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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 14, 2011  
**TO:** TechMIS Subscribers  
**FROM:** Charles Blaschke, Blair Curry, and Suzanne Thouvenelle  
**SUBJ:** Title I Alert; Waiver Guidance Changes; K-12 Dropout Prevention Initiatives; Distance Learning Priorities; College Remediation Opportunities; and State Profile Updates

Enclosed is a Special Report analyzing the November 10<sup>th</sup> USED Addendum to Waiver Initiative Guidance which subscribers should take into account in approaching Priority and Focus Schools. One critical clarification encourages districts with Priority and Focus Schools to put in the Title I “reserve” the 20% set-aside for SES/parent choice and to allocate those “freed-up” funds to Priority and Focus Schools, thereby excluding that amount of Title I funds when the district calculates the amount the district has to allocate for non-public schools serving Title I students. This incentive will encourage more districts to allocate more freed-up funds for purchasing interventions, professional development, and related services for these Priority and Focus Schools which potentially could be \$1.5 billion.

The Addendum also clarifies:

- Schools already receiving SIG funds do not have to be identified as Priority or Focus Schools, which means they are not limited to the four SIG intervention models, but can use other interventions aligned with the seven waiver turnaround “principles.”
- Title I funds cannot be allocated to schools not receiving Title I funds, which differs from the SIG guidance; hence, some Priority or Focus Schools which currently do not receive Title I funds could have only limited access to other Federal funds (e.g., Race to the Top). On the other hand, sales staff should be reminded that Priority or Focus Schools can be designated as schoolwide programs even if poverty enrollments are less than 40 percent, which increases the amount of flexibility to, for example, use Title I funds to implement various levels of response-to-intervention approaches.

Also, as we have previously reported, it would appear that districts which have Priority and Focus Schools can also use provisions in the September 2, 2009 Title I guidance on the use of ARRA funds (see TechMIS Special Report September 15, 2009) to use Title I funds to train non-Title I teachers and to purchase (with non-Title I funds) interventions used in Title I schools for use in non-Title I schools.

As we have periodically reported over the last year, the best opportunities over the next year or so are still with Title I programs which should increase significantly over the next month or so as uncertainty regarding the 1.5% sequestration funding cut last October are removed. This is further explained in the enclosed Funding Alert.

Also included are the following Washington Updates:

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The first of its kind survey recently conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) describes dropout prevention initiatives conducted by public school districts which suggests the types of opportunities which likely exist in different types of districts, particularly beyond those districts which are receiving Race to the Top and/or School Improvement Grants. The largest percentages of districts offer tutoring, remediation classes, and after-school programs, especially in city districts and the foci of these activities are recovery courses or programs and early graduation options. Perceived “academic failure” is a major factor districts take into account in identifying potential dropouts, but not through the use of state assessment results. Only about a third of districts reported tracking dropouts and encouraging them to return to school the next year.

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A new NCES survey of public school districts found 55 percent have students enrolled in distance education courses, with over 60 percent enrolled in credit recovery courses, which did not include non-courses such as tutoring or remediation for at-risk students. The primary mode of instructional delivery was the Internet with asynchronous (non-real time) instruction. Districts in the Southeast used relatively more computer assisted instruction (CAI) which is not web-enabled, while small rural districts in the Central part of the country rely mainly on two-way interactive video. About half of all districts reported using distance education courses delivered by postsecondary institutions or by independent vendors. Three-fourths of districts intend to expand distance education courses in the next three years.

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A new study identifies effective practices of SEAs in supporting district adoption and implementation of formative assessment strategies which are likely to be expanded under Common Core State Assessment and in Priority and Focus Schools under the Waiver Initiative. Successful efforts in New York and Vermont used external partners, but in different ways, which could be a model to be expanded nationwide.

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New opportunities could exist for subscribers in Head Start agencies which have to recompute for grants and those new grantees as a result of new regulations requiring Head Start grantees to meet seven criteria. Grantees which have to improve quality of individual classrooms should also be targeted.

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USED has created a new Office of Early Learning which will have responsibility for the new \$500 million Race to the Top Early Challenge grants, as well as early childhood components of other reform initiatives, including Promise Neighborhoods. .

- **Page 8**

The National Center on Time and Learning has identified effective practices for use in expanded time programs, several of which can be facilitated through the use of technology. .

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A recent report by the American Institutes for Research found that during the last five years the total cost in Federal, state, and local taxpayer monies for first-year, full-time community college students who dropped out was almost \$4 billion. The report also identifies model programs which “harness technology” into hybrid online learning configurations. .

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The second annual community college student survey conducted by Harris Interactive for the Pearson Foundation points to important trends in the use of online delivery and digital devices, suggesting opportunities for firms in providing college remediation and preparation readiness. .

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A number of important miscellaneous items are also highlighted, including:

- a) Significant increase in new charter schools and student enrollment.
- b) Use of smartphones could expand instructional learning time by 40 minutes per week.
- c) New GED test will also focus on college readiness.
- d) New data released on gifted and talented education.
- e) Wisconsin Consortia of states (WIDA) received \$10.5 million grant to create new ELL proficiency assessments related to Common Core.
- f) New report finds science “proficiency” tests score rating varies widely among states.

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E-Rate update on districts with potential E-Rate refunds for purchasing non-eligible products and services. Many of these opportunities could exist in Philadelphia among charter schools.

The state profile updates address a number of issues including proposed funding and legislation for K-12 education next year, college remediation initiatives, and other items of interest to many TechMIS subscribers. Our last two TechMIS Special Reports addressed some of the opportunities which will likely be created in the 11 states which requested approval which submitted waiver requests.

We offer our “Best Wishes” for a happy and restful holiday season and a prosperous new year!

## **Stimulus Funding Alert: Title I Purchasing Interruption**

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

*Prepared by:  
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*December 14, 2011*

In response to numerous TechMIS subscribers' questions regarding the drop in Title I purchases beginning in October, our advice is "Don't panic." The culprit is the 1.5% sequestration (i.e. rescission) which occurred before the large October Title I allocation amount was sent to districts as SEAs had to recalculate the actual amount for each district after sequestration. Anger and uncertainty prevailed which virtually halted purchasing. It was hoped that the November 23<sup>rd</sup> Continuing Resolution would "restitute" the loss which it did not, and now many districts are hoping that the December 16<sup>th</sup> Continuing Resolution will do so. As long as this uncertainty exists, Title I purchasing will be slow. However, subscribers ought to be reminded that virtually all states carried over much more than 15 percent limitation, perhaps as much as \$3 billion from last year's Title allocation to this year's. So once the uncertainty is removed, Title I budgets have a fairly large "cushion" to be spent before September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. We will keep you posted on developments.

**Special Report:**  
**USED Addendum (November 10) to ESEA Flexibility Waiver Guidance  
Could Affect the Selection and Amount of Title I Funds Allocated to  
Priority and Focus Schools at the Expense of Funding Allocated for  
Non-Public Schools**

*A Technology Monitoring and Information Service (TechMIS)*  
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On November 10<sup>th</sup>, four days before the first round of SEA waiver applications were due, USED published an Addendum to Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) guidance, which will affect the amount of Title I SES funds freed-up to be allocated to Priority and Focus Schools and the process used by SEAs to select them. The late timing of the Addendum could have created the confusion which we have noted by which SEAs, in their waiver applications identified the number of Priority and Focus Schools. Highlights of the 11 state waiver requests have been previously sent to TechMIS subscribers.

The new FAQ Addendum appears strongly to encourage districts with Priority and Focus Schools to free up the 20% SES/parent choice set-aside for states to allocate to the Priority and Focus Schools. Even though the Addendum specifically states, "...the Secretary may not waive any statutory or regulatory requirement related to the equitable participation of private school students, teachers, and families," it does indicate the conditions under which the 20% set-aside can be put into the Title I "reserve," thereby excluding it from the percentage amount of funds to be "equitably distributed" to non-public schools. The USED interpretation says that, if Title I funds apply to Title I students "as a whole" (e.g., are used like regular Title I funds) then they are subject to the equitable services to private schools. As the Addendum notes, "However, they do not apply to the reservations from which an LEA provides services to a subgroup of students -- e.g., homeless students, neglected, and delinquent students -- or if an LEA focuses the reserved funds on a specific subset of low-performing schools -- e.g., schools in restructuring -- because public Title I school students as a whole do not benefit from those services either." Then, the guidance states, "On the other hand, if the LEA uses funds from an off-the-top reservation to implement interventions in its priority or and focus schools, the equitable services requirement would not apply." The bottom line is that, if an LEA with Focus or Priority Schools uses the 20% set-aside freed-up funds to implement interventions in those Priority and Focus Schools, the amount of Title I funds subject to calculations for allocating services "in the form of dollars" for equitable participation of private schools is reduced. As the *Title I-derland* blog (December 1<sup>st</sup>)

notes, if this happens, “private school students are out of luck...” This is consistent with previous guidance, but much more explicit.” We estimate that the total amount of freed-up SES/choice funds which could be allocated across states to Priority and Focus Schools potentially could be as high as \$1.5 billion, plus an additional \$600 million of the SEA 4% set-aside for school improvement.

The Addendum also clarifies that the Timeline for Implementation specified in the Flexibility guidance for meeting turnaround principles represents the latest dates allowed and that “an SEA or LEA always has the option of meeting the principle earlier than specified. SEAs and LEAs must, however, meet all of the principles.” As we have noted in our state summaries, several states are proposing to take advantage of such an earlier implementation date option, if state regulations/legislation are modified.

Also emphasized in the Addendum is the fact that the Flexibility guidance does not change parent involvement requirements, under ESEA, to provide materials and training to parents, to educate staff on how to reach out to parents, and to ensure written parent involvement policies are implemented. It also states that, “...an LEA with one or more priority schools must seek input from families and the community in selecting the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that will be implemented in these schools. Additionally, an LEA’s interventions in priority schools must include ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.”

As a reflection of the Administration’s priority on early learning, the Addendum states that in order to meet the turnaround principle regarding re-designing the school day, week, or year “...an LEA may choose to expand the school program to offer full-day kindergarten or high-quality preschool. Similarly, as part of meeting the turnaround principle regarding strengthening the school’s instructional program based on student needs, an LEA may choose to improve schools’ kindergarten or preschool program so that it is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State standards.”

Regarding the identification/selection of Priority and Focus Schools, the Addendum attempts to clarify a number of points. While an SEA is not required to take into account grade spans in identifying reward Priority and Focus Schools, USED “encourages an SEA to structure its identification process so that a mix of elementary, middle, and high schools are included in each category of identified schools.” This “encouragement” differs significantly from guidance under the School Improvement Grant program which strongly encourages the identification of high schools which are “dropout factories” (Tier I and Tier II). In addition, the Addendum states that an SEA may not want to “count Tier I or Tier II schools already implementing a school intervention model as priority schools, since Tier I and Tier II schools may not be in need of additional assistance.” As we noted in previous reports, if a Priority School does not receive SIG funding, it is not required to implement one of the four SIG intervention models, but still must implement all of the seven “turnaround” principles, which appear to be much more flexible than even the SIG “transformation” model.

