



Interpreting “Race to the Top”

TNTP Summary & Analysis of USDE Draft Guidelines

September 2009



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“Race to the Top” Overview

- ▶ The “**Race to the Top**” Fund (R2T) is a \$4.3 billion education reform program enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) will award R2T grants to states through a competitive application process.
- ▶ ARRA defined four “assurances” or areas of funding priority in education: **(1) standards and assessments; (2) data systems to support instruction; (3) great teachers and leaders; and (4) turning around struggling schools.**
- ▶ Some elements of the R2T application process, as well as application and eligibility criteria, have already been established in ARRA and are not subject to revision. On July 24, USDE released a set of proposed additional application process elements, eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and priorities that are open to public comment through August 28, after which point the USDE may make revisions before releasing the final application guidelines in Fall 2009.
- ▶ R2T funds will be distributed in two phases. **Phase I** applications will be due in late 2009 for funds to be awarded in early 2010. **Phase II** applications will be due in Spring 2010 for funds to be awarded in Fall 2010.



Secretary of Education Duncan and President Obama set the stage for this historic reform effort in their remarks during a July 24 webcast.

“This competition will not be based on politics, ideology, or the preferences of a particular interest group. Instead, it will be based on a simple principle—whether a state is ready to do what works. We will use the best data available to determine whether a state can meet a few key benchmarks for reform—and states that outperform the rest will be rewarded with a grant. Not every state will win and not every school district will be happy with the results. But America's children, America's economy, and America itself will be better for it,”
- *President Barack Obama, July 24 R2T webcast*

“(F)or the first time in history, we have the resources at the federal level to drive reform. . . The \$4.35 billion dollar Race to the Top program that we are unveiling today is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the federal government to create incentives for far-reaching improvement in our nation's schools.

For states, for district leaders, for unions, for business, and for non-profits, the Race to the Top is the equivalent of education reform's moon shot. And the administration is determined—I am determined—not to miss this opportunity... But I want to be clear that the Race to the Top is also a reform competition, one where states can increase or decrease their odds of winning federal support.”
- *Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, July 24 R2T webcast*



TNTP Summary of the R2T Application and Selection Process

In order to apply, states must meet:

Application Requirements

- Signatures of key stakeholders
- Progress to date in four reform areas
- Education funding from FY08-FY09
- Plans for funds
- State level implementation plan
- Reform Condition Criteria of current preparedness level
- Reform Plan Criteria of future reforms
- Agree to report publicly on progress

Eligibility Requirements

- Approved for State Fiscal Stabilization Fund money (ARRA)
- No legal barriers to linking student achievement data to teachers and principals

Applications will be scored based on:

