Plans. • Develop innovation cluster Request for Proposal criteria, process and expert session(s) for interested districts. • Conduct technical assistance and professional development needs analyses based on District Race to the Top Implementation Plans. • Launch Innovation Cluster RFPs and select participants. • Forward (and seek support for) legislative and organizational recommendations resulting from Education Reform Plan finalization. • Implement additional organization and practices changes, linked to the 2010 State Education Reform Plan, across education offices, departments, commissions, boards, committees, and councils. • Follow timelines for implementation within application sections (B) through (E). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch innovation clusters. • Continue to implement additional organization and practices changes, linked to 2010 State Education Reform Plan. • Implement performance management model. • Launch report card. • Follow timelines for implementation within application sections (B) through (E).

Updated Timeline for Completion of 2010 State Education Reform Plan

Activity	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2011 Legislative Session & Follow Up
1. Draft 2010 State Education Reform Plan Document		X	X						
2. Assign Lead and Team Responsibility and allocate funding for Coordinating Stakeholder Input, Meetings, and Communication		X							
3. Convene Education Reform and Innovation Steering Committee to Discuss Planning Steps and Process			X						
4. Conduct Education Advocacy Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups (philanthropies, businesses, community groups, advocacy organizations)				X	X	X			
5. Conduct Parent and Student Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups in 9 Educational Service Districts				X	X	X			
6. Conduct meeting with Quality Education Council leadership to review 2010 Education Reform Plan process and draft				X			X		
7. Convene Education Reform and Innovation Steering Committee to discuss input to date, status of stakeholder input process, and implementation planning – invite other state-level education stakeholders to discuss implementation					X				
8. Conduct Educator Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups in 9 Educational Service Districts						X			

Activity	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2011 Legislative Session & Follow Up
9. Conduct State Legislator, Agency, Board, Commission, Committee, and Department Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups						X	X		
10. Convene Education Reform and Innovation Steering Committee to discuss contents of 2010 State Education Reform Plan, and potential legislative agenda – include Quality Education Council leadership meeting to discuss implementation of the plan						X			
11. Craft Related Legislative Agenda, Organizational Changes, and Budget						X	X		
12. Write and Edit New Version of 2010 State Education Reform Plan <u>Document</u> ; and Implementation Plan							X		
13. Share 2010 Education Reform Plan with Legislative Education Committee Chairs								X	
14. Develop Communication and Dissemination Plan								X	
15. Convene Education Reform and Innovation Steering Committee for Formal Sign Off on 2010 State Education Reform Plan									X
16. Print Formal Document									X
17. Commence Implementation and Communication									X