Also emphasized in the new Addendum is the requirement that the number of Priority Schools identified equal at least 5% of the state’s Title I schools and the number of Focus Schools

identified equal at least 10% of the state's Title I schools to meet principle 2 as indicated in the original guidance. An SEA is free to identify additional schools as Priority or Focus Schools. Indeed, most of the 11 states submitting waiver requests thus far have chosen to identify and serve with interventions the 25% lowest-performing schools or the 25% lowest-performing students in schools identified as Priority or Focus Schools. The Addendum also clarifies that, for Priority and Focus Schools which do not receive Title I funds, "...nothing in the flexibility gives an SEA or its LEAs the authority to use Title I funds in non-Title I schools." At least one state has proposed to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds identified for Title I Focus Schools' for rigorous interventions, which would also be allocated to non-Title I Focus Schools -- a request which will not likely be approved. In deciding which, if any, non-Title I Priority or Focus Schools to target, a firm must take seriously into account whether the SEA is willing to allocate other Federal funds such as Race to the Top, SIG for Tier III schools, or even state funds for districts to purchase interventions and professional development.

For a copy of the new Addendum go to: [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)

# Washington Update

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Vol. 16, No. 12, December 14, 2011

## **New National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Survey Describes K-12 Dropout Prevention Initiatives Which Suggests Types of Opportunities Which Likely Exist in Different Types of Districts**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has released new data from its first survey, under the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), of the types of dropout prevention initiatives and activities undertaken in school districts during 2010-11. Although the sample was representative of K-12 districts nationwide, the findings are “descriptive” rather than “exhaustive;” however, they can point market strategists toward likely opportunities.

Dropout prevention services and programs were defined by NCES as “services and programs intended to increase the rate at which students are staying in school, progressing toward graduation, or earning a high school credential.” The study’s estimates are based on data reported by districts that had at least one elementary, middle school, and/or high school providing dropout prevention programs or services. Ongoing USED reforms, such as the State Waiver Initiative, School Improvement Grants, and Race to the Top include funding for dropout prevention interventions, programs, and initiatives. This survey suggests areas which provide opportunities, beyond districts participating in these programs, and which represent a market niche with expanded potential.

Participating districts offered the following services for students at risk of dropping out:

- tutoring (75% in elementary/79% in middle schools/84% in high schools)
- remediation classes (61%/69%/79%)
- summer school (54%/58%/67%)
- academic support (36%/63%/70%)
- alternative schools/programs (20%/44%/76%)
- after-school programs (42%/45%/45%)

Whether tutoring or remediation were provided in “extended learning time” or after school was not addressed in the survey. However, as our analysis of State Waiver requests has found, thus far, virtually all states are seeking waivers to allocate Federal funds, including the SES 20% set-aside, for extended learning time or after-school/summer school programs.

Not unexpectedly, the highest percentages of districts with schools offering services for students at risk of dropping out were city districts for tutoring, summer school, and remediation classes. Higher percentages for these three dropout prevention approaches were most often registered by districts in the Southeast than elsewhere in the nation. And as expected, the highest percentages came from districts with high poverty concentrations.

The percentage of districts with high school grades offering services and programs in any of their schools for dropout prevention included: credit recovery courses/programs (88%), early graduation options (63%), and

self-paced courses for purposes other than credit recovery (55%). Only 25% reported use of summer bridge programs (i.e., transitioning from one level to a higher level which includes remedial opportunities, study skills, etc.), and district-administered GED preparation courses (24%). Not unexpectedly, higher percentages were reported from large districts (enrollment sizes of 10,000 or more) and in cities. Districts in the Southeast reported higher percentages of districts providing credit recovery, summer bridge programs, and GED prep, while the districts in the Northeast appeared to emphasize use of decelerated curriculum (i.e. a one-year course spread over two years) and flexible school days. Districts in the Central part of the country had the highest percentages for providing early graduation options.

In order to help transition students from elementary to middle/junior high school, study districts assigned student mentors (10%), assigned adult mentors (17%), or offered an “advisement” (providing advice on careers and college preparation) class (24%). The corresponding percentages for transitioning from middle/junior high to high school were 20%, 26%, and 40%, respectively. The Central part of the country reported the highest percentages of districts offering all three elements of elementary-middle school transition, and low-poverty (less than 10%) districts had the highest percentages offering the three elements of middle/high school transition.

Not unexpectedly, high percentages of all districts reported using school counselors, teachers, or school administrators to mentor students at the elementary (60%), middle (66%), and high school (77%) levels. Lower percentages of districts used community

volunteers (35% elementary, 30% middle, 30% high school) and student mentors (25%, 28%, and 39%).

The survey also asked districts whether they used a formal program to reduce behavioral problems, such as positive behavioral support or positive behavioral intervention systems. The highest percentage of reporting districts were at the elementary level (69%), followed by middle school-junior high school (61%), and high schools (49%). Higher percentages were reported for large districts and districts in cities. It is noteworthy that the School Improvement Grant program places a high priority on the use of behavioral supports, particularly in high schools; nationwide, such behavioral supports tend to be provided more in the elementary and middle school levels than high schools.

The survey also found that more than one-third of all districts reported using the following factors, to a large extent, to identify potential dropouts:

- academic failure (76%), truancy or excessive absences (64%) and behaviors that warrant suspension or expulsion (45%);
- only 32% of districts reporting heavy reliance on “failure on state standardized tests;”
- only 17% of districts relied, to a large extent, on mental health problems as a factor in identifying potential dropouts;
- smaller percentages of districts reported relying, to a large extent, on for identifying potential dropouts or disciplinary action (27%), involvement in criminal justice (36%), pregnancy/teen parenthood

(28%), substance abuse (29%), learning disabilities (22%), observed changes in student attitude or life conditions (23%), and homelessness (30%).

Under the State Waiver Initiative, the flexibility guidance provided to states allows funds to be used for certain districtwide reforms (unlike SIG guidance) necessary to support the individual Priority or Focus Schools (i.e., the lowest-performing 15 percent) in areas such as the development and implementation of early warning systems for identifying students at risk of dropping out.

The types of entities districts reported most often working with to prevent students from dropping out were child protective services (85%), community mental health agency (73%), government agencies that provide financial assistance to needy families (68%), churches or community organizations (54%), and a health clinic or hospital (50%). It should be noted that a major component of the SIG program is supposed to focus on behavioral supports and “wraparound services,” including mental health services.

The survey also identified the percentage of districts who attempted to determine the status of students who dropped out and did not return in the Fall and who conducted follow-up with these students before the next school year to encourage them to return. Seventy-three percent of districts indicated they tried to determine the status of all students who dropped out, but only 36% followed up by encouraging them to return to school the next year. The lack of districts’ ability to conduct follow-up and the desire to encourage students to return to school is one of the major problems

apparent in credit recovery. Firms that have developed procedures in this area, working with districts, have been successful not only increasing ADA funds to the district, but also improving graduation outcomes.

The report is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011037.pdf>

### **New Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Survey of Public School Districts Found 55 Percent Reported Having Students Enrolled in Distance Education Courses With Over 60 Percent Enrolled in Credit Recovery Courses**

In the first survey of its kind, NCES found that in 2009-10 school year, 55 percent of school districts reported having students enrolled in distance learning courses, with 96 percent of those districts enrolling students in such courses at the high school level. Districts reported distance learning students enrolled in credit recovery courses (62%), dual enrollment (47%), and Advanced Placement (29%). Sixty-five percent of districts reported having distance learning students enrolled in “other types of academic courses,” which included core courses and electives. The survey did not report on students enrolled in distance learning “non-courses,” such as various types of tutoring/remediation activities including after-school programs for which online is often the most widely-used form of delivery. Reasons for providing distance learning courses reported by districts were “courses not otherwise available at the school” (64%) and “providing opportunities to recover course credits from classes missed or failed” (57%).

Almost 60 percent of districts reported students enrolled in Internet-delivered courses using asynchronous (not real-time) instructional to a “large extent,” with an additional 27 percent reporting students enrolled in courses that use this technology to a “small or moderate” extent. About two-thirds reported not using computer-based technologies other than the Internet. Hence, the report concludes the primary mode of instructional delivery was “Internet with asynchronous instruction.” Interestingly, districts in the Southeast reported using “Computer-based technologies other than the Internet” much more than districts in other parts of the country. Not surprisingly, small districts, those located in rural settings, and those in the Central part of the country are more likely to rely on “Two-way interactive video” for delivery than other districts. Ninety-two percent of all districts reported students accessed Internet-delivered courses at school, while 78 percent reported students accessed courses at home.

The percentage of districts reporting students enrolled in distance learning were higher in the Southeast (78%) and Central (62%) region, than in the Northeast (39%), and the West (51%). There were little differences among districts with varying levels of poverty concentration.

While 22 percent of districts with students enrolled in distance education courses reported that students can take a full course load using only distance education courses, only 12 percent reported that students could fulfill all high school graduation requirements using only distance education courses.

Half of the districts reported using distance education courses delivered by

postsecondary institutions, with 47 percent reporting delivery by independent vendors. Three-quarters of the districts reported that all distance education courses were developed by third-party entities outside their district. The types of districts most likely to rely on delivery from independent vendors in the U.S. are those with enrollments between 2,500 to 9,995 (61%), those in suburban settings (65%), those located in the Northeast (57%), and those having less than ten percent poverty concentrations (53%). Large city districts are more likely to rely on district-delivered courses, while smaller districts and those in rural settings are more likely to rely on delivery from another school district in their state, particularly those in the Central region of the country. Smaller suburban and rural districts and those in the Northeast are more likely to rely on education service agencies.

The percentage of districts with students enrolled in distance education credit recovery courses are larger districts (83%), those located in cities (84%), and those in the Southeast (71%). Districts reporting credit recovery as a very important reason are more likely to be larger districts (81%), those located in cities (81%), and those in the Southeast (65%).

About three-fourths of districts with distance education enrollments indicated plans to expand the number of distance education courses offered in the next three years.

The largest percentages of districts planning to expand distance education courses over the next three years were in large districts, those located in cities, and those in the West.

For a copy of the report go to: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012008.pdf>

## **New Study Identifies Practices Which Appear to be Effective in SEA Initiatives to Support District Adoption and Implementation of Formative Assessment Strategies at the District and School Level**

A new report by the Regional Educational Laboratory, Northeast and Islands, conducted for the Institute of Education Sciences at USED, identifies a number of effective State-supported practices at the district and school level to pilot and expand implementation of formative assessment systems. Supported by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the New York and Vermont SEAs, the study is important because, under both the State Waiver Initiative currently being implemented and the Common Core State Assessment models being developed, formative assessment is a major component. Findings on effective practices from this study will likely influence the overall strategies to be undertaken in the immediate future by other SEAs, possibly creating opportunities for firms with tools and applications and professional development techniques that can be used in facilitating the implementation of such practices at the state and/or district level -- particularly for Priority and Focus Schools under the Waiver Initiative.