Selection Criteria

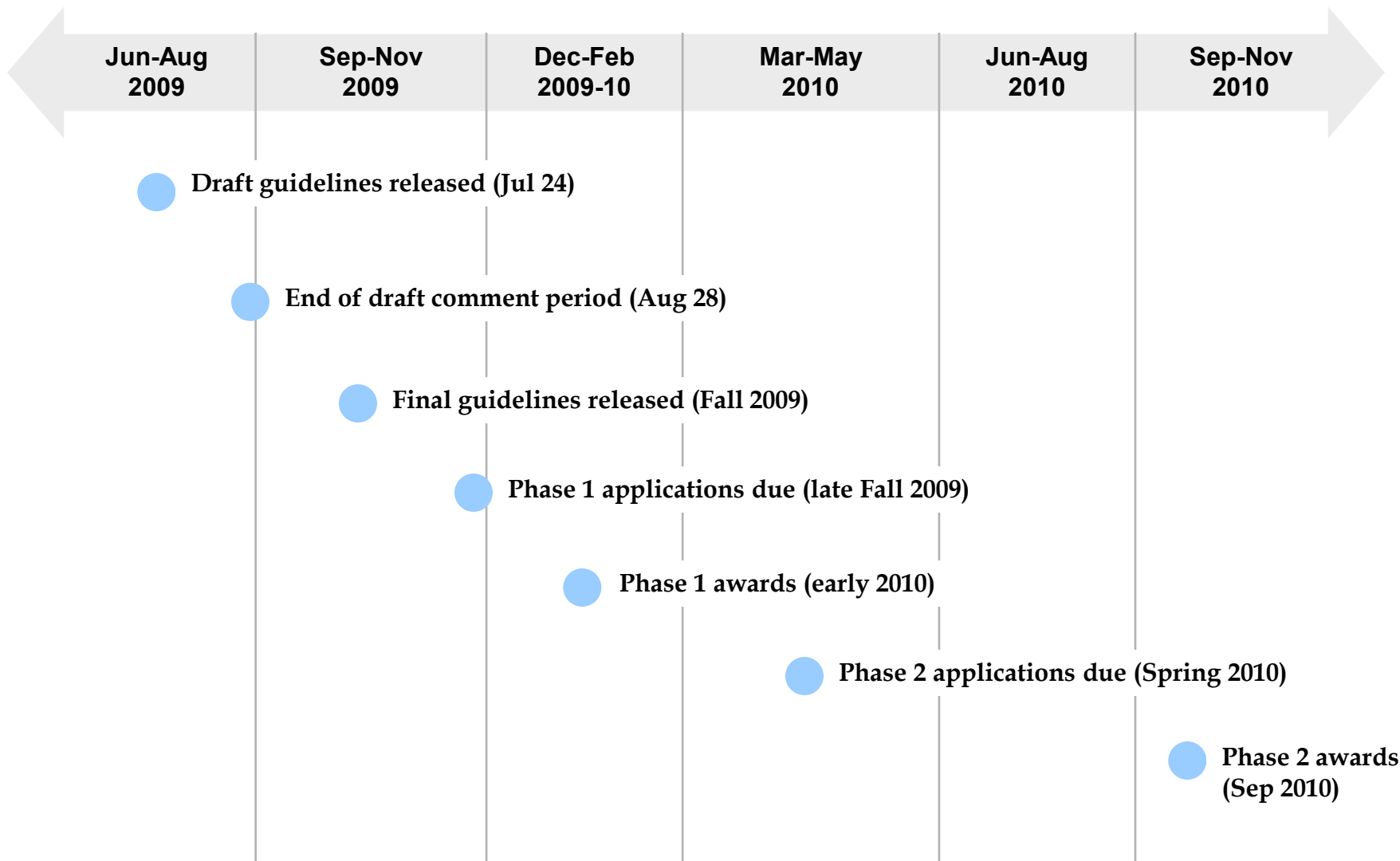
- Has made progress in closing achievement gap and set ambitious future targets
- Will transition to common standards and assessments
- Will implement a statewide longitudinal data system to improve instruction
- Will differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness; report effectiveness of teacher & principal prep programs; provide targeted support to teachers and principals
- Will turn around struggling schools

Other Priorities

- Must describe progress in the four assurances
- Extra points for STEM improvement plans
- Interested in plans for expanded data systems
- Interested in seamless P-20 plans
- Interested in plans to increase school autonomy



Anticipated R2T Application and Award Timeline





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Summary of USDE Application Criteria for R2T Funding

▶ Applications will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Eligibility requirements
2. A set of overall criteria, and
3. Criteria for each of the four assurance areas.

▶ Each subset of criteria includes:

- *Reform Condition Criteria* (**extant policies** that create the conditions necessary to achieve reform); and
- *Reform Plan Criteria* (planned **future reforms** to accomplish the overall goals and the goals of each assurance area). Each Reform Plan Criterion has an associated performance measure, for which states must set annual targets.

▶ **Certification and Signatures:** All applications must:

- Include certification from the state's attorney general that all elements accurately reflect the state's legal and statutory framework; and
- Be signed by the Governor, chief state schools officer, and president of the state board of education.

▶ **Reporting:** States that are awarded funds must meet annual reporting requirements and progress measures, participate in national and state-level program evaluations, and make results publicly available (e.g., via a website).



States and Districts must also meet two core R2T eligibility criteria.

- Completion of requirements for ARRA stability funds**
Pennsylvania has not yet been approved for ARRA stability funds (as of August 2009).
- Legal ability to link student achievement data to teachers and principals for the purposes of evaluation**
California, Nevada, New York and Wisconsin appear to have laws prohibiting the use of student achievement data for teacher evaluation, although each state disputes this assessment.

“We will . . . ask whether the data around student achievement is linked to teacher effectiveness. Believe it or not, several states including New York, Wisconsin, and California, have laws, they have laws that create a firewall between students and teacher data. Think about that, laws that prohibit us from connecting children to the adults who teach them. . .

