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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 28, 2010  
**TO:** TechMIS Subscribers  
**FROM:** Charles Blaschke and Blair Curry  
**SUBJ:** Possible Opportunities in Individual States' Race to the Top Applications

As a starting point, we have attempted to identify opportunities and key groups/decision-makers/influencers in individual states' Race to the Top applications for the School Improvement Grant component. This initial analysis should help you decide what states and/or districts -- or even external partners -- you might want to approach after reviewing the state's application in more depth. Please feel free to contact Charles Blaschke directly if you have any questions or Blair Curry if you have any questions accessing specific states' applications, including appendices.

# **Special Report: Race to the Top State Applications: Analysis of Opportunities**

*A Technology Monitoring and Information Service (TechMIS)  
SPECIAL REPORT*

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*January 28, 2010*

Over the last week we have reviewed individual Race to the Top applications for states that have them posted on their states' websites. Our brief analysis of individual states' applications focused on the School Improvement Grant component. This analysis should be considered preliminary for several reasons. First, the entire proposals, including appendices, for most states were between 1,000-2,000 pages and time-consuming to digest. Second, under the Race to the Top program, the states are competing with each other and only a limited number will be selected. Hence, for states that are going to receive School Improvement Grants, but are not funded under Race to the Top, these state School Improvement Grant components will likely change, if for no other reason than many of the lead partners identified in the states' proposals do not have the capacity to serve all of the state applications which were submitted. Third, the number of Tier I, Tier II and Tier III schools identified, usually in the appendices of each state's application, are likely to change due to revised USED guidance and mistakes -- which almost three-fourths of the states made in submitting their RTTT applications (e.g., not including alternative schools). To the extent an SEA has the inclination and time to identify additional schools to be served (typically new Tier III schools), the list of schools to be served under School Improvement Grants will likely increase and change somewhat.

Within the context of these cautionary notes, we have attempted to identify some of the potential opportunities for subscribers. In each of the states, there are some existing school improvement "entities" (e.g., districts, education service agencies, SEAs offices) and new ones to be created (state directed non-profit entities) which will serve as general turnaround offices. We have also attempted to identify the EMOs, CMOs and other non-profit entities which will likely serve as lead or support external partners working with states and/or districts. We have also identified turnaround expert groups which have influenced SEA's design of its school improvement component -- such as Mass Insight and Project Lead the Way, among others who we have covered in several TechMIS reports and updates which suggest the types of procedures and tools SEAs/districts who were influenced by these groups will likely use (e.g., performance contracts as recommended by Mass Insight, TechMIS Special Report June 9, 2009).

While there is some overlap, three types of states submitted RTTT applications. Nine states

were approved for differentiated accountability models about two years ago under the previous Administration and have already begun to implement their versions of school improvement, particularly for schools in restructuring and corrective action, along with efforts to prevent other schools from entering sanctions. Most of these states are proceeding pretty much as planned; however in most cases, new requirements related to parent and community engagement, behavioral interventions, etc. will require that new initiatives be undertaken now. Another group of states (e.g., Michigan and Georgia) began initiating turnaround initiatives several years ago, mostly through statewide support teams and other mechanisms, to help schools in restructuring to exit from sanctions and with some success. Statewide initiatives for School Improvement Grants are likely to change more in these states than in the differentiated accountability states generally. A third group of states, for a number of reasons, has not placed as much priority as other states on turning around restructuring schools. Here an infrastructure will have to be created and a lengthy planning/needs assessment phase will be required before serving any of the Tier I and Tier II schools beginning in 2010 or most likely 2011.

TechMIS subscribers who are seriously considering or already targeting School Improvement Grants as a funding source for purchases of their products and services should take into account a number of considerations including:

- The degree to which the product/service line fits into the new or expanded priorities of the SEA and its districts.
- Whether eligible schools are in districts which are existing “good” customers or it has “good” professional relations with key district officials.
- The degree to which its products/services would fit into or complement approaches used by lead or support partners with which SEAs/districts will likely partner.
- The degree to which the firms’ pricing arrangements and business models fits into the district’s and the SEA’s overall approach as influenced by “expert” design groups (e.g., Mass Insight, Gates Foundation).

For subscribers who are interested, we would be pleased to discuss such strategies as to who to approach, when, and with what message using information which we have gathered or to which we have access. Please contact Charles Blaschke directly at (703) 536-2310.