A national group of researchers, convened by the CCSSO, arrived at a consensus definition of formative assessment as “a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve student’s achievement of intended instructional outcomes.” State-supported initiatives in New York and Vermont were examined. A primary study question was,

“What strategies do state, district, and school leaders report using to support implementation of formative assessment initiatives?” Researchers in the Regional Educational Lab, operated by the Education Development Center, relied on publicly available information and interviews conducted with participants in the projects implemented between 2007 and 2010. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two state, two district, and two school leaders knowledgeable about each of the initiatives. One was a project in a large urban New York district that began in 2007 and ended in 2010; the Vermont project began in 2006-07 with nine schools and was expanded to 55 schools by 2008. Interviews focused on three implementation goals:

- getting teacher buy-in to adopt and integrate formative assessment practices into regular instruction;
- sustaining teacher use of formative assessment; and
- spreading or scaling the use of formative assessment beyond pilot populations.

Researchers identified nine sets of strategies that were present in both initiatives which are outlined below:

- training provided by well-known experts focusing on credible evidence of how formative assessments benefit students and teachers;
- early collaboration with local leaders;
- harnessing enthusiasm at all levels of the system to spread formative assessments;
- creation of a safe environment for teachers to try out new

- practices and have opportunities to fail;
- alignment of reforms with existing context and concurrent training efforts;
- providing ongoing training and support for teachers and others at different levels;
- establishment of accountability and monitoring methods for sustaining implementation;
- building independent state and district capacity to sustain and spread teacher training; and
- using both voluntary and mandatory participation approaches.

The report commented on the use of external partners, indicating that both initiatives relied on external partners for support, but the roles and the costs differed. In the New York project, providers assisted in developing the initiative and provided continuing support for three years. In Vermont, the vendor provided direct support only during the first year with the State developing its capacity to expand initiative subsequently.

For a copy of the report go to: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL\\_2012112.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2012112.pdf)

### **New Head Start Regulations to Implement 2007 Provisions to Improve Program Quality Offers Possible New Opportunities for Firms**

The 2007 Head Start reauthorization changed Head Start grants from indefinite to five-year grants. The Act required HHS to

develop a system for designation renewal. Grantees identified as delivering high-quality comprehensive services receive an automatic five-year extension; other grantees are subject to open competition.

Over a three-year period all Head Start grants will be transitioned from indefinite to five-year grants. The application of the system begins with the consideration of criteria 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 (below) based on 2009 monitoring results. Beginning with the issuance of this rule (effective December 9, 2011), all seven criteria are included in determining which grantees will be required to compete for future funding.

The seven criteria for identifying the Head Start grantees that will have to compete are organized according to Quality (1 through 3 below); Licensing/Operation (4 and 5 below); and Fiscal and Internal Controls (6 and 7 below). Any Head Start program that meets one of seven criteria below will have to compete for continued funding:

1. The Grantee is found to have one or more “deficiencies.” Deficiencies are based on results of OHS monitoring.
2. Grantee is not taking steps to ensure that children in the program are meeting the school readiness goals established by the grantee.
3. Grantee scores poorly on classroom quality as measured by the CLASS: Pre-K assessment tool.
4. Grantee has its license to operate revoked by State or local licensing agency.
5. Grantee has had its grant suspended by the Department of Health and Human Services.
6. Grantee is “debarred” from receiving funding from any Federal or state governmental; agency or is

disqualified from the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

7. Audit finding indicates that the auditor is unable to ensure that the organization can continue as a “going concern.”

As noted in Education Week by staff writer Sarah Sparks, “The rules set no national school readiness standards, but they require each program to develop and use school readiness goals which must include pupils’ achievement and progress in literacy development, cognition and general knowledge approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development and social and emotional development. (These goals are those identified by the National Education Goals Panel.) They take effect on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The Class Assessment Scoring System (CLASS-PreK) tool developed by the University of Virginia is used to measure classroom interactions that promote positive child development and influence later achievement.

Education Week reports that beginning in December, the Department of Health and Human Services -- which is responsible for Head Start -- will begin notifying Head Start providers that fail to meet new benchmarks and are deemed low-performing. This could amount to 500-600 of the 1,600 organizations currently providing Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

As we have advised TechMIS subscribers over the last decade, the best prospects for selling instructional, assessment, and related developmentally-appropriate products and services to Head Start providers are to target those organizations receiving new Head Start grants, followed by agencies that have to make significant quality improvements in

order to continue to receive Head Start funding. According to Education Week, some administrators from multiple Head Start sites are concerned that their grants were at greater risk in that if a program is found deficient, all of its centers must re compete, not just the one cited for poor quality. Discussions with knowledgeable Head Start observers suggest if a large city has an overall grantee, but also 50 or so delegate agencies which operate separate centers, if one center of one delegate agency fails, then only that delegate agency has to compete for all of its centers. Some of the greatest potential opportunities exist in grantees in which new or improved classrooms will be established.

For further information about the recently published Head Start Designation Renewal System regulations, based on legislation, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, go to:

[70010 Federal Register / Vol. 76, No. 217 / Wednesday, November 9, 2011 / Rules and Regulations](#)

[http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Head%20Start%20Program/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Head%20Start%20Requirements/Head%20Start%20Requirements/1307/Part%201307-FRNotice\\_2011-28880.pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Head%20Start%20Program/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Head%20Start%20Requirements/Head%20Start%20Requirements/1307/Part%201307-FRNotice_2011-28880.pdf)

## **USED has Created the Office of Early Learning Which Will Be Responsible for Implementing the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge \$500 Million Program which Will be Headed by Secretary Duncan's Senior Advisor Jacqueline Jones, who With DHHS Officials Has Been the Primary USED Person Spearheading the New Early Learning Challenge Initiative**

In a November 5<sup>th</sup> USED Daily Digest bulletin, Secretary Duncan said the office reflected the high priority being placed on Early Learning by the Administration and stated that, "The dedicated office underscores a critical step in progressing the national dialogue about improving outcomes for young children. It will institutionalize, increase, and coordinate federal support for high-quality early learning, manage outreach to the early learning community and enhance support for building high-performing early education systems in states across the country." According to Education Daily (November 9<sup>th</sup>), the Office would also have oversight for early childhood programs under Title I, IDEA, Promise Neighborhoods, and the i<sup>3</sup> grant program. Several observers have questioned the degree of oversight the new office could actually execute over Early Learning components under IDEA which likely exceed \$500 million, the size of the Early Learning Challenge, Race to the Top grants, and Title I which allocates a lesser but significant amount to Early Learning. Secretary Duncan's statement in the Daily Digest bulletin indicated that he looked "forward to sharing more details on the role of the office of Early Learning" in the next few weeks.

## **The National Center on Time & Learning Has Identified Eight Practices Used in Successful Expanded-Time Schools, Several of Which Offer Opportunities for Technology to Facilitate and Implement**

In its new report entitled "Time Well Spent: Eight Powerful Practices of Successful Expanded-Time Schools" the National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) argues that in most successful expanded-time schools "more time is a powerful lever for boosting student achievement, closing opportunity gaps, and improving teacher effectiveness. The challenge is to use time wisely and well."

The NCTL identified at least 1,000 schools offering expanded schedules based on its 2010-11 survey and identified 30 schools which consistently demonstrate higher efficiency rates (at least five percentage points higher on state standardized tests for math or language arts); offered significantly more time than surrounding schools in their districts did or at least ten more days per year; and served a large percentage of low-income students. Arguing that more time "is fundamental to providing high-quality rigorous and well-rounded education that prepares students for success," some of the practices in which technology could play an important role in facilitating include:

- offering challenging academic program while still providing individual student academic supports;
- engaging teachers in the significant work of analyzing student data, strategizing on common instructional practices, and honing their skills in the classroom;

- providing more opportunities to a well-rounded education in subjects beyond math and reading and exposing students to “the world outside their schools and communities”;
- opportunities to teach and reinforce high expectations for behavior and achievement.

For schools with large populations of students who would be first in the family to attend college, expanded learning time can assist them in college selection, application, and admission processes; in preparing them for independent learning they will need in college settings; and familiarize students with career opportunities; and helping them build skills necessary for them to succeed in a work environment.

The report also points to indication of the priorities being placed on extended learning time by the Obama Administration, noting that “as many as 850 schools serving 500,000 students have begun implementing these new models” under the transformation and turnaround models in the School Improvement Grant Program. As reported in Education Daily (October 10<sup>th</sup>), Secretary Duncan, before the Center for American Progress, stated extended learning time “is not just the idea of theoretically” he said, “it’s getting results.” Secretary Duncan pointed to good results being achieved in states like Massachusetts where he argued that increased learning time by 25-30 percent is needed, to close achievement gaps. In the planned State Waiver Initiative, one “optional” allowable waiver would be to use 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers funding to expand learning time during the regular school day as well as before and after school. As we have noted

in previous TechMIS reports, Secretary Duncan’s strong support for extended learning time has often generated opposition from groups such as the Afterschool Alliance which argues that opening 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds to be used for extended learning time could reduce the number of after school programs. The Senate ESEA Harkin/Enzi bill tends to create a level playing field under a new initiative for both afterschool and extended learning time funding.

**Recent Report by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) on “The Hidden Costs of Community Colleges” Found that, During the Last Five Years (2005 to 2009 Academic Years), the Total Cost in Federal, State, and Local Taxpayer Monies in Appropriations and Student Grants for First-Year, Full-Time Community College Students Who Dropped Out Was Almost \$4 Billion**

In the 2008-09 academic year, nearly \$1 billion of taxpayer money was spent on first-time, full-time community college students who dropped out before their second year -- an amount that is up by more than 35 percent from five years ago. \$110 million to \$120 million Federal grants (mostly Pell grants) to students who dropped out during the 2005-06 timeframe Pell grants to first-year community college dropouts increased by about 25 percent to about \$140 million in 2007-08 and another 25 percent to \$180 million in 2008-09. State grants to students increased from about \$39 million in 2004-05 to more than \$60 million in 2008-09. The report also noted that in 2008-09, taxpayers spent a total of more than \$900 million on full-time, degree-seeking community college

students who dropped out during their first year, a substantial increase from the \$660 million spent five years earlier. Estimates did not include part-time students.

The AIR report also provides state-by-state estimates of local and state expenditures in 2008-09 for these dropouts, ranging from \$130 million in California to \$94,000 in Vermont. In terms of Federal grants spent on community college dropouts, California also leads the pack at \$24 million compared to \$9,000 in Alaska.

The AIR report cites a number of reform initiatives which appear to hold promise, many of which were identified in our lengthy on the trends in funding for college remediation (TechMIS Special Report March 1, 2001). Referred to by AIR as “arguably the single best repository of what is known about student success in community colleges,” the Community College Resource Center at Teachers College has cited a number of factors contributing to first-year dropouts, including limited engagement of faculty, poor alignment of course curricula, outcomes, and assessments, and poor practices concerning use of data to inform a continuous improvement process. AIR also cites models by groups such as The Western Governors University and Valencia College in Florida, stating, “Harnessing technology is commonly called upon as a way forward. Combining adaptive learning, adaptive testing, and social media into new ‘hybrid’ learning platforms looks especially promising and Carnegie Mellon’s Open Learning Initiative is often singled out as the current ‘best in class’...the current environment seems to hold promise by increasing flexibility and personalizing the rate at which students attain necessary

skills.” The report also notes that, since the mid-1970s when Tennessee began using incentives to improve community college retention and completion rates, about “half the states are experimenting with various formulas for rewarding institutional performance.” As we noted in our March TechMIS Special Report, many states are attempting to use financial rewards for colleges to improve the success of their students. As noted in our March 1 TechMIS Special Report, several other viable approaches have also been proposed to provide incentives to change the entire college remediation structure and to provide incentives for students to progress on their own rates while at the same time reducing costs to colleges.