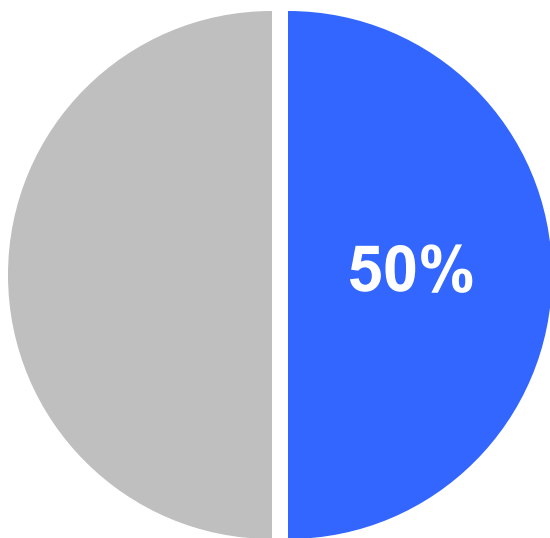
In California, they have 300,000 teachers. If you took the top 10 percent, they have 30,000 of the best teachers in the world. If you took the bottom 10 percent, they have 30,000 teachers that should probably find another profession, yet no one in California can tell you which teacher is in which category. Something is wrong with that picture.”

- Secretary Duncan's remarks to the Fourth Annual Institute of Education Sciences Research Conference, June 8, 2009



R2T Award Funding Distribution Requirements

Race to the Top Award



States must allocate **at least 50 percent** of awarded R2T funds to LEAs.

**Local
Education
Agencies**

- Emphasis on high-need LEAs
- Participating LEAs must provide **statements of support** from the **superintendent, school board president, and teachers union president.**



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Overall Selection Criteria for R2T Funding



Reform Condition Criteria

- Progress in addressing each of the four assurances:
 1. Standards and assessments
 2. Data systems to support instruction
 3. Great teachers and leaders
 4. Turning around struggling schools
- Progress in enacting state law to create conditions favorable for reform
- Progress in improving student achievement
- Priority given to education funding in state budget, as reflected in an increase from FY08 to FY09 in the percent of available funds used for education
- Demonstrated statewide support from state and local stakeholders, including the teachers union, LEAs and charter school authorizers



Reform Plan Criteria

- Raise student achievement and close achievement gaps
- Build capacity to sustain and implement proposed reforms at both the state and local level



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Overall Selection Criteria

- Progress in each of the four assurances and funding priority for education**
 - Can the state identify specific areas of progress in each of the four assurances and gains in student achievement as a result of that progress?
 - Has the percent of available funds for education increased since FY08?

- Demonstrated statewide support from stakeholders**
 - Can the state obtain statements of support from a broad coalition of stakeholders, including state and local teachers union leadership, LEAs and charter schools, and leaders in the community?

- Progress in raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps**
 - Will the state's plan for using R2T funding lead to measurable and significant gains in student achievement and reduction in achievement gaps, as measured by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)?

- Capacity to sustain reforms**
 - Can the state identify and allocate permanent sources of funding to continue reforms after the end of the grant?
 - Will the state develop a plan to expand reforms beyond the initial group of LEAs to affect as wide a student population as possible?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



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Assurance Area Criteria for R2T Funding

Race to the Top applications will be scored in part on each applicant's response to criteria in four assurance areas:



Standards and assessments

Participation in national efforts to adopt common standards and assessments of student performance, and a plan for instituting them.



Data systems to support instruction

Statewide longitudinal data system that links student and teacher data and makes data available to researchers and the public.



Great teachers and leaders

Differentiation of teachers and principals according to effectiveness, and incorporation of effectiveness data in human capital policies and decisions.



Turning around struggling schools

Authority to intervene with struggling schools and a policy framework that supports high-quality charter schools.



R2T Criteria Summary: Standards and Assessments



Reform Condition Criteria

- Participation in a consortium of states developing a set of internationally benchmarked common standards and assessments that build toward college and career readiness



Reform Plan Criteria

- High-quality plan to implement new standards and assessments, including alignment of high school graduation and college entrance requirements, and development of curricular materials and professional development for educators



“Standards shouldn’t change once you cross the Mississippi River or the Rocky Mountains. Kids competing for the same jobs should meet the same standards. So – while this effort is being led at the state level – as it should be -- it is absolutely a national challenge – that we must meet together or we will compromise our future. . .