## **Alabama**

The State places a high priority on eligible districts' use of the Transformation Model under School Improvement Grants which mirrors models that have already been successful in the state. The Alabama Statewide System of Support will be continued, involving the *Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, Prevention and Support Services, Intervention Initiatives, School Improvement Teams, and Technology in Motion*. The State has also identified five best practices (Section E, Appendix 3). Under Race to the Top, incentives and rewards will be used extensively. Rewards can be used for tutorial assistance, high-quality professional development, and purchases of instructional supplies. Participating schools will receive \$250,000 a year, in addition to their annual per-school SIG allocation. RTTT funds will be used to expand the Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX) which facilitates technology-rich environments. Also, a major initiative will be funded to expand distance learning capabilities to about 40 or 50 Career and Technical Centers which have not been fully equipped thus far. Online delivery is likely to be funded in a number of other areas. [<https://docs.alsde.edu/documents/55/RACE-TO-THE-TOP.pdf>]

## **Arizona**

Preliminary analysis suggests that at least 16 persistently lowest-achieving schools will be served during the first year. One component of Arizona's RTTT initiative would be incentives for educators, students, and parents. Another is the development of an early warning system which forecasts schools/students that are most at risk. The RTTT initiative will emphasize reading skills as a core component in its intervention models. Another priority will be dropout prevention through the use of intervention strategies identified in Clemson University's National Dropout Prevention Network research. Models for "turnaround educators" would include *Rodel Exemplary Teachers and Principals*, and *Teach for America*, as well as others identified through a future RFP. Throughout the application is the extensive use of distance learning and online delivery, especially to schools in rural districts in subjects beyond the Advanced Placement Incentive Program. The Arizona Response-to-Intervention framework will be expanded to oversee dropout prevention in high schools and middle schools through the creation of a credit recovery system, especially involving rural schools with a preponderance of Native American enrollments. [[http://az.gov/recovery/assets/docs/arizona\\_rttd\\_app.pdf](http://az.gov/recovery/assets/docs/arizona_rttd_app.pdf)]

## **Arkansas**

As one of the nine states with an approved Differentiated Accountability (DA) model, Arkansas will continue many of the initiatives which began two years ago. Approximately 14 Tier I schools will be served, along with two Tier II high schools. The DA model, referred to as "Smart Accountability," already uses, to some extent, all four intervention models. The Arkansas Public School Resource Center, which works with charter and rural schools, will provide assistance to schools that choose the restart model. Additional partnerships with outside EMOs will also be established. For rural schools, the transformation model is the only model of practical choice. The components of the transformation model, which do not exist currently and will have to be developed, include:

- Implementing strategies such as financial incentives, increased opportunities, and improved working conditions for teachers and other staff who have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates.

- Instituting a system for measuring changes in instructional practices resulting from professional development, which is one of the new requirements in the transformation model guidance.

Education co-ops will provide an important role in developing district capacity. Schools will be provided \$750,000 during the first year of implementation of a transformation model, but will only receive funding for years 2 through 4 if they demonstrate that student growth is occurring according to Smart Accountability data. If not, another model must be implemented. Intensive support for lowest-achieving schools include one State Improvement Director, Professional Development Specialists, School Improvement Directors (school-based, leadership support coaches), and instructional facilitators (math and literacy coaches). Assisting in an activity related to increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools will be the Arkansas Coordinated School Health Initiative. The Arkansas Out-of-School Network (AOSN) will be supporting expansion of afterschool programs; their partners would include *AmeriCorps* and *City Year*. The University of Arkansas at Little Rock has been working at establishing professional “learning teams.” Beginning in 2006-07, the Arkansas Department of Education contracted with *America’s Choice* as the State’s turnaround model and has worked with 39 schools in 17 districts. Of the 14 Tier I schools that would be served under RTTT, seven will be served during the first year with the remainder over the next two years. [[www.arkansased.org/about](http://www.arkansased.org/about)]

### **California**

The California RTTT proposal will use a large portion of SIG funds to hire effective teachers, provide additional learning time, and expose students to community services and supports. Eighty-four elementary, 46 middle, and 57 high schools have been identified for the first year of the RTTT grant. Eleven Regional Lead Offices will oversee progress being made over three years. Full-scale implementation by schools will begin in 2011. Schools not making progress with their intervention must adopt one of the other three intervention models within the region and work with the Regional Lead Offices. LEAs will be able to select any organization or partner that they feel best meets their needs. Several entities to be created include a Turnaround Principal Institute, a Regional Charter Innovation Center, and a “brokers of expertise” portal which appears to focus on research-based best practices and groups with specific capabilities. Partnerships will also be created among participating districts following an ongoing pilot similar to the existing Fresno-Long Beach partnership. [[www.caracetothetop.org/cs/rttt/print/htdocs/home.htm](http://www.caracetothetop.org/cs/rttt/print/htdocs/home.htm)]