The AIR report is available at: [http://www.air.org/files/AIR\\_Hidden\\_Costs\\_of\\_Community\\_Colleges\\_Oct2011.pdf](http://www.air.org/files/AIR_Hidden_Costs_of_Community_Colleges_Oct2011.pdf)

### **Second Annual Community College Student Survey Points to Trends Suggesting Opportunities in Community College Remediation and College Preparation Readiness**

The Second Annual Community College Survey, conducted by Harris Interactive for the Pearson Foundation, points to emerging trends and potential opportunities related to student preparation for community college and college remediation. Findings from the first annual Harris survey were addressed in our February 2011 TechMIS issue. One conclusion from the new survey findings is that “Online learning and digital technology may offer alternative solutions to address students’ needs.” Specifically the report states, “Online tools may provide additional assistance to community college students

who are at-risk of dropping out, such as those who are parents, employed, or enrolled in remedial courses. These students tend to be more likely than their counterparts to try online software, online tutors, and use social media for coursework-related activities, such as communicating with faculty about coursework and collaborating with classmates on coursework.” Moreover, the study found that ownership of digital reading devices and Smartphones has increased since 2010 among community college students. More than half of the students now own Smartphones, a third own digital reading devices, and one in ten own tablets. Nearly two-thirds of tablet owners use their device sometimes while studying or doing coursework, as do 42 percent of Smartphone owners. These devices can be used to reinforce what students are learning in their courses. One-third of community college students are now “extremely” or “very familiar” with digital textbooks compared to only 25 percent a year ago; but, while purchases have not increased, one-third of students indicated they would be likely to download or purchase a digital textbook online next semester.

This year’s survey provided more detail on characteristics of online instruction, especially for community college students at risk of dropping out.

- About 60 percent of all community college students have used online homework or tutorial software;
- 75 percent of students who have used the software say it helped them understand subject matter better;
- While only 13 percent of all students have ever used an online

tutor to help in their courses, 32 percent said that if such sessions were free as part of the course, they would be extremely or very likely to use online tutors.

- Students enrolled in remedial courses or those who are parents are more receptive to online homework and tutorial software, online tutors, and digital textbooks than their counterparts.
- While over 80 percent of all community college students strongly or somewhat agree that online courses are more convenient than in-person courses, about 60 percent think that online courses are more difficult than in-person ones.
- 80 percent of students who have used online help would recommend online homework or tutorial software to other students; 75 percent feel such online delivery helped them identify topics that they had not mastered, an equal percentage believe such delivery helped them understand the subject matter better, and about 70 percent feel it helped increase their course grades.

Almost half of community college students who recently graduated from high school think their high school did only a “fair” or “poor” job at preparing them for college courses. Of these who have dropped out or who have seriously considered dropping out of college, around 50 percent feel that their high schools should have offered more challenging courses, placed stronger emphasis on basic skills, or offered more courses. Interestingly, those who graduated

from high schools that did an “excellent” or a “good” job were more likely to want the availability of extra help and tutoring in high school (34%) than those who graduated from a high school they felt was only “fair” or “poor” (25%).

For a copy of the report go to:  
[www.pearsonfoundation.org/pr/20111117-new-survey-community-college-students-shut-out-of-classes.html](http://www.pearsonfoundation.org/pr/20111117-new-survey-community-college-students-shut-out-of-classes.html)

## Miscellaneous

a) The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools recently reported that in 2011-12 school year, the numbers of new charter schools and charter school student enrollments experienced the largest single year growth over the last two decades. As Education Week reports (December 7<sup>th</sup>), interim CEO for the National Alliance Ursula Wright attributed the increase of more than 500 new charter schools which opened last school year to the Race to the Top initiative in which 16 states have lifted “caps” on the number of new charter schools and students that can be enrolled in them. According to the National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL), funding from private foundations has also contributed to the growth even though some Federal and state funding has been reduced. According to Robin Lake, Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington, charter schools have matured, increasingly focusing the leads on at-risk students while public schools appear to be more acceptable now than in the past.

b) A recent study of over a million smartphone users, conducted by StudyBlue, found that “students with access to smartphones study material for classes approximately 40 minutes more per week than students without access to a smartphone.” Such use occurs when students are commuting or when at home or at school. StudyBlue found, “Approximately half the students use the application to study when going to bed or just waking up as well as when standing in line. Nineteen percent use a smartphone for studying while in the bathroom and 17 percent study while exercising.” Students using mobile devices for study are three times more likely to track progress for tests and class assignments. However, StudyBlue found no correlation between higher grades due to increased study time.

Under the waiver option, to which 11 states have already responded and 20-30 more likely will apply in February, one of the waiver principles is to allow states to use 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center funding for extended learning time initiatives. Virtually all of the states which have responded thus far plan to use Title I funds or freed-up funds from the 20% SES/choice set-aside for extended learning initiatives or after-school activities. Secretary Duncan has noted on several occasions that a minimum extended learning time of 300 hours per student per year is required to make a difference. However, because of budget, scheduling disruptions, and other reasons, many districts are proposing to reduce the number of days of schooling per week, or otherwise reduce the time for school operations, to reduce costs. An

alternative way to extend learning time may be through the use of mobile devices such as smartphones for students who have their own devices without disrupting the normal school day. It is not clear whether states which win approval to extend learning time through the waiver process will be allowed to use Title I or 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds to support activities which will facilitate the use of smartphones to extend learning time beyond the classroom. The article appeared in Digital Trends: <http://www.digitaltrends.com>

- c) The American Council on Education (ACE), working with Pearson, announced that it will be developing a new General Education Development (GED) test; last year more than 800,000 individuals took GEDs with more than 450,000 awarded high school equivalents. Aligned with the Common Core State Standards, the new envisioned GED exam, which is supposed to be available in 2014, would be designed for two purposes: (a) similar to the existing GED's primary purpose, students could use it to obtain a GED high school equivalency; and (b) an additional purpose which would prepare students for college and career readiness. As reported in Straight A's, the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE) which is the primary advocate for high school reforms, ACE and Pearson will also create a test prep program "featuring an expanded array of innovative and personalized learning resources and a transition network that connects GED test takers to career and postsecondary educational opportunities." In the same issue of Straight A's, AEE highlights a recent report by the National Center for

Education Statistics entitled "Characteristics of GED Recipients in High School: 2002-06" which found that GED recipients do not fare as well as high school graduates in two or four-year institutions of higher education. For a copy of the report (November 28<sup>th</sup>), go to: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012025.pdf>

- d) The National Association for Gifted Children has released its biannual report "State of the Nation in Gifted Education" with survey findings which collected data for 2010-11 from 44 states. As a result of the Waiver initiative, it is very likely that many states will be placing a higher priority on gifted education as state funding situations improve. Many attribute the closing of the achievement gap between high and low achieving subgroups under NCLB which occurred to the lack of actual "progress" of gifted and talented students because of the use of tests in which they "topped out," while lower achieving subgroups made some progress, thereby reducing gaps. Thirty-one states either have mandates or require services for gifted and talented students, while 14 have no mandates nor provide any funding. Ten states allow dual enrollment; 14 states reported funding virtual high schools serving gifted and talented students among others. Among states that do provide funding for gifted education, the average state funds per gifted student ranged from \$8 to \$2,500. A summary of the report has been posted on the Education Week online blog *Unwrapping the Gifted* or it is available at the NAGC's

website.

- e) As reported in Education Week (November 15<sup>th</sup>), a 28-state consortia led by the Wisconsin Education Department has received \$10.5 million to create new assessments of English-language proficiency. The so-called World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (WIDA) won the Federal competitive grant, while a second consortia led by California was denied funding. The states in that consortia included California, Arizona, Florida and 15 other states that represent about 2.5 million English language learners. According to the Education Week article, one option would be that the California consortia states would adopt the work of WIDA, but some observers feel that California may develop its own tests, similar to what New York state is doing. According to Ed Week, USED officials “declined to answer detailed questions about the outcome of the grant competition.” (See April 29 TechMIS Washington Update)
- f) A recent report by a coalition of more than 100 corporations called Change the Equation found that significant differences exist in the way states define “proficiency” on science assessments for eighth-grade students when compared to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The new report “All Over the Map: Comparing States’ Expectations for Student Performance in Science” prepared by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for the coalition, looked at 37 states analyzing scores on state tests on the 2009 eighth-grade science test against the 2009 NAEP results and found that in 15 of the

37 states, state definitions of “proficiency” were below the NAEP benchmarks for basic levels. It reported that Virginia has the lowest definition of “proficient” followed by Tennessee, Michigan, North Carolina, Iowa, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Georgia, Maryland, Texas, Oregon, South Carolina, California, and Arizona. All of these set their definitions for achievement below NAEP’s standards for “basic” science learning.

As noted in the summary, “Only four states have set the bar near or above NAEP’s bar for proficiency. Louisiana, New Mexico, Mississippi have more rigorous performance standards for students than states like Connecticut, New York, Maryland that are generally thought to have high-quality competitive schools.”

In a related development under the leadership of Achieve, in partnership with the National Research Council, National Science Teachers Association, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Next Generation Science Standards coalition of 20 states have developed a framework to guide the development of science standards which will identify core ideas and practices in natural sciences and engineering, as reported by *Curriculum Matters* (November 29<sup>th</sup>). At the end of November, six additional states were joining the coalition including: Arkansas, Delaware, Illinois, Montana, North Carolina, and Oregon as reported by Achieve. This effort appears to parallel the Common Core State Standards initiatives which focus on reading/English language arts, and

mathematics which consist now of about 45 states.

More information is available at:  
[www.changetheequation.org/scienceproficiency](http://www.changetheequation.org/scienceproficiency)

### **E-Rate Update on Districts With “Potential” E-Rate Refunds for Purchasing Non-eligible Products and Services**

As we attempt to do every quarter, we have included a list of districts that received funding commitments from the SLD, during the latest quarter, for applications submitted back to 2004. We believe that most of the funding commitment letters represent appeals that were filed by districts when they were notified that certain requests in their applications were denied. In many cases, these districts went ahead and purchased the product in question, paying the whole pre-discount price. Because the SLD eventually found many of these appeals to be meritorious, these districts can request a check instead of a credit through the so-called BEAR process. Those districts doing so can use the discount refund to purchase non-eligible E-Rate products and services such as instructional software and professional development. If a district staff person is interested in purchasing a non-E-Rate eligible product or service, then he or she should contact the district E-Rate office to determine whether a check was requested for the refund amount through the BEAR process and, if so, whether some of that money can be used to purchase the desired product or service. The accompanying chart shows the funding commitments greater than \$50,000.