- Secretary Duncan’s remarks to the National Governors Association Education Symposium, June 14, 2009



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Standards and Assessments

- Participation in a consortium of states to develop common standards and assessments**
 - The primary consortium of states that meets the requirements of this assurance is the Common Core State Standards Initiative, led by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State Schools Officers.
 - As of August 14, 2009, only **Alaska, Texas, and South Carolina** have not joined Common Core.

- High-quality plan to implement new standards and assessments**
 - Can the state allocate resources to developing new curricular and professional development materials?
 - Do LEAs have a plan to efficiently approve and purchase new curricular and professional development materials?
 - Will LEAs have the time and resources to provide high quality professional development in the new standards to all instructional staff?
 - Can the state obtain support from colleges and universities to align their entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments?
 - Will state teacher and principal preparation programs modify their curriculum to align with the new standards?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



R2T Criteria Summary: Data Systems to Support Instruction

▶ Reform Conditions Criteria

- Implement a statewide longitudinal data system that:
 - Includes extensive student demographic, education history, and achievement data;
 - Can communicate with higher education data systems;
 - Can match individual teachers and students; and
 - Incorporates an audit system for continually assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.

▶ Reform Plan Criteria

- Make data available to key stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, principals, and district and union stakeholders.
- Use data to improve instruction and allow researchers to access data for program evaluation.



“I am a deep believer in the power of data to drive our decisions. Data gives us the roadmap to reform. It tells us where we are, where we need to go, and who is most at risk. . . The Data Quality Campaign, DQC, lists ten elements of a good data system. Six states, Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, and Utah have all ten elements.”

- Secretary Duncan's remarks to the Fourth Annual Institute for Educational Sciences Research Conference, June 8, 2009



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Data Systems to Support Instruction

- Implementation of a statewide longitudinal data system**
 - Does the state have a unique statewide student identifier and the ability to track student demographic, transcript, testing, graduation/dropout, and higher education data? Can the state track data on untested students as well?
 - Does the state have a unique statewide teacher identifier and the ability to link individual students and teachers?

- Data available to key stakeholders**
 - Does the state have a plan to make data available to key stakeholders, including educators, parents, and students, via a data portal that is easy to use and meets privacy requirements?
 - Will stakeholders have access to teacher value-added data?

- Data to drive instruction**
 - Can the state give teachers and principals access to the timely, actionable data they need to drive instruction?
 - Will the state give researchers essentially open access to data for the purposes of identifying and replicating what works and eliminating what does not?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



R2T Criteria Summary: Great Teachers and Leaders

▶ Reform Condition Criteria

- There are alternate routes to teacher certification in place that meet certain requirements, such as approving providers other than institutes of higher education and allow testing out of required coursework

▶ Reform Plan Criteria

- Differentiate teachers and principals based on effectiveness, using student growth data¹ as one measure
- Use data on teacher and principal effectiveness for the purposes of evaluation, compensation and promotion, tenure granting, and dismissal.
- Increase the number of highly effective teachers and principals in high-need schools and the number of effective teachers in shortage subject areas
- Annually publish student performance data, as linked to teacher and principal preparation programs
- Use rapid time (less than 72 hours) student data to inform and evaluate teacher and principal supports such as professional development and collaboration / common planning time

1. Change in student achievement for a given student between two points in time measured by analysis that is statistically rigorous and based on student achievement data, which must be measured by the state standard assessment whenever possible



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Great Teachers and Leaders

- Availability of alternate routes to teacher certification**
 - Does the state designate alternate routes to certification that have demonstrably lower coursework requirements and eliminate other barriers to entry to the teaching profession and the principalship?
 - Do alternate routes to certification contribute a significant share of the state's teachers and principals?

- Differentiation of teachers and principals based on effectiveness and use of this data for key decisions**
 - Will appropriate student growth data be available for use as a measure of effectiveness? Can the state develop statistically rigorous means of analyzing student growth data for this purpose?
 - Are there policy barriers to using effectiveness data for purposes such as tenure conferral, compensation, and promotion, either in state law and policy or LEA policy and collective bargaining agreements?
 - Are there policy barriers to evaluating all teachers annually and to using a multiple rating scale for evaluation, either in state law and policy or LEA policy and collective bargaining agreements?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Great Teachers and Leaders (con'd)