### **Colorado**

Forty of the 87 persistently lowest-achieving schools are “Priority Intervention,” which will implement one of the four models; 47 are designated as “Turnaround Support” in which participating LEAs will receive incentive grants for teachers, leaders and direct, critical support funding. In developing its initiative, the Colorado SEA worked with Mass Insight and Public Impact. The first year of activities would include a pilot test of intensive turnaround models that would be led/influenced by Mass Insight in selected partnership zones. Partnering with innovative school suppliers would begin in September 2010. The proposal calls for a significant expansion of the *Teach for America* corps by more than 1,000 members. Under the initiative of providing incentives and critical supports, Colorado indicated it would issue a Request for

Information to be used in the process of identifying State-approved external providers. Another solicitation will identify operators of new, alternative schools, especially to serve students in rural areas, and/or to replicate successful schools such as the Denver School of Science and Technology. A charter school growth fund will be established as an incubator for new school startups. LEAs who voluntarily implement one of the four Federal intervention models (beyond those identified for School Improvement Grant funding) will receive \$250,000 per eligible school per year. The Colorado Department of Education Turnaround Office will issue Requests for Information or work with the Colorado Turnaround Center to identify eligible providers that LEAs can select to manage or assist turnaround schools. The current list includes:

- Edison Learning
- Consortium on Reading Excellence
- Pearson K12 Solutions
- America’s Choice
- Cambium Learning
- Cambridge Education
- CTB-McGraw Hill
- Curriculum Leadership Institute
- Evans Newton
- Focal Point
- Just ASK Publications
- Lindemood-Bell
- McREL
- Mosaica
- National Literacy Coalition
- RMC Research Corporation
- Success for All Foundation
- The Flippen Group
- WestEd

[[www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)]

### **Connecticut**

Eighteen schools in Connecticut have been identified as Tier I, with five non-Title I high schools identified as Tier II. A complete list of several hundred Tier III schools is in Appendix A, page 472 of the State’s application. School improvement efforts have been implemented under the *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CLSAI)* involving 15 districts; however, none of them has implemented one of the four SIG intervention models which they will have to do if RTTT is funded or even if they receive only School Improvement Grants. The SEA has conducted an analysis to identify the need for professional development integrated into classroom work, the need to model the fidelity of implementing effective teaching strategies, ongoing evaluation for continuous improvement of the model and efficient use of resources -- which could represent opportunities for firms which can help facilitate meeting these needs. Tier I and Tier II schools have been finalized in January, with Tier III schools, which will become Demonstration Schools, identified in February.

[[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/arra/CT\\_RT TT\\_Grant\\_Application.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/arra/CT_RT TT_Grant_Application.pdf)]

### **Delaware**

Over a five-year period, the Delaware RTTT turnaround effort will be serving ten failing schools. Partnership Zones will be created and a Turnaround Office (in collaboration with Mass Insight) will be established to develop local capacity and support for three schools in September 2011, with seven more schools added a year later. In 2010 a Partnership Zone Institute will be held at which Mass Insight will share results and experience from other turnaround states within the Mass Insight network. The SEA will also facilitate “introductions to potential partners that have a proven track record and an interest in expanding to Delaware.” Some schools may select lead partners. The Turnaround Office appears to be a key decision-maker as to what types of

partners and practices are needed and will assist in negotiating agreements. The Turnaround Office will also ensure that Partnership Zone schools receive maximum funds under School Improvement Grants of \$500,000 to \$700,000 annually. For each school under the SIG program, the SEA can fund only those districts/schools that have “credible plans for improvement.” [<http://governor.Delaware.gov/information/racetothetop.shtml>]

## **Florida**

The Florida Differentiated Accountability Model plan identifies the most effective strategies and interventions for turning around low-performing schools. It takes the position that the districts, not schools, failed. Hence, strategies and interventions cannot focus only on specific schools; the capacity to lead, support, and monitor the school improvement process must be developed at the district level. Some of the important intervention strategies which will be used to implement RTTT and SIG grants include

- providing performance and incentive pay to recruit and retain high-performing administrators and teachers;
- hiring instructional coaches to assist teachers in the delivery of effective instruction and data analysis;
- using formative assessments in reading, math, science and writing;
- implementing the Lesson Study process.

Several unique requirements are placed on districts including:

- establishing a district-based RTI team led by the superintendent;
- conducting “data chats” with principals after formative assessments;
- creating a district-wide reading plan.