<b>E-Rate</b> <b>Funding Year 2011, Quarter 3 (Jul-Sep) Commitments</b> (greater than \$50,000)			
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount Committed</b>
<b>2004 Commitments</b>			
DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$305,486
IMANI EDUCATION CIRCLE	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$276,784
IMHOTEP CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$212,350
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$164,742
<b>2006 Commitments</b>			
DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$261,792
RICHARD ALLEN PREPARTORY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$255,401
THE KHEPERA CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$243,001
FRANKLIN TOWNE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$209,437
GADSDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT #32	SAN LUIS	AZ	\$176,999
UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$152,696
ATLANTIC CITY BVE-ADMIN	ATLANTIC CITY	NJ	\$108,998
ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	ALLENDALE	SC	\$73,702
MASTERY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$72,977
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$69,818
EUGNIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$64,882
NUEVA ESPERANZA ACADEMY	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$53,626
<b>2007 Commitments</b>			
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SCHOOLS	UPPER MARLBORO	MD	\$4,732,653
TUCSON UNIF SCHOOL DISTRICT	TUCSON	AZ	\$4,406,115
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS	DALLAS	TX	\$783,714
IMHOTEP CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$379,704
ATLANTIC CITY BVE-ADMIN	ATLANTIC CITY	NJ	\$366,094
MATHEMATICS, CIVICS & SCIENCES CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$301,337
THE KHEPERA CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$282,832
FOLK ARTS-CULTURAL TREASURES CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$280,321
UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$214,657
GADSDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT #32	SAN LUIS	AZ	\$179,996
RANCH HOPE FOR BOYS INC	ALLOWAY	NJ	\$175,164
NUEVA ESPERANZA ACADEMY	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$160,953
FRANKLIN TOWNE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$151,602
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$127,590
WILDWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILDWOOD	NJ	\$112,945
MASTERY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$103,012
DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$85,541
EUGNIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$73,940
ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	ALLENDALE	SC	\$61,559

<b>2008 Commitments</b>			
TUCSON UNIF SCHOOL DISTRICT	TUCSON	AZ	\$4,905,269
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SCHOOLS	UPPER MARLBORO	MD	\$4,282,836
ASPIRA SCHOOL DISTRICT	CHICAGO	IL	\$1,543,279
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS	DALLAS	TX	\$1,458,027
EAST SIDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT	SAN JOSE	CA	\$1,153,767
INDIAN OASIS-BABOQUIVARI DIST	SELLS	AZ	\$854,965
ATLANTIC CITY BVE-ADMIN	ATLANTIC CITY	NJ	\$785,687
FRANKLIN TOWNE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$703,936
TOOMBS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	LYONS	GA	\$681,056
IMHOTEP CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$535,765
NUEVA ESPERANZA ACADEMY	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$521,860
MASTERY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$464,761
RICHARD ALLEN PREPARTORY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$379,619
TALLADEGA COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	TALLADEGA	AL	\$372,227
FOLK ARTS-CULTURAL TREASURES CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$295,988
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$227,379
UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$202,554
RANCH HOPE FOR BOYS INC	ALLOWAY	NJ	\$187,879
BERNALILLO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	BERNALILLO	NM	\$180,206
WILDWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILDWOOD	NJ	\$142,524
BAIS TRANY OF MONSEY	MONSEY	NY	\$127,940
GERMANTOWN SETTLEMENT CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$119,026
ICHUD HATALMIDIM	BROOKLYN	NY	\$98,048
ARLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 16	ARLINGTON	WA	\$95,588
MARITIME ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$86,167
EUGNIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$86,095
IMANI EDUCATION CIRCLE	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$81,884
ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	ALLENDALE	SC	\$80,533
DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$67,777
OHELELOZER	BROOKLYN	NY	\$64,916
CENTRAL VALLEY SCH DIST 356	SPOKANE VALLEY	WA	\$54,608
<b>2009 Commitments</b>			
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SCHOOLS	UPPER MARLBORO	MD	\$5,081,636
FULTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	ATLANTA	GA	\$2,205,679
ASPIRA SCHOOL DISTRICT	CHICAGO	IL	\$1,761,018
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS	DALLAS	TX	\$1,244,123
PORTALES MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	PORTALES	NM	\$1,132,063
TUCSON UNIF SCHOOL DISTRICT	TUCSON	AZ	\$921,170
ASPIRA PENNSYLVANIA	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$742,405
ATLANTIC CITY BVE-ADMIN	ATLANTIC CITY	NJ	\$673,184
SAN BENITO CONS INDEP SCH DIST	SAN BENITO	TX	\$599,535
FLORESVILLE INDEP SCHOOL DIST	FLORESVILLE	TX	\$551,230
NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION	BERNALILLO	NM	\$416,546
AL MADINAH SCHOOL	BROOKLYN	NY	\$391,212
ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION	ORANGE	NJ	\$346,290
EUGNIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$272,634
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$265,705
IMHOTEP CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$264,397
HOUSTON INDEP SCHOOL DISTRICT	HOUSTON	TX	\$250,474
NATIVE VOCATIONAL DISTRICT	KAYENTA	AZ	\$210,393
LONGFELLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	RATON	NM	\$188,069
ESPERANZA ACADEMY	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$185,336
SOUTH UMPQUA SCHOOL DIST 19	MYRTLE CREEK	OR	\$178,653
EAGLES' NEST ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL	POMPANO BEACH	FL	\$163,013
EAGLES' NEST MIDDLE CHARTER SCHOOL	POMPANO BEACH	FL	\$159,782
YESHIVAT OHR HATORAH	BROOKLYN	NY	\$151,384
CONGREGATION MACHNE SHALVA	BROOKLYN	NY	\$149,871
OHELELOZER	BROOKLYN	NY	\$147,909
LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	FLORENCE	AL	\$142,301
GREATER BRUNSWICK CHARTER SCH	NEW BRUNSWICK	NJ	\$141,392
WILDWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILDWOOD	NJ	\$136,501
UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL	PHILADELPHIA	PA	\$130,208
BERNALILLO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	BERNALILLO	NM	\$124,051
RICHARD ALLEN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY	MIAMI GARDENS	FL	\$119,495
ICHUD HATALMIDIM	BROOKLYN	NY	\$108,225
PACKER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE	BROOKLYN	NY	\$92,200
ASSOCIATION TO BENEFIT CHILDREN	NEW YORK	NY	\$88,893
BAIS TZIPORAH GIRLS SCHOOL	BROOKLYN	NY	\$86,748
THE CENTER FOR DISCOVERY	HARRIS	NY	\$83,002
OLTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	OLTON	TX	\$75,801
ARCHDIOCESE OF NY HEAD START	NEW YORK	NY	\$65,286
PLEASANTVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	PLEASANTVILLE	NJ	\$64,563
INDIAN OASIS-BABOQUIVARI DIST	SELLS	AZ	\$62,640
TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION INC.	LITTLE FAILS	MN	\$58,860
KEREN HATORAH	BROOKLYN	NY	\$57,938
CENTRAL VALLEY SCH DIST 356	SPOKANE VALLEY	WA	\$55,601
TRI-VALLEY OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL	CROOKSTON	MN	\$50,965

# Alabama Update

## December 2011

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As reported in *Digital Directions* from Education Week, 164 Alabama elementary schools are using an online computer gaming program called *Kids College* which incorporates Alabama curriculum standards into reinforcement of students' reading and math skills. Available to Alabama public schools for three years, *Kids College* is provided at no cost to the schools through funding and support from the State Department of Education and the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools, a professional organization for school administrators.

# Arizona Update

## December 2011

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The East Valley Tribune reports that more and more Arizona high school students are participating in dual enrollment classes to get ahead in college and save tuition costs. In the East Valley region, for example, more than 6,000 high school students -- from the Tempe, Paradise Valley, Dysart, and Deer Valley school districts -- are taking dual classes through Rio Salado College in Tempe. Rio Salado offers 161 courses to high school students at 41 public schools as well as a number of charter schools and private prep schools. Students pay \$76 per credit -- the community college rate.

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer has appointed former Intel CEO, Craig Barrett, to be chairman of the Arizona Ready Education Council. Barrett has declared that Arizona is at the lower tier of states when it comes to public education. His primary goal is to get Arizona to adopt the Common Core State Standards and to attract higher quality teachers into the field.

# Arkansas Update

## December 2011

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According to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, a new State report shows that 480 Arkansas schools -- 45 percent of the State's 1,071 public schools -- have not met State minimum achievement standards for at least two years. The data indicate that 420 schools fell in the category last year.

# California Update

## December 2011

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A new report from California's Legislative Analyst's Office indicates that 2011-12 revenue for the State will be \$3.7 billion below the \$88.4 billion assumed when the State budget was approved last Summer. The shortfall will trigger \$2 billion in automatic cuts, most of which (\$1.4 billion) will be seen by public schools. According to Education Week, among the cost-cutting options being considered by school districts is a reduction of the school year from 175 days to 168 days. Thirteen of California's 30 largest school districts have already cut some days from the school calendar which required 180 days prior to the recession.

Faced with a huge budget deficit, California Governor Jerry Brown may ask voters to approve increases in sales taxes and income taxes on wealthy earners. As reported in the Sacramento Bee, a group known as the Think Long Committee for California is calling for an even broader overhaul of the State's tax system.

As we reported last month, California education officials have bemoaned the costs to the State of meeting the U.S. Department of Education's conditions for a waiver (which California has not requested) from the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. According to a new State report, "estimates for statewide implementation of waiver conditions range from \$2.4 billion to \$3.1 billion. The estimate reflects materials adoption and purchase, professional development for all teachers, development and statewide implementation of a teacher and principal evaluation system, statewide implementation of teacher collaboration time, and assessment and accountability development costs."

The Sacramento Bee reports that a new California law has changed the ages of children to eligible for kindergarten. Currently, California kids could enroll in kindergarten if had turned five years old by December 2. Under the new law, the age-5 cutoff dates will change to November 5 in 2012, to October 1 in 2013, and September 1 in 2014. The same law has also

created a “transitional kindergarten” for children with later birthdays. TK, as it is called, will focus on improving students’ motor and social skills to prepare them for full kindergarten.

A public opinion survey conducted by the Los Angeles Times and the University of Southern California has found that 52 percent of respondents had a favorable opinion about charter schools with only 12 percent having an unfavorable opinion. Forty-eight percent said charters provided a better education than traditional schools; 24 percent indicated traditional schools are more effective. Nearly a third of respondents said education would improve if schools were run by “qualified, licensed, for-profit companies.” And 37 percent said the same for nonprofits. California has more than 900 charter schools -- nearly all organized as nonprofits -- serving six percent of California’s students.

# Colorado Update

## December 2011

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According to the *State EdWatch* blog on [EducationWeek.org](http://EducationWeek.org), Colorado's Proposition 103, which would have raised an estimated \$3 billion for public education, was defeated by a 64-36 margin. The measure would have raised the State income tax rate from 4.63 percent to 5.0 percent and the State sales tax from 2.9 percent to 3.0 percent for a five-year period. On the same day, Governor John Hickenlooper released a proposed budget that would cut K-12 school funding by \$97 million at a time when the State's school enrollment is expected to grow by 52,000 students. The Governor's proposed education cuts come on top of a \$200 million reduction for the current year in K-12 funding.