- Increased supply of highly effective teachers and principals in high-need schools and shortage subject areas**
 - Are there policy barriers to incentivizing highly effective teachers and principals to move to high need schools, either in state law and policy or LEA policy and collective bargaining agreements?
 - Do teacher certification program providers produce a sufficient number of effective teachers in shortage areas? Are there mechanisms in place that the state can use to drive providers to increase this pool?
- Publication of data on teacher and principal preparation programs**
 - Does the state's longitudinal data system include links between student outcomes and the preparation programs of his/her teachers and principals?
- Use of rapid time student performance data to inform and evaluate teacher and principal supports**
 - Can LEAs develop sources of student performance data that can be analyzed and put to use within 72 hours?
 - Will LEAs have the technical capacity to track and link professional development and other supports to student performance data?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



R2T Criteria Summary: Turning Around Struggling Schools

▶ Reform Condition Criteria

- Legal authority to intervene in persistently low-performing schools and LEAs
- Statutory framework that is supportive of high-quality charter schools (i.e., no charter cap; use of student achievement as a factor in authorizing, reauthorizing, and closing charter schools; and equal funding and facilities access)

▶ Reform Plan Criteria

- Turn around the lowest 5 percent of schools using one of three options: (1) reconstitution; (2) handover to a charter school or other education management organization; or (3) school closing.
- (Note: If none of those options are feasible, such as in a rural area, schools may be turned around using an alternate transformation strategy that requires new school leadership but not faculty turnover.)



“I'm a big supporter of these successful charter schools and so is the President. That's why one of our top priorities is a \$52 million increase in charter school funding in the 2010 budget. . . But the CREDO report last week was a wake-up call – even if you dispute some of its conclusions. The charter movement is putting itself at risk by allowing too many second-rate and third-rate schools to exist. Your goal should be quality, not quantity.”

-Secretary Duncan's address to the Nat'l Alliance for Charter Schools, June 22, 2009



TNTP's Recommended Checklist for States and Districts: Turning Around Struggling Schools

- Legal authority to intervene in struggling schools**
 - Are there policy barriers to the state's ability to mandate turnarounds of struggling schools and to specify the strategies used, either in state law and policy or LEA policy and collective bargaining agreements?

- Statutory framework that is supportive of high-quality charter schools**
 - Does the state have a cap on the number or percentage of charter schools?
 - Do charter schools in the state have equitable access to funding and facilities?
 - Does the state use student performance data in decisions to authorize, re-authorize, and close charter schools?

- Turnarounds of struggling schools**
 - Does the state have a plan to develop a framework for identifying struggling schools, selecting a turnaround strategy for each, and completing turnarounds in a timely fashion?
 - Can the state develop rigorous criteria for mandating that a turnaround must use one of the three preferred strategies unless the LEA can demonstrate legitimate hardship (e.g., a geographic location that is sufficiently remote that the LEA could not reasonably be expected to replace teachers and principals with new staff members)?

Checklist based on TNTP's initial analysis of R2T draft guidelines and is intended to serve as a set of recommended areas of practical and strategic consideration for states developing R2T applications.