Differentiated Accountability Regional Executive Directors possess the legal statutory and regulatory authority to recommend that principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches or faculty be replaced and that instructional programs be replaced or revamped. For the lowest-achieving schools referred to as “Intervene” schools, all interventions will be prescribed by the Florida Department of Education. Fifty-one Title I schools were identified last year in the “Intervene” category, while 19 Title I-eligible secondary schools were also identified to be served for a total of 70 schools. This count may change as a result of new requirements placed on school selection included in the latest Federal SIG guidance. [[www.fldoe.org/ARRA/pdf/rttt-apbud.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/ARRA/pdf/rttt-apbud.pdf)]

## **Idaho**

The Idaho proposal points out that individual communities are very skeptical about outsiders coming in to change their schools. The State will rely heavily on its Statewide System of Support. Charter schools are a part of their repertoire of options, but not as a means of turning around a low-performing school. The Transformation Model has already been used under School Improvement Grants. The Idaho Race to the Top initiative will partner with the Idaho Superintendents Network, the Idaho Building Capacity Project, and the Principal Academy of Leadership. The State has developed a three-tiered Response-to-Intervention type of model to implement its Statewide System of Support. It has identified, as an absolute priority, six districts (Aberdeen, Buhl Joint, Soda Springs, Teton County, Valley, and Wallace). These districts need

“more technical assistance, more funds for curriculum development, curricular materials, professional development, facilities improvement, and a more holistic approach to reform.” Current partners include the Center on Innovation and Improvement, the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington, Boise State University’s Center for School Improvement and Policy Studies, and the Kentucky Department of Education. [[www.sde.idaho.gov/site/race](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/race)]

### **Illinois**

Illinois has developed a list of “Illinois Priority Schools” which includes all schools designated as Tier I and Tier II for School Improvement Grants as well as others that fall within the bottom five percent Statewide (See Appendix E2-1). Of the 181 Illinois Priority Schools, 155 are in Participating LEAs for RTTT funding. The RTTT plan calls for four inter-related components: the Illinois Partnership Zone; Direct State Intervention System; School District Reorganizations, and Drop-out Prevention and Reenrollment Supports (i.e., credit recovery). The latter is a relatively new component. Over 80 percent of Illinois Priority Schools are high schools. For the Illinois Partnership Zone, RFP submissions for “Lead” and “Supporting” Partners were received in December; however, the State may reopen the bidding. Illinois has been chosen by Mass Insight to participate in a three-year \$70 million effort using other funding. Lead Partners working with the schools will perform individual school needs assessments and assist or direct the implementation of a “whole school intervention model” in partnership with the LEA and will assist LEAs in providing professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers and principals.

Under the Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways through Education (IHOPE) program, efforts to promote dual enrollment in high school and online programs for specific credit courses leading to the receipt of a high school diploma will be expanded. A pilot program consisting of five charter schools will be exclusively devoted to dropout recovery with the intent of reenrolling 3,600 students during 2010-11 school year. Some of the Lead Partners include the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), America’s Choice, Consortium for Education Change, Diplomas Now (Johns Hopkins University), Edison Learning, the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, Learning Point Associates, Talent Development (Johns Hopkins University), and Success for All Foundation. Some Supporting Partners include New Leaders for New Schools, Teach for America, the Federation for Community Schools, and DePaul University. [[www.isbe.state.il.us/racetothetop/PDF/application.pdf](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/racetothetop/PDF/application.pdf)]

### **Indiana**

Indiana’s current Fast Forward Initiative will be expanded under RTTT to scale-up best practices for school turnaround. Contracts with carefully selected turnaround partners will be consummated to implement and oversee restarts and turnaround models in schools. The State will also enter into rigorous Memoranda Of Understanding with districts to prevent schools from going into restructuring and, if improvement does not occur, the State will require that schools be taken over by turnaround management organizations (TMOs). In mid-2010, the SEA will issue an RFP for non-profit and for-profit organizations interested in, and capable of, serving in a turnaround management organization role. TMOs will operate under performance contracts in which a pool of dollars will be loaned to each at the outset and a proportionate amount will be



forgiven in each subsequent year based on performance. This unique type of performance contracting has also been suggested by Mass Insight which assisted Indiana in developing its initiative. A school that exits restructuring or corrective action status under oversight by the TMO can transfer its TMO contract to the district. The Indianapolis-based non-profit The Mind Trust will assist the State in developing an incubator for high-quality new providers that have promising models, including New Tech High School, Early College High School, Asia Society, International Baccalaureate, and Diploma Plus. Another RFP will be issued for external providers of a Turnaround Leaders Academy. The due date for proposals in response to an RFP for Turnaround Management Organizations is June 15<sup>th</sup>. Negotiations with selected TMOs will be completed by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Selection of the provider to operate the Turnaround Leaders Academy will be completed by July 1<sup>st</sup>. [[www.doe.in.gov/fastforward](http://www.doe.in.gov/fastforward)]