A proposal in the Colorado legislature to review online schools in the State failed on partisan voting. As noted in *Education Week's Digital Directions*, approximately two percent of Colorado's K-12 public school students attend school online. Some online providers are for-profit firms which, Democrats contend, increase enrollment rates before the October 1 "count date" but which often have failure rates of more than 50 percent. Overall, the State spent an estimated \$85 million for online schools last year.

# Connecticut Update

## December 2011

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As we reported last month, Connecticut is enhancing its application for \$50 million under the Federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge by establishing a new Early Childhood Office and developing a coordinated child care system. Going beyond RTT-ELC requirements, the State is planning to allocate \$12 million to provide 1,000 additional early childhood education slots by July 1, 2013. In its proposal, the State would reallocate \$44 million and \$60 million of Title I and IDEA, respectively, for early childhood education.

# Florida Update

## December 2011

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In February, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed into law a budget that reduced school funding by \$1.3 billion, requiring teachers to pick up a portion of their pension that had been paid by school districts. Then, in May, he vetoed \$615 million from this year's budget and urged the legislature to target the savings on education. According to [Education Week](#), the Governor has proposed a budget for FY 2012 that would increase public school funding by more than \$1 billion (more than \$100 per student). The Governor has said he will not sign a budget that does not include an increase in school spending when the legislature convenes in January.

Of Florida's \$700 million under the Federal Race to the Top grant, according to the [Orlando Sentinel](#), the State plans to allocate \$7.6 million for a competition to develop more teachers through UTeach programs. Specifically, Florida wants to triple the number of colleges and universities with UTeach programs (which are modeled on a University of Texas initiative). The goal is to graduate more math and science teachers for middle and high schools. Students in UTeach programs, unlike traditional teacher education programs, take rigorous math and science courses.

The Florida Department of Education, in cooperation with the nonprofit Charter School Growth Fund, is initiating a \$30 million fund to encourage the growth of high-performing charter schools in the State. According to [The Miami Herald](#), the State is contributing \$20 million from its \$700 million Race to the Top award; the nonprofit has pledged another \$10 million. To be eligible for the fund, charter schools must be financially sound, serve primarily low-income students, and be among the State's top-performing charters. The first finalist is Youth Co-Op Charter school in Hialeah which could win as much as \$3 million to expand or open a new school.

Launched with a \$900,000 grant from the Walton Family Foundation, the new Florida Charter School Alliance is a lobbying group whose objective is the expansion of charter schools in

Florida. According to The Orlando Sentinel, the Alliance will help new charter schools open, but will also attempt to sway public policy in favor of charters. The Alliance's board of directors includes:

- Jim Horne, former State legislator and commissioner of education;
- Patricia Levesque, head of former Governor Jeb Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education; and
- John Kirtley, head of Step Up for Students, a group that collects corporate donations to fund private school scholarships.

Education Week's On Special Education blog notes that Florida's McKay Scholarship Program is one of the oldest private school voucher programs for students with disabilities. Last school year, the State paid out \$148.5 million to about 1,000 private schools for 22,200 students, with vouchers ranging from \$4,752 to \$19,510. The State has recently expanded the scholarship program. But the McKay program has come under considerable criticism of late because it does not require accreditation for participating private schools and other reasons. One State legislator has called for major changes in the program.

As reported in The Miami Herald, the Florida State Board of Education has approved new learning standards for public prekindergarten programs in the State. The standards include curriculum benchmarks, as well as social and emotional development guidelines, for the 160,000 four-year-olds who attended voluntary pre-K programs (VPK) in 2009-10. Prior to the new rules, only 15 percent of providers could be rated as low-performing. The new standards are expected to increase the number of low-performing programs, who would be placed on probation and run the risk of losing State funds if their low performance continues. The State Board has also asked the Legislature to require tests for all VPK providers before and after children attend.

The Miami Herald reports that the Miami-Dade County school district has eliminated the requirement for mid-term and final exams for students in grades 6-12. Teachers may still opt to give the exams if they wish. At the same time, Florida is moving toward common end-of-course

exams; Algebra I began last school year and this year Geometry and Biology exams will be in place.

# Georgia Update

## December 2011

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A new report from the National Council on Teacher Quality identified Georgia as one of four states which have won awards under the Federal Race to the Top program but which have not produced high-quality teacher evaluation plans as called for by RTTT guidelines. Because only 26 of Georgia's 181 school districts are participating in the State's RTTT program, they are the only districts with solid teacher evaluation plans. It should be noted that, in its RTTT application, Georgia did not promise to develop a Statewide teacher evaluation plan.

Education Week notes that the cheating scandal at 40 Atlanta elementary and middle schools is likely to result in many teachers and administrators losing their teaching licenses. They could also face criminal charges. The schools involved have lost their Federal standing meaning they could face sanctions and could be required to return many thousands of dollars in Federal money.

Teachers in the Gwinnett County school district are using predictive analytics software to identify students in need of early help using grade, attendance, and discipline data. As reported by eSchoolNews, the district is working with IBM to create a digital content learning assessment support system (eCLASS). The eCLASS software will provide teachers with important information about their students with the ability to drill down to see individual student results and suggestions for addressing individual students' academic weaknesses.

# Hawaii Update

## December 2011

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A report from the National Council on Teacher Quality identified Hawaii as one of four states which have won awards under the Federal Race to the Top program but which have not produced high-quality teacher evaluation plans as called for by RTTT guidelines. According to the NCTQ report, Hawaii has made “little or no legislative or regulatory changes” concerning teacher evaluation, as promised in its RTTT application. The State’s plan to redesign its teacher evaluation system has not “materialized in any significant way.”

# Idaho Update

## December 2011

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According to the Deseret News, Idaho has become a laboratory for teacher performance-pay plans. At least 29 Idaho school districts have developed pay-for-performance plans based, at least in part, on parental involvement, as an outgrowth of the State's education reforms. Under next year's proposed budget, the State will use \$20 million from its projected surplus to replace the funding that would continue to come out of salaries to pay for such changes as teacher merit pay.

According to Education Week, Idaho has become the first state in the nation to make at least two online credits a requirement for high school graduation, beginning with next year's entering ninth-graders. Alabama, Florida, and Michigan require at least one online credit for graduation. The online requirement is part of a major education reform plan that includes teacher merit pay and phases in laptop computers for every high school teacher and student. Proponents of the plan say the online classes will save money and better prepare students for college and careers. There has been vocal opposition to the plan and a group of teachers and parents expect to put repeal of the virtual learning requirement on the November 2012 ballot.

The Moscow-Pullman Daily News reports that more than ten private companies have responded to the State's request for information about technology products that could become part of Idaho's education reform agenda known as Students Come First. Among the responding firms are Apple, Dell, and Hewlett-Packard. It is expected that a formal request for proposals will be issued in April 2012 with bids due in early Summer.

# Illinois Update

## December 2011

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The Daily Herald (Springfield) reports that Illinois Governor Pat Quinn has reached an agreement with the State legislature to prevent -- at least temporarily -- the layoff of 2,000 State employees. The \$273 million plan shifts money from some areas of the budget to others in order to keep facilities open. Approximately \$100 million originally allocated to education will be used for prison, juvenile detention, and mental health facilities that had earlier been slated for closure.

As we have reported over the past few months, the Chicago school district has been attempting to get district schools to extend their school day through financial incentives for schools and teachers. A total of 13 elementary schools have voted to do so. The Chicago Tribune notes that the district is providing similar incentives to the 42 charter schools (out of a total 108 charters in the district) that do not currently have extended school days. The district has allocated \$6 million for the charter school offer which includes \$75,000 grants to schools that implement a longer school day in 2011-12, as well as \$800 stipends for teachers in those schools. In early November, the district reached an agreement with the local teachers union not to ask additional district-operated schools to lengthen their day.

The Chicago school district has signed a charter school compact agreement with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation making the district eligible for a part of a \$40 million Gates grant. As reported in District Administration, Chicago would use the money to remove barriers between charters and neighborhood schools to allow for the sharing of innovative ideas and programs.

# Indiana Update

## December 2011

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Education Week notes that Indiana is considering a new set of rules for better identifying struggling schools and targeting them with extra support and guidance. Under existing rules, schools getting an F rating by the State for six years in a row can be taken over or subjected to other severe sanctions. The new plan calls for possible State takeover after four consecutive years of F ratings or five straight years of D or F ratings. If implemented, the new rules could put more than 100 schools in 76 districts at risk of takeover. It should be noted that this summer the State Board voted to place private operators in charge of four schools in Indianapolis and one in Gary.

Also according to Education Week, Indiana's new school voucher law has provided scholarships (worth an average of \$4,150) for nearly 4,000 students to attend private schools at a cost to the State of \$16 million. As a consequence of the law, the Indianapolis school district has lost 650 students, the most of any district. Because the law requires voucher students to have attended public school for at least one year, some parents are pulling their children out of private schools and putting them in public schools so they will be voucher-eligible next year. The Indiana voucher program is the most expansive in the country because of its wide income guidelines and its availability to students from all schools -- not just failing schools. The State teachers union plans to challenge the legality of the program.

According to The Republic (Columbus, IN), the superintendent of the Indianapolis school district has called for a State investigation into allegations that Indianapolis charter schools are turning away homeless students and students with disabilities. The ten charter schools cited are accused on enrolling students at the start of the school year and putting them out "after the State's count date for determining funding." Charter school representatives say that student movement among schools can be attributed to parents changing jobs or moving from one part of town to another.

# Iowa Update

## December 2011

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Iowa Governor Terry Branstad has proposed a package of changes that would affect teacher training. According to the *State EdWatch* blog on [EducationWeek.org](http://EducationWeek.org), among the Governors proposed reforms are:

- a minimum 3.0 grade-point average for admission to teacher-education colleges in the State;
- a more rigorous screening process for candidates for teacher education programs;
- new scholarships to attract more educators into high-need subjects;
- requiring teachers to take more subject-specific classes in core academic areas;
- a greater emphasis on in-class training for aspiring teachers; and
- an overhaul of the compensation system for educators, including higher starting teacher pay.

Many of the proposed reforms would require legislative approval.

# Kansas Update

## December 2011

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Kansas Governor Sam Brownback is developing a plan to overhaul the State's funding for its 283 local school districts. As noted in Education Week, the plan is expected to be released shortly before the State Legislature convenes in January. It is anticipated that the plan would remove limits imposed by the State on local districts' ability to levy property taxes. This year, the State, faced with a tight budget, cut base State aid to schools by six percent (\$232 per student), dropping the aid amount to \$3,780 per student. The State has been sued by a number of school districts who argue that State funding is inadequate and is distributed unfairly. The Governor believes the revised funding formula would avoid future lawsuits.