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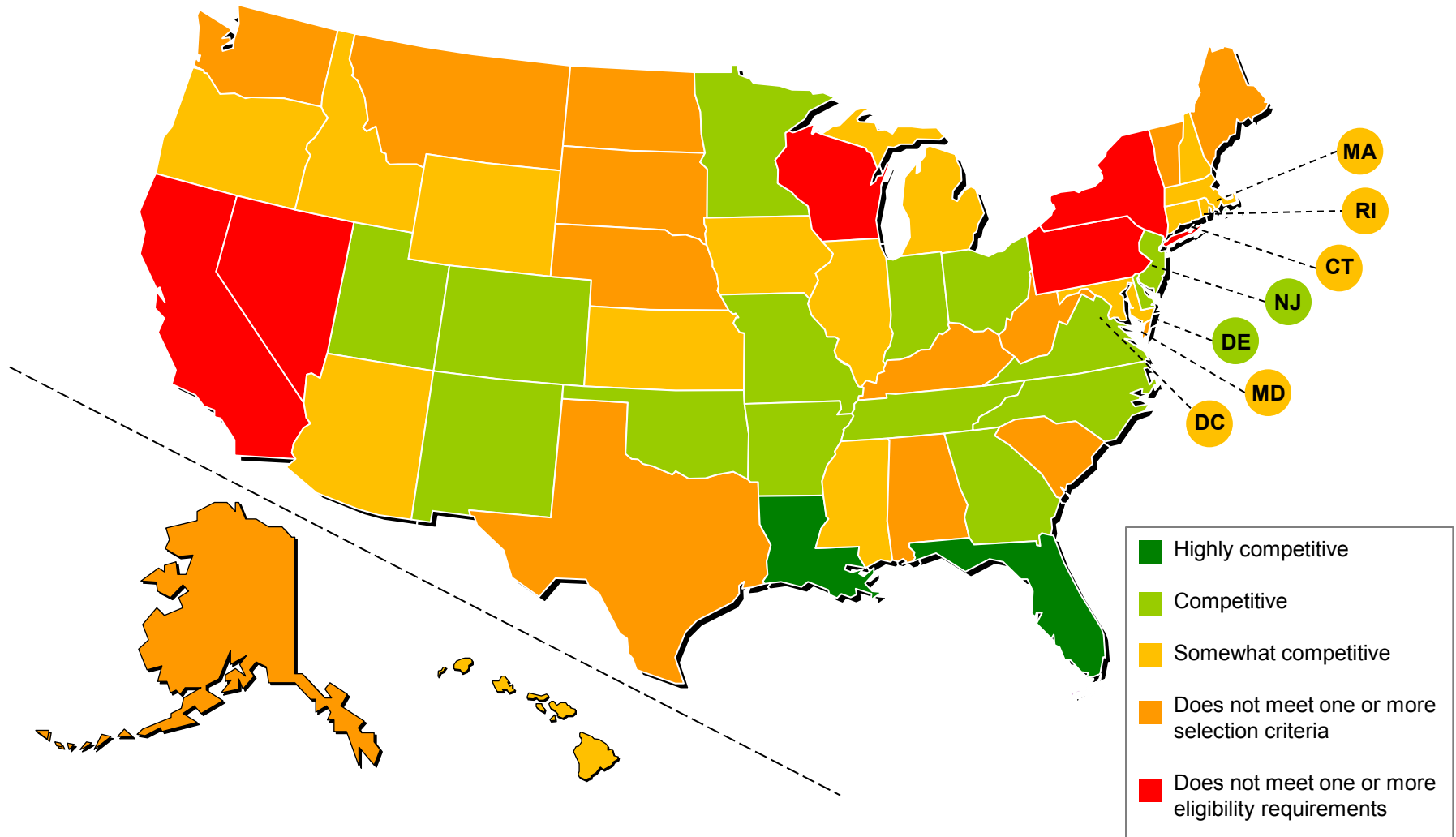
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TNTP Analysis of Current State Competitiveness for R2T Funding



- State rankings reflect TNTP's initial analysis of eligibility and competitiveness based on data available as of August 2009, and are not intended to be predictive of ultimate funding outcomes.
- See Appendix for complete state scorecard and source information.



TNTP Analysis of Current State Competitiveness for R2T Funding - Notes

- **State eligibility for R2T funds**
 - California, Nevada, New York and Wisconsin appear to be ineligible states because they disallow the use of student performance data for teacher evaluation, although each state disputes that assessment.
 - Pennsylvania is ineligible because it has not yet been approved for ARRA stability funds, as of August 2009
- **States not meeting one or more criteria**
 - *Standards and Assessment:* Alaska, South Carolina, and Texas fail to meet the criteria in this area as they are not members of the Common Core State Standards Initiative.
 - *Turning Around Struggling Schools:* Alabama, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, West Virginia, and Vermont fail to meet the criteria in this area as they do not have charter school legislation.
- **Ranking of state competitiveness on selection criteria in each of the four assurances**
 - States were assigned two points for each criterion fully met, and one point for each criterion partially met.
 - *Highly competitive* = 7 points
 - *Competitive* = 5 or 6 points
 - *Somewhat competitive* = 3 or 4 points
 - Although ratings of current state performance on the criteria for the competitive priority “Emphasis on STEM” are included in the complete state scorecard in the Appendix of this document, those ratings were not factored into the overall ranking of state competitiveness as reflected in the map on the preceding slide.