### **Iowa**

SIG funds will be used to serve Tier I for school improvement, while RTTT funds will serve Tier II schools. The State's fifth *Center for Collaborative Inquiry* will focus on intensive school support and could include external partners used primarily for various types of professional development. The first step will be audits to identify priority schools' needs and then to select interventions. New components will focus on parent, community, and directly-related required activities under the transformation and turnaround models. Leadership training of principals and administrators has been provided by Harvard University using Wallace Foundation funding; this is expected to continue. The State will continue some of the intervention models which have worked in the past, such as the *Instructional Decision-Making* system used in Waterloo which employs Activboards plus a science/technology/engineering/mathematics curriculum. The State emphasizes a full continuum of interventions covering dropout reduction, achievement gap closing, enabling students to go to post-secondary institutions, community efforts to reduce behavior problems and related activities. [[www.iowa.gov/educate](http://www.iowa.gov/educate)]

### **Kentucky**

Kentucky's RTTT application would create *District 180*, a recovery district, similar to Louisiana, focusing only on districts and schools identified for recovery. RTTT funds would serve the lowest-achieving schools -- about 13 during the first year -- while School Improvement Grant funding would provide funding to additional Tier I, Tier II and Tier III schools. External school management groups can include profit or non-profit organizations selected by a local board off a list compiled by the State Board. School Improvement Grants will be used to improve all schools in education recovery. Audits will be conducted early to identify needs which can be used to select interventions. Centers for Learning Excellence will be established as intermediaries between *District 180* and individual schools and could have numerous support partners and providers. Each Center will be competed to select a lead recovery partner which could be an institution of higher education, a regional education cooperation, an EMO or other group. Likely expanded interventions will include *High Schools that Work* and *Making Middle Grades Work* (Southern Regional Education Board), as well as *Save the Children's* K-8 literacy program, among others). Each Center will also manage STEM initiatives like *AdvanceKentucky* and *Project Lead the Way* and will form partnerships with other experienced project-based, real-world providers. Each Center will also provide professional development for education recovery leaders and education recovery specialists. About 90 schools are expected to be served using

RTTT funds under the next three years. [[www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/2C6E60CE-09A6-4C65-8137-99721482B683/0/KentuckyRacetotheTopapplicationFINAL.pdf](http://www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/2C6E60CE-09A6-4C65-8137-99721482B683/0/KentuckyRacetotheTopapplicationFINAL.pdf)]

### **Massachusetts**

About 35 persistently low-achieving schools will be the initial focus of Massachusetts's turnaround activities; these schools are located in nine urban districts, more than half in Boston and Springfield. The State will set up a process for in-depth review of potential providers developed through an RFP process and eventually will create a List of Priority Providers. The State's initiative would also create a non-profit school-improvement intermediary organization that will identify and manage a network of strong turnaround operators. Serving as an incubator that will receive private funding, the intermediary will support, manage, and evaluate school turnaround providers via performance-based contracts and will work closely with districts in the State to implement these models in Level 4 and 5 schools. Mass Insight has recommended in its reports that all contracts be performance contracts. Part of the State's SIG funding will allow Level 3 schools (most likely Tier III) to implement turnaround, transformation, or restart models at about \$500,000 per year. [[www.doe.mass.edu/arra/rttt/narrative.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/arra/rttt/narrative.pdf)]

### **Michigan**

In the first year of RTTT funding, Michigan will focus on Detroit Public Schools and 15 other LEAs with lowest-achieving schools. Turnaround experts and distinguished educators, as well as several Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) and Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), and external partners will be selected. Michigan will issue an RFP to invite ISDs/RESAs and others to submit their qualifications. Once selected, their continued service will be dependent on results achieved. SIG funds will serve Title I and Title I-eligible secondary schools, while RTTT funds will support other schools in the bottom five percent. Vendors which are currently working with 17 schools in Detroit include Edison Learning, EdWorks, the Institute for Student Achievement, and the Model Secondary Schools Project, among others. ISDs and RESAs are also in integral part of the Michigan Statewide System of Support which has been effective in helping 280 restructuring schools exit from that status over the last several years. Lead partners will have direct responsibility for the turnaround process in one or more schools, while a supporting partner may be responsible for coaching, professional development, mentoring, and other instructional supports. Michigan State University's College of Education will likely continue to have a major professional development and leadership training role. An RFP will also be issued for the development of a Turnaround Academy. A newly hired State School Reform/Redesign Officer will have supervisory authority over the lowest-performing schools. The Wayne County RESA will likely continue providing a large portion of professional development for Detroit schools that are receiving SIG funding. Over the four-year period, approximately 240 schools will participate in one of the four models, which are new to Michigan's "turnaround" initiative that began several years ago. [[www.mdoe.state.mi.us/MDEDocuments/MDE-rttt-2010-01-19.pdf](http://www.mdoe.state.mi.us/MDEDocuments/MDE-rttt-2010-01-19.pdf)]