# Kentucky Update

## December 2011

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Education Week observes that Kentucky is at the forefront of collecting and sharing P-20 data -- preschool through graduate school. In 2009, the State legislature mandated that K-12, postsecondary, and teacher training sectors work together to improve education. Among the benchmarks established were:

- Cutting in half the percentage of students who enter college needing remediation, so that 81 percent of students are college-prepared by 2014;
- Increasing the college graduation rate for first-time underprepared students from 33 percent to 48 percent by 2014.

The *Curriculum Matters* blog on EducationWeek.com reports that Kentucky, the first state to adopt the Common Core State Standards, has been selected as a demonstration site for a new, Statewide professional development model reflecting the Common Core Standards. A professional development group, Learning Forward (formerly by the National Staff Development Council), will lead the effort in which six other states -- Georgia, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Utah, and Washington will help in the development. The project will involve creating and delivering the professional development and supporting “new school year and daily school schedules that provide substantive time for professional learning for educators.” Kentucky is also one of eight states that are pilot testing instructional tools created by math and literacy “design collaboratives.”

Funding by the Federal Investing in Innovation (i3) program, the Jefferson County (Louisville) school district has designed and implemented a school turnaround model that was fully operational during the 2010-11 school year. Known as the “Investment Model,” it invests in the creation of a professionalized teaching culture, according to Education Week. The model has three core elements:

- substantial and consistent time for teacher collaboration;

- an emphasis on formative assessment that allows teachers to diagnose students' understanding of content matter and provide feedback; and
- effective and flexible use of the school schedule to provide time for personalized student support from adults and peers.

According to the most recent State data, 56.8 percent of 2008 Kentucky high school graduates had enrolled in postsecondary education in-State, up from 50.9 percent in 2004. And, for those currently enrolled in college, 38 percent needed remedial work in at least one subject -- down from 45 percent. The coordination among education levels is being overseen by the State's Council on Postsecondary Education.

# Louisiana Update

## December 2011

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The Louisiana State Board has approved a new teacher evaluation system that links teacher reviews to student performance. To become effective for the 2012-13 school year, the system's teacher ratings will be based half on the growth of student achievement on standardized tests. Under the new method, teacher and administrator evaluations will be conducted annually as opposed to every three years under the old structure. State officials acknowledge that the evaluation system will require refinement over time.

A recent study by the Southern Regional Education Board is sharply critical of middle school education in Louisiana. The nonprofit SREB says Louisiana -- as well as several other Southern states -- should make immediate changes (including a new mission) to improve student achievement in grades 6-8 and ultimately to increase high school graduation rates. Among SREB's recommendations are:

- Educators should undergo new training leading to a "middle school makeover."
- The middle school curriculum should be focused on literacy, science, technology, engineering, and math.
- Middle school goals should be at least: (1) 90 percent of eighth-graders graduate from high school; (2) 80 percent of high school graduates go on to post-secondary education; and (3) two-thirds finish a college degree or career credential.

Current State law, passed in 2009, calls for a high school graduation rate of 80 percent by 2014 -- up from only 67.4 percent this year.

Education Week notes that the demand for French education has continued to be strong among Louisiana families. There are waiting lists at all 29 of the State's public school French immersion programs. Louisiana has as many as 200,000 French-speaking residents. Approximately 50,000 of the State's public school students are learning French as a second language and there are 3,500 students in French immersion programs.

# Maine Update

## December 2011

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In mid-November, Lewiston, Maine hosted a national conference on iPad Education called *Leveraging Learning: The iPad in Primary Grades Institute*. Maine was chosen for the conference in large part because of the State's ten-year-old program to provide laptop computers for seventh- and eighth-graders. Currently, about half of the State's high school students have public-funded laptops.

# Maryland Update

## December 2011

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According to The Baltimore Sun, officials in the Baltimore County school district (the northern suburbs of Baltimore) ignored advice from State leaders and spent more than \$5 million in recent years to revise its English programs. The Sun reports that the textbooks purchased are largely unused and the new curriculum has not been implemented. The State warned the district that Maryland would commit to the Common Core State Standards agreed upon by 46 states. But Baltimore County last year went ahead with its curriculum rewrite which is not being widely used.

# Massachusetts Update

## December 2011

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The Boston Herald reports that Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick has announced a number of new initiatives intended to close achievement gaps between student groups. The Governor's plan includes:

- establishing a goal that all students should be proficient in reading by third grade;
- starting a pilot kindergarten literacy program in areas of the State that have persistent achievement gaps; and
- creating a Commonwealth Education Innovation fund to raise money for education initiatives in the State.

A new report from the National Council on Teacher Quality identified Massachusetts as one of four states which have won awards under the Federal Race to the Top program but which have not produced high-quality teacher evaluation plans as called for by RTTT guidelines. The NCTQ report says that Massachusetts' new regulations do not require student performance measures to be a "significant" component of teacher evaluations. The State's regulations also give too much discretion to individual evaluators concerning the selection of appropriate student achievement measures and the definition of satisfactory student growth.

# Michigan Update

## December 2011

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According to Education Week, Michigan's Republican-controlled Senate has approved, by a narrow 20-18 vote, a bill that would allow more online charter schools in the State. Under current State law, only two "cyber" charter schools are authorized to operate in Michigan. Supporters of the legislation argue that there is a waiting list of students hoping to get into the schools. Opponents, primarily Democrats, say there is not enough data to justify lifting the cap.

As we reported in October, Michigan's new Statewide school district for the State's lowest-performing schools -- the Education Achievement Authority (EAA) -- will take control of failing schools across the State starting next Fall. According to the Detroit Free Press, originally, the EAA had only planned to take over about 35 struggling Detroit schools for the 2012-13 school year. Now, the EAA will assume control of some rural schools as well as a smaller number of Detroit schools. It expected that the EAA schools for next year will be selected by mid-February. Over the next three years, the EAA will take over schools serving more than 100,000 students Statewide, making it Michigan's largest school district.

Education Week notes that the Detroit school district has achieved a budget surplus for the first time in four years and will use it to reduce a \$327 million deficit. The district's \$43 million surplus was made possible by spending cuts (\$98 million), debt refinancing (\$200 million), and additional Federal revenues (\$54 million). For the past three years, Detroit has been run by an Emergency Manager appointed by the Governor, as have Benton Harbor, Ecorse, Pontiac, and Flint. A new State law allows these districts to make major changes in union contracts and school board organizations.

# Minnesota Update

## December 2011

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This Summer, when the Minnesota State legislature passed the State's budget for 2012-13, it included a provision that delayed 40 percent of the payments to school districts until the next fiscal year. A survey of school districts in the Minneapolis --St. Paul area has found that the districts will have to borrow funds to meet this year's financial obligations. A total of 26 districts expect to borrow a total of \$382 million this year, at a cost of \$3 million for financing. State per-pupil aid did, however, increase by \$50 student offsetting the districts' financing costs.

Education Week notes that, last year, close to half of Minnesota's 2,255 schools failed to make adequate yearly progress under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. The State has requested a waiver from NCLB benchmarks which State officials hope to receive early next year. The State expects to switch from the NCLB assessment requirements that rely heavily on high-stakes testing to a "more nuanced" system focusing on student academic growth, reduced achievement gaps, and higher graduation rates.

The Minnesota Department of Education has established a new website designed to provide the State's educators and parents with an easy-to-use tool that helps people learn about Minnesota public schools. Among the features of the website are a "Just for Parents" section and a live Data Center which provides a centralized location for files and reports.

The *Teacher Beat* blog on EducationWeek.org notes that the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers has been granted the authority to charter schools. Through a non-profit guild, the union will approve new schools, monitor their performance, and shut them down, if necessary, if they fail to meet academic or financial benchmarks. The union will not be involved in the operation of the charter schools. The nonprofit guild was established with a grant from the American Federation of Teachers Innovation Fund.

Last year, 25 southwest Minnesota school districts had special permission from the State to start school before Labor Day for three years. According to Minnesota Public Radio, a new report has found mixed academic results from the program's first year. Some districts showed improvement in reading and math scores, but overall the districts failed to meet several goals. District officials still believe the early start will eventually improve student achievement.

Math teachers in the Anoka-Hennepin school district have developed their own online curriculum to replace mass-produced textbooks. As reported in *Education Week's Digital Directions*, the district had budgeted \$200,000 to purchase statistics texts. Instead, over the summer, three math teachers spent about 100 hours developing the lessons at a cost of about \$10,000. Another \$5,000 was spent to make the materials accessible to students without Internet connections or to produce hard copy and DVD versions. Because some classrooms do not have enough computers, some students have bought bound copies for \$5 or checked out print copies from the school library. The classes have also used the free resources of the CK-12 Foundation which has created an online framework to develop and distribute digital textbooks.

# Montana Update

## December 2011

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The Billings Gazette notes that Montana has adopted the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and math, joining 45 other states and the District of Columbia. As required by the State constitution, Montana's new standards also include Indian Education for All.

According to the *Politics K-12* blog on EducationWeek.org, Montana is projecting a budget surplus of about \$430 million -- three times the legislature's estimate in the Spring. The larger surplus is attributed to the sale of mineral rights as well as to overly pessimistic original estimates.

Also noted in *Politics K-12*, Montana has elected not to seek waivers from the requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. State officials cited the costs of implementing the "unfunded" requirements that would accompany a waiver as well as the possibility that waiver initiatives could be overturned as part of a reauthorization of ESEA.

# **Nevada Update**

## **December 2011**

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A new report by the nonprofit American Institutes for Research has found that community college dropouts who fail to graduate cost taxpayers, at all levels, nearly \$4 billion over a five-year period. Specifically in Nevada, the estimated cost of community college dropouts between 2004 and 2009 was \$8.8 million. At Nevada's largest community college, the College of Southern Nevada, the graduation rate for first-year, full-time students is only nine percent -- well below the national average of 35 percent. Another report, by Complete College America, found that 42 percent of first-year students at Nevada's community colleges require remedial courses. And of those requiring remediation, less than 10 percent graduate within three years.

# New Jersey Update

## December 2011

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As reported in The Newark Star-Ledger, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie is pushing a comprehensive set of school reform bills keyed to the State's application for a waiver from some of the requirements of the Federal No child Left Behind Act. The four measures comprising the Governor's reform package are:

- School Children First Act (S2882/A4168) -- which would change the way teachers earn and retain tenure;
- Charter School Bill (A4167) -- which would expand access to charter schools;
- Opportunity Scholarship Act (S1872/A2810) -- which would offer vouchers to private schools for students in failing public schools; and
- Urban Hope Act (S3002/A4264) -- which would privatize some schools in the State's five lowest-performing school districts.

The State's largest teachers union has expressed strong opposition to the Governor's proposals on tenure, charter schools, and vouchers.

Education Week has analyzed the contrasting views on major issues by Governor Christie and the State's largest teacher union, the New Jersey Education Association:

- School Choice -- The Governor wants easier movement between public schools and the use of corporate tax credits to fund scholarships for students in low-performing districts. The NJEA suggests allowing colleges to approve and regulate charter schools but does not want public money used for private school scholarships.
- Standardized Tests -- The Governor wants a large portion of the State's teacher evaluation system to be based on such measurable standards as students' improvement on standardized tests. The union does not.
- Merit Pay -- The Governor wants teacher pay to be partially based on student outcomes. The NJEA opposes merit pay for individual teachers based on test scores.
- School Management -- The Governor would like education management organizations --

including for-profit companies -- to operate some low-performing schools. The NJEA opposes allowing for-profit firms to run public schools.