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The July 24 draft application guidelines include five priorities for evaluating state applications and communicating areas of desired reform beyond the four assurances

PROPOSED PRIORITIES

- 1 Reform in the four assurances to increase student achievement and decrease achievement gaps. *(Only applications that meet this priority will be considered.)*
- 2 A rigorous course of study in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) that fosters collaboration with technical and professional sectors and prepares more students for STEM advanced study and careers. *(Applications meeting this priority will be given preference over those that do not.)*
- 3 Expansion of longitudinal data systems to include data from other sectors (e.g. financial, health, and workforce data) and adoption of data systems that can link and compare data from state to state. *(The USDE is interested in applications meeting this priority but will not award them additional points.)*
- 4 A P-20 plan linking early childhood, K-12, and post-secondary education and workforce outcomes for successful transitions. *(The USDE is interested in applications meeting this priority but will not award them additional points.)*
- 5 Autonomy for schools in areas such as staffing, budget, instructional time, and wrap-around services. *(The USDE is interested in receiving applications that meet this priority but will not award additional points for doing so.)*



TNTP State Scorecard

Based on data available as of August 2009

Meets criteria

Partially meets criteria

Minimally meets or does not meet criteria

State	Eligibility Requirements ¹	Standards & Assessments	Data to Support Instruction	Great Teachers and Leaders	Turning Around Struggling Schools	Emphasis on STEM
Alabama						
Alaska						
Arizona						
Arkansas						
California						
Colorado						
Connecticut						
Delaware						
District of Columbia						
Florida						
Georgia						
Hawaii						
Idaho						
Illinois						
Indiana						
Iowa						
Kansas						

1. Source: Data on states receiving ARRA education stability funds at www.recovery.gov and states that disallow the use of



TNTP State Scorecard (con'd)

Based on data available as of August 2009

Meets criteria

Partially meets criteria

Minimally meets or does not meet criteria

State	Eligibility Requirements	Standards & Assessments ²	Data to Support Instruction ³	Great Teachers and Leaders	Turning Around Struggling Schools	Emphasis on STEM
Kentucky						
Louisiana						
Maine						
Maryland						
Massachusetts						
Michigan						
Minnesota						
Mississippi						
Missouri						
Montana						
Nebraska						
Nevada						
New Hampshire						
New Jersey						
New Mexico						
New York						
North Carolina						

2. Source: List of states in the Common Core State Standards Initiative at www.corestandards.org (as of August 14, 2009) and *Education Week: Quality Counts 2008*

3. Source: 2008 state survey results from the Data Quality Campaign, www.dataqualitycampaign.org



TNTP State Scorecard (con'd)

Based on data available as of August 2009

Meets criteria

Partially meets criteria

Minimally meets or does not meet criteria

State	Eligibility Requirements	Standards & Assessments	Data to Support Instruction	Great Teachers and Leaders ⁴	Turning Around Struggling Schools ⁵	Emphasis on STEM ⁶
North Dakota						
Ohio						
Oklahoma						
Oregon						
Pennsylvania						
Rhode Island						
South Carolina						
South Dakota						
Tennessee						
Texas						
Utah						
Vermont						
Virginia						
Washington						
West Virginia						
Wisconsin						
Wyoming						

4. Source: National Council on Teacher Quality *State Teacher Policy Yearbook 2008* and *Education Week: Quality Counts 2008*

5. Source: Center for Education Reform *Race to the Top for Charter Schools: Which States Have What it Takes to Win* (June 2009)

6. Source: Education Commission of the States database of state high school level STEM initiatives (2008)



TNTP State Scorecard - Methodology

Eligibility Requirements:

Data sources used include the list of states receiving ARRA funding available at www.recovery.gov and states that disallow the use of student performance data for teacher and principal evaluation.

- *Meets criteria:* States that have received ARRA funding and appear not to disallow the use of student performance data for teacher and principal evaluation
- *Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States that have not received ARRA funding or who appear to disallow the use of student performance data for teacher and principal evaluation

Standards and Assessments:

Data sources used include the list of states in the Common Core State Standards Initiative available at www.corestandards.org, and state ratings in the area of “Standards, Assessments, and Accountability” from *Education Week’s* report *Quality Counts 2008: Tapping Into Teaching*.

- *Meets criteria:* States participating in Common Core who received a grade of A in the area of “Standards, Assessments, and Accountability” in *Quality Counts 2008*
- ◐ *Partially meets criteria:* States participating in Common Core who received a grade of A- or lower in the area of “Standards, Assessments, and Accountability” in *Quality Counts 2008*
- *Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States not participating in Common Core



TNTP State Scorecard – Methodology (con'd)

Data Systems to Support Instruction:

Data source used was the results of the 2008 state data systems survey by the Data Quality Campaign (DQC), available at www.dataqualitycampaign.org.