### **Minnesota**

The Minnesota SEA has identified 34 persistently lowest achieving schools (Appendix C-Exhibit B). Eleven are in the St. Paul and Minneapolis area, 11 are in rural districts (three of which have large concentrations of Native Americans), and 12 are charter schools. The State will create an

Office of Turnaround Schools to oversee implementation of RTTT. The OTAS will be either a non-profit or independent organization housed within an institution of higher education. The University of Minnesota will play an important role and will assist in the adaptation of the National Institute for School Leadership curriculum. In the participating schools, a Site Administrative Manager (SAM) -- equivalent to an Assistant Principal -- will be funded. SAMs will follow guidelines developed by the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy in its report, "Out of the Office and into the Classroom." Turnaround teachers will be trained in best practices, the use of formative assessment to perform academic interventions, and the use of digital tools (available through an iTunesU platform) with differentiated instruction techniques. [<http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>]

### **Missouri**

Missouri is in the first year of implementing a program focused on turning around its 29 lowest-achieving schools in 15 LEAs. Turnaround Specialists have been trained at the University of Virginia which will continue to provide training under the Missouri Turnaround model. For Tier III schools, priority emphasis will be placed on early intervention for all students. To improve high school and college completion rates, participating external groups would include In it 2 Win, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, St. Louis Regional College Access Pipeline, among others. The Missouri Professional Learning Communities Initiative will involve the Missouri School-wide Positive Behavior Support Network. In the initial year, seven schools will be served, increasing to 15 by the fourth year. [<http://dese.mo.gov/rt3/documents/RT3Application.pdf>]

### **Nebraska**

The primary focus of Nebraska's RTTT application is high schools, specifically decreasing the number and percentage of dropouts and increasing the number of students attending college. In order to establish a new support and intervention system, which will be integrated primarily into turnaround and transformation models, school reform specialists will be hired and housed at selected intermediate education agencies. A new School Reform Leadership Academy will be expanded to train principals and teachers. The State's Expanded Learning Initiative will follow guidelines developed in Massachusetts and recommended by the National Center on Time and Learning. Four schools will be served in each of the four years; all or most will be high schools. [[www.nde.state.ne.us/ARRA/RaceToTheTop.html](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ARRA/RaceToTheTop.html)]

### **New Mexico**

More than 60 percent of New Mexico schools are in need of improvement. Twenty-five schools will be funded under Race to the Top, and an additional 18 persistently low-achieving schools will be funded under School Improvement Grants. The State will establish the New Mexico Exemplary Teacher and Principal Center and Community Engagement Collaboratives in nine regions to support local networks of parents, community leader schools and other stakeholders. Extensive use of technology is planned such as expansion of Web-EPSS online which links principals and teachers to instruction and assessments. Competitions to motivate students in STEM activities, partnerships with NASA, and many of the other activities follow recommendations by Mass Insight that were included in its report: *The Turnaround Challenge Report*. The State plans to issue an RFP to select a comprehensive system, using computer adaptive technology, which can be used to differentiate instruction; it will be available to all

turnaround schools and 30 other high-needs schools. Twenty-five schools will participate in the turnaround initiative in the first year. Part of the Community Engagement Collaborative will be the Parent Connect System, which will rely on a number of commercial off-the-shelf products, as well as some likely to be developed, to change the school culture and climate, an important component following guidance from Mass Insight. Fast-Forward New Mexico will expand Statewide broadband use and awareness. Partners will include New Mexico State Library, the University of New Mexico, The Global Center for Cultural Entrepreneurship, and 1st Mile Institute. Level 1 training includes intensive computer literacy. WestEd will play an important role in technology development and implementation. The public-private partnership between the SEA and Innovate-Educate will leverage the implementation of laptops and handhelds under the *Carve Your Path* initiative. All participating teachers will receive their own laptops or handheld devices. Under the *Grow Your Own Teacher* initiative, participant's external partners will include High Schools That Work and Teach for America, among others. STEM partners will likely include Challenger Centers and Project Lead The Way. [[www.ped.state.nm.us/RTTT/index.html](http://www.ped.state.nm.us/RTTT/index.html)]

### **New York**

Based on a press release dated January 21<sup>st</sup>, 57 New York schools will participate under RTTT funding and School Improvement Grants. Most of the schools are located in Albany, Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Roosevelt, Syracuse, and Yonkers, all of which have signed memoranda of understanding to participate in RTTT funding. It would appear that 35 more secondary schools could participate. The press release includes the names of the participating schools which may be added to based on an ongoing analysis of school data by the State Department of Education.

### **North Carolina**

In 2009, 130 North Carolina schools, constituting the bottom five percent, would be eligible for School Improvement Grants (see Appendix 35). A variety of "change" partners have assisted in implementing a transformation model including McREL's Success in Sight, America's Choice, Talent Development, Solution Tree, SREB, and the North Carolina New Schools Project. The State is currently providing assistance to districts in the conduct of needs assessments and training; strategies and options which are likely to be made available include Teach for America, NC Public Virtual School Courses, strategic staffing initiatives including "learning team" models, and Community Collaboratives. North Carolina will be providing a major expansion of its numerous State STEM projects within four thematic areas: aerospace; engineering and energy; biotechnology and agriscience; and health and life sciences. Partners could include Project Lead the Way, the National Academy of Engineering, and Battelle Institute. [<http://racetothetop.nc.gov/about/application.pdf>]

### **Ohio**

Ohio's RTTT goal is to "improve" entire districts which have one or more of the State's 69 persistently lowest-achieving schools. The School Innovation and Support Network (SISN), to be operated by a non-profit partner, will direct efforts in at least 20 schools, including efforts by the Ohio STEM Learning Network. Participants under the SISN include the University of Virginia Turnaround Specialist Training Program, the New York City Leadership Program, the

Chicago Leadership Academy, and New Leaders for New Schools. Other partners to be involved in creating school “climate tools” and providing assistance include the Educational Service Centers, Family and Children First Councils, and district-level Family and Civic Engagement teams. RTTT funds will be set aside for pilots, including one in which two large districts will evaluate the use of a “portfolio” approach, and for investments in innovations developed by potential partners. Leadership teams will be created at each school to coordinate positive behavior, intervention support, planning, student academic interventions, and extended learning opportunities. The Ohio High School Transformation Initiative, which received Gates Foundation funding and which works closely with the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, will be used in failing high schools. [<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=560>]

### **Pennsylvania**

A total of 128 schools throughout the State (76 schools Philadelphia) will participate in the so-called Turnaround Initiative in which 37 schools will be identified and served first. Philadelphia and Pittsburgh will likely begin interventions in 18 schools during the first year, with about 77 districts served the second year. Outside groups involved in overall planning including Johns Hopkins University, KIPP Charter School, Mastery Charter School, and the University of Pittsburgh, among others. Schools participating in the state’s Turnaround Initiative will be required to implement *Reading Recovery* (or a “comparable elementary reading intervention” model) for all students below grade level in grades one through three. Funds will be provided for training *Reading Recovery* teachers and leaders. For high schools, research--based curricula could include *High Schools That Work*, *Talent Development*, or *Project Grad Success for All* and *America’s Choice* will be used at the elementary/middle school level. Elementary science will include ASSET’s program called *Science: It’s Elementary*; 2,500 teachers across the state will be trained each year to use *Science*. More than 75 “data facilitators” in Intermediate Units will help districts to develop a capability among principals and teachers to use assessment data to inform instruction. Individual Learning Plans will be developed for students participating in extended instruction. External contractors will be selected to increase the capacity of the State’s Technical Assistance Network and to provide job-embedded professional development. Approximately 80 percent of the schools on the turnaround list are in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Reading, Chester-Upland, and Duquesne. The list of districts is in Appendix 6.1. [[www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)]

### **Rhode Island**

Rhode Island will focus on six persistently low-achieving schools, of which five are in Providence, when the State receives SIG funds; if RTTT funds become available, an additional six schools will be added to the list. Of the 12, five are high schools, three are middle schools, and four are elementary schools. To help enhance the pipeline of effective teachers and principals, the State will work with The New Teachers Project and Teach for America to create the Rhode Island Turnaround Principal Core. One key player will be the mayor-led non-profit organization called the Rhode Island Mayoral Academies which will recruit high-performing charter operators to open new schools. [[www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov)]

### **Tennessee**

Tennessee will be serving ten Tier I schools and five Tier II high schools under RTTT. Tier III

schools are “High Priority” schools that do not fit the definition of persistently lowest-achieving. The first step will be an evaluation of 13 most struggling schools to identify interventions that will result in partnerships with a “small number of high-capacity non-profit organizations.” Also 18 other schools in corrective action, known as Renewal Schools, will be identified. All served schools must use one of the four models. The 13 schools could be included in a State-run Achievement School District (ASD). Contracts to operate the ASD will have to be renegotiated because several organizations under consideration are already working with districts in the State. Incubation funds will be created to scale-up two or three CMOs to have the capacity to create about 15 high-performing charter schools across the State, especially in Memphis and Nashville. A Request for Information will be posted to select providers for the 18 other schools under corrective action or restructuring. Slightly over 110 schools -- Focus Schools -- will be served by existing teams, including targeted assistance teams. Current partners include: The Effective Practice Incentive Community (Memphis), The New Teacher Project (Memphis and Nashville), Benwood (Hamilton County), and Project GRAD (Knoxville). [[www.tn.gov/education/doc/TN\\_RTTT\\_Application\\_2010\\_01\\_18.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/education/doc/TN_RTTT_Application_2010_01_18.pdf)]

### **Virginia**

Under Virginia’s proposed RTTT budget, nine schools would be involved initially, with more later if additional funds are provided. An RFP has been issued to identify Lead Turnaround Partners (LTPs) which will provide “an instructional program rich in content and rigor, and one that provides a truly differentiated and specialized path to learning taught by experienced and trained teachers.” Virginia’s proposal argues the need to intervene before the ninth grade which will be a primary emphasis in reducing dropout rates. School improvement funds will also be used to intervene with “high school students who are at risk of not graduating on time.” Both charter and contract schools, as well as transformation models, will be offered. The Virginia approach was influenced by the Mass Insight Education and Research Institute and its reports. Lead Turnaround Partners will be identified by mid-February. Planning will begin quickly with partners in five to seven districts; sites will open in 2011. The Office of School Improvement (Dr. Kathleen Smith) will oversee the project. Current partnerships exist with the Virginia Foundation of Education Leadership, the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, and The Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Center. [[www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov)]

### **West Virginia**

The School Improvement Grant component of West Virginia’s RTTT application indicates that 23 Title I schools identified for improvement and restructuring, along with four Tier II schools and 18 Tier III schools, will be served beginning in 2010. The following year, 24 additional schools will receive intensive and long-duration technical assistance. The non-Title I low-achieving schools that are identified will receive 45 days of professional development, over a three-year period, to develop capacity. It is likely that Title I ARRA funds will be used to defray some of the cost of training teachers in non-Title I schools following the September 2, 2009 revised Title I guidance on use of Title I ARRA funds. An individual who works with the Closing Achievement Gap Professional Development Demonstration Schools (which began in 2004) will serve as liaison to three low-performing schools. External partners will work with schools to increase their capacity and expertise in the development of professional learning communities. RTTT and SIG funds will be used to strengthen the State System of Support

which will oversee implementation of SIG funds. External support partners will be selected competitively; they will form the State-approved list from which districts can select external support partners who can best meet their needs. [<http://wvde.state.wv.us/race-to-the-top.html>]

### **Wisconsin**

Five high schools in Milwaukee constitute the Tier I/Tier II schools to be served under Wisconsin's RTTT plan. The expected \$46 million School Improvement Grant to the SEA will serve the five schools and, then, continue to support current improvement efforts in 42 remaining Title I schools identified for improvement. The Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center is currently providing assistance to the State in developing research-based criteria to assist in monitoring the implementation for turnaround, transformation, and restart models. Almost \$3 million of RTTT funds would be used to develop a cadre of external technical assistance providers to help with charter school start-up, teacher evaluation, RTI at the secondary level, adolescent literacy, and principal leadership. Wisconsin envisions the creation equivalent of the Consortium on Chicago School Research and the Boston Plan for Excellence. Within the Milwaukee Public Schools, the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, at the University of Wisconsin, will evaluate Milwaukee Public School initiatives. Based on the Harlem Children's Zone project, *WINS for Children* will be established and will build on the *Zilber Neighborhood Initiative* already underway through a \$50 million philanthropic investment. *Discovery World*, an "accomplished STEM education institution" will be involved in the State's STEM programming and will establish a satellite learning program. A Response-to-Intervention Center will also be established to facilitate the implementation of a train-the-trainer model which is aligned with the National Staff Development Center. Another initiative will expand *Project Lead the Way* to improve math and science instruction. [<http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/racetothetop.html>]

### **Wyoming**

Wyoming has developed its "theory of action" which is designed to improve entire school systems, not just individual schools. It will rely on its State Support Team Structure to provide different levels of technical assistance. The focus will be on districts with schools which may not have been identified because of small subgroup (N) sizes, but which have the characteristics of persistently low-achieving schools. The Wyoming Department of Education will likely provide services, through its contractors, to schools which do not have the capacity to implement the Transformation Model, which will be the predominant model used. [[www.k12.wy.us/A/Docs/RTTT\\_final.pdf](http://www.k12.wy.us/A/Docs/RTTT_final.pdf)]