Leaders in the New Jersey State legislature have said that they will consider a teacher merit pay bill as long as schools, not individual teachers, are identified for performance. The legislators also said they would not consider a measure that would remove seniority protection for teachers. The State teachers union has maintained its opposition to all merit pay plans, but has said rewards to schools are less problematic than individual teacher bonuses.

Last month, we reported that the New Jersey After 3 afterschool program for low-income children had been eliminated because of State budget cuts. This month it was announced that the program will continue through a public-private partnership. As reported in Education Week, an ally of Governor Christie, David Tepper has agreed to provide bridge funding while the State applies for additional Federal money. The State expects the program to become part of the extended learning component of its No Child Left Behind waiver application. If approved, NCLB funds will support the afterschool programs.

# New York Update

## December 2011

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A new report by the Alliance for Quality Education says the latest State budget approved by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo will result in cuts that are three times as large in poor school districts than in wealthy districts. The report estimated total education reductions to be \$1.3 billion this year. Arguing that the Governor broke his campaign promises with respect to school funding, the report's analysis indicates that high-wealth districts will lose \$269 per student, poor school systems will lose \$843 per student, and the poorest districts will see per-pupil losses of \$547.

New York plans to award a total of \$75 million over three years to local school districts through a "Mini-Race to the Top" competition. As noted in Education Week's State EdWatch blog, New York will base the awards on district enrollment and a 115-point scale that includes academic improvement, effectiveness in helping students, and developing innovative plans for middle school, early college, and career-and-technical education.

An analysis by The New York Times showed that A to F report cards for New York City high schools, this year, for the first time, include college readiness measures. Overall, only about a quarter of the students entering City high schools are college-ready after four years. About half of the 363 high schools receiving report cards got the same grade as the previous year; 15 percent got a higher grade and about a third went down. The overall decline in college readiness has been attributed to tighter graduation requirements and revised grading practices. At the 11 City high schools receiving Federal School Improvement Grants last year, there was no clear indication of whether the reform strategies were effective.

According to school district data, only 21.4 percent of entering freshmen at New York City high schools graduate four years later college ready. District officials say that student tests must be improved to assess better the skills students need after graduation, including critical thinking,

problem solving, and analytical writing. Specifically, the officials believe that “state exams have not shifted to focus on college readiness.”

The Buffalo school district, under pressure to have turnaround plans in place by January 1 for seven failing schools has asked outside groups to submit proposals to operate the schools. A total of 14 organizations -- eight local and six out-of-district -- have filed initial notices. Among the responding groups are:

- Center for Social Organization of Schools at the Johns Hopkins University;
- Frazier Academy Design Team (Chicago);
- Distinctive Schools (Chicago);
- The Research to Practice Group (Long Island); and
- ASCD -- formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Virginia).

# North Carolina Update

## December 2011

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As reported in Education Week, North Carolina's FY 2011 budget, despite an overall cut of more than \$1 billion, included enough money to fund all teacher and teacher assistant positions across the State. But it also included "flexibility" for the funding to be used for other purposes. The Speaker of the North Carolina House has said that local superintendents who use their money for purposes other than classroom staff must be prepared to defend their decisions.

As we have previously reported, this past Summer, the North Carolina legislature removed the Statewide limit of 100 charter schools. Education Week notes that the State's plan for fast-track approval of new charters has attracted 27 applications by the November 10 deadline. Intending to open next Fall, the charter applicants will undergo financial reviews and personnel interviews and must demonstrate their capability to operate a charter school.

A new report from the National Council on Teacher Quality identified North Carolina as one of four states which have won awards under the Federal Race to the Top program but which have not produced high-quality teacher evaluation plans as called for by RTTT guidelines. The report says that North Carolina's new standard that only calls for teachers to contribute to the academic success of students is "too vague" and is not part of teacher performance ratings.

# North Dakota Update

## December 2011

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According to The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead, the Hess Corporation is planning to donate \$25 million to support a Statewide education program intended to help North Dakota students become better prepared for college and the workplace. Called Succeed 2020, the program is targeted at middle and high school students starting with next year's fifth-graders. Planning grants will be used to bring together educators, parents, and business and community leaders. Regional education associations will work with local school districts to:

- design and implement programs to improve college and career counseling;
- increase access to career/technical education and advanced placement courses; and
- provide professional development for teachers and counselors.

# Ohio Update

## December 2011

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Within three years, online State tests will replace pencil-and-paper assessments for all Ohio school districts. As reported in the Dayton Daily News, the computerized exams will be keyed to the Common Core State Standards being implemented in most states. Some local district officials have expressed concern about how the testing will be paid for. It is unclear how much it will cost to acquire the computers, infrastructure, and training to implement the online assessments. The State has suggested that some of its Race to the Top award could be available but has made no commitment.

Ohio voters have rejected a referendum -- Issue 2 -- that would have imposed broad restrictions on the collective bargaining rights of public workers, including teachers. The law would have established a merit-pay system for teachers; however, a separate law also created a performance-pay system that will soon go into effect despite Issue 2's defeat. Strongly supported by Governor John Kasich, the statute has been the subject of much media and political attention over recent months. The Governor pushed for the law on the grounds that it would save local governments (including school districts) more than \$1 billion a year by reducing health care costs and eliminating automatic salary increases.

# Oklahoma Update

## December 2011

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According to the [Tulsa World](#), the new teacher evaluation system developed by the Tulsa school district has been selected as the model for the entire State of Oklahoma. Developed with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the evaluation system must be approved by the State Board at its December 15 meeting. The mandate to implement a Statewide system was embodied in Senate Bill 2033 in an effort to strengthen Oklahoma's bid under the Federal Race to the Top competition. Although Oklahoma did not win RTTT funding, the mandate stands. The system's framework is a five-point rating scale that incorporates equally both quantitative and qualitative measures.

The saga of the Oklahoma special education voucher program continues. In June 2010, the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarships for Students with Disabilities became law, allowing parents to send their children to private schools with public funds. As noted in the *On Special Education* blog on [EducationWeek.org](#), the law required school districts to reimburse parents for tuition. Apparently, some districts did not do so and the parents sued. Two districts then countersued, challenging the constitutionality of the vouchers. The State legislature then revised the law by requiring the State to reimburse parents. So the parents dropped their legal action. All this leaves in question the districts' court challenge over the constitutionality of the vouchers.

# Oregon Update

## December 2011

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Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, as part of his plan to redesign the State's education system, plans to hire a chief education officer who will have temporary authority over all levels of education until they are coordinated into a PreK through graduate school structure.

In 2007, Oregon introduced a new, tiered diploma system that includes standard, modified, extended, and honors diplomas, as well as an alternative certificate. State universities do not accept modified diplomas but community colleges do. According to Education Week, in 2010, of the 693 Oregon students who graduated with modified diplomas, 691 had disabilities.

# Pennsylvania Update

## December 2011

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Education Daily reports that Pennsylvania's Auditor General has called for a Federal investigation of the York City school district's use of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers funding. The U.S. Department of Education has been asked to look into the charge that the district misspent \$834,000 of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds between January 2008 and August 2009. It is also charged that Pennsylvania Department of Education knew about the misspent money but still urged the district to spend all of the grant funds so as to avoid having to return the money to USED.

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reports that the Pittsburgh school district, two years ago, received a \$40 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to improve teacher effectiveness. District data indicate that close to a third of the amount allocated to date has gone to contractors and consultants. Between now and the end of next year, the district expects to spend \$19 million of the grant, 68 percent of it on consultants. The money will be used to develop more comprehensive evaluations and to create better learning environments. It was noted that other districts that received similar Gates grants -- Hillsborough County, Florida and Memphis, Tennessee -- also have spent most of their money on contractors and consultants.

# South Carolina Update

## December 2011

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South Carolina education officials and the State Board are in a standoff over Federal aid to schools. State Superintendent Mick Zais, an outspoken critic of Federal stimulus programs, has refused to apply for money from Race to the Top and the Education Jobs Fund. Moreover, he says will not submit monthly reports to the Board on funding available from the Federal Government and private sources. The State Board may ask the State's Attorney General if the Superintendent can be required to comply with the Board's request.

# South Dakota Update

## December 2011

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A recent study by the Associated School Boards of South Dakota has found that this year's cuts in State aid have led to reductions in local school district budgets of more than \$38 million and the elimination of 465 full-time equivalent jobs -- including 266 teaching positions. Districts are dealing with the 6.6 percent reduction by relying more on local property taxes than on State aid. Among the district approaches are spending reserve funds and asking residents to opt out of the State property tax freeze.

South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard has proposed a State budget for next year that would increase State aid to school districts by 4.5 percent, partially offsetting this year's cuts. As noted in Education Week, the Governor's spending plan would provide three-percent pay raises plus a one-time bonus for State employees. Much of the education increases would be one-time money that may not be included in subsequent budgets.

# Tennessee Update

## December 2011

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Tennessee has submitted a request for a waiver from some requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act with the intent of implementing its own education standards. Among the standards the State expects to establish is a 20 percent improvement in students' proficiency scores over the next five years. Currently, scores on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment program show that 40 percent of third-graders are rated proficient in reading, while 29 percent of seventh-graders are proficient in math.

As noted in the [Chattanooga Times Free Press](#), Tennessee has made a number of changes to the State's new teacher evaluation program which came about through Tennessee's successful application for \$500 million under the Federal Race to the Top competition. Among the changes are:

- streamlining principals meetings with teachers related to personal observations of classroom performance;
- ensuring personal observation scores are in line with other evaluation components; and
- using evaluations to make decisions about teacher tenure.

An article in [The New York Times](#) says that Tennessee's efforts to implement Federal requirements under the State's Race to the Top award have led to micromanaging principals and what have been called "bewildering" assessment rules. According to the [Times](#) article, math specialists can be evaluated through their schools' English test scores and music teachers by schoolwide writing scores. State education officials acknowledge some of the problems and are looking at "tweaks" to the requirements.

# Texas Update

## December 2011

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According to data from The Dallas Morning News, Texas' education budget cuts of 3.3 percent on average have resulted in a sharp increase in the number of elementary schools that have been allowed to exceed the State's 22-student limit. This year, 6,988 K-4 classrooms have more than 22 students -- up from 2,238 a year ago. Close to 30 percent of all elementary schools in the State (affecting more than 150,000 students) have larger classes. Class size exemptions are given for one year at a time; districts will have to reapply for the 2012-13 school year when even more exemptions are expected.

An article in The New York Times has highlighted the rapid growth in the number of alternative teacher certification programs in Texas. Texas has more than 110 such programs which, unlike other states, are dominated by for-profit firms. Despite an overall drop in pathways to certification since 2003, for-profit alternative certification programs have grown by 23 percent (although the actual number of for-profit alternative certificates granted