- *Meets criteria:* States that have implemented all ten of DQC's essential elements for state data systems
- ◐ *Partially meets criteria:* States that have implemented eight or nine of DQC's essential elements for state data systems
- *Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States that have implemented seven or fewer of DQC's essential elements for state data systems

Great Teachers and Leaders:

Data sources used include state ratings in the areas of "Identifying and Retaining Effective Teachers" and "Exiting Ineffective Teachers" in the National Council for Teacher Quality's (NCTQ) report *2008 State Teacher Policy Yearbook: What States Can Do to Retain Effective New Teachers*; and state ratings in the area of "The Teaching Profession" from *Education Week's* report *Quality Counts 2008: Tapping Into Teaching*. Each of these reports assigned state grades on an A - F scale, and TNTP averaged those grades for an overall score on a 4.0 scale.

- *Meets criteria:* States that received an average grade of B or above
- ◐ *Partially meets criteria:* States that received an average grade of C, C+, or B-
- *Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States that received an average grade of C- or below



TNTP State Scorecard – Methodology (con'd)

Turning Around Struggling Schools:

Data source used was the state ratings assigned in the Center for Education Reform's report *Race to the Top for Charter Schools: Which States Have What it Takes to Win*.

- Meets criteria:* States that received an overall grade of A
- Partially meets criteria:* States that received a grade of A- or below
- Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States that do not have charter school legislation

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM):

Data source used was the Education Commission of the States' database of state high school level STEM initiatives available at <http://ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/issuesK12.asp>. The database includes ten components of a state STEM strategy.

- Meets criteria:* States with eight or more of ECS's STEM strategy components
- Partially meets criteria:* States with five, six, or seven of ECS's STEM strategy components
- Minimally meets or does not meet criteria:* States with four or fewer of ECS's STEM strategy components



Key Definitions*

Effective Teacher – A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (states may supplement the definition as long as it is still based in significant measure on student growth).

Highly effective teacher – A teacher who realizes high rates of student growth (e.g., more than one grade level in an academic year) overall and by subgroup.

High-poverty school – A school in the top quartile of schools in the state by poverty level, using a measure of poverty identified by the state.

High-Poverty LEA – An LEA with at least one high-poverty school.

Student achievement – In tested grades and subjects, student achievement is a student's score on the state's NCLB assessment. In non-tested grades and subjects, student achievement is an alternative measure of student performance, such as an interim assessment, on-track-for-graduation rates, percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses who take AP exams, rates at which students meet IEP goals, and student scores on end-of-course assessments.

Student growth – Change in achievement data for a given student between two points in time, measured by analysis that is statistically rigorous and based on student achievement.

* Definitions related to specific criteria can be found on the slides outlining those criteria



Additional Resources

States and districts seeking additional information on “Race to the Top” and the four assurances may wish to access the following resources.

Overall Race to the Top application process and guidelines:

- Race to the Top website: www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html
- Department of Education ARRA news updates: www.recovery.gov/?q=content/agency-summary&agency_code=91

Standards and assessments:

- Common Core State Standards Initiative: www.corestandards.org

Data to drive instruction:

- Data Quality Campaign: www.dataqualitycampaign.org

Great teachers and leaders:

- *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act Upon Differences in Teacher Effectiveness*, TNTP’s 2009 report on school districts’ failure to accurately assess teacher effectiveness and tendency to treat teachers as interchangeable parts: www.widgeteffect.org

Turning around struggling schools:

- Mass Insight: www.massinsight.org
- *Multiple Choice: Charter School Performance in 16 States*, a recent report from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University comparing student performance data from charter schools to their traditional public school counterparts



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Teachers matter.

In the fight to eliminate educational inequality, teachers matter most. The New Teacher Project works with school districts and states nationwide to ensure that poor and minority students get outstanding teachers.

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In Focus

New: Indianapolis Public Schools Must Change Policies, Practices to Ensure Effective Teaching
A new TNTP analysis calls for changes in teacher layoff, transfer and evaluation rules and human resources services in Indianapolis Public Schools. Nearly three-quarters of surveyed teachers want factors other than seniority to be considered in layoff decisions.
[More »](#)

Publications

Read our latest research reports on educational reform.

- [The Widget Effect](#)
- [Mutual Benefits \(PDF 7.4M\)](#)
- [Unintended Consequences \(PDF 414K\)](#)
- [Missed Opportunities \(PDF 526K\)](#)

News & Press

07.22.09
Indianapolis Star: Educators Welcome Changes
"Indianapolis Public Schools teachers and principals say burdensome personnel policies and an inefficient human resources department are having a negative impact in the classroom, according to a survey to be released today."

For more information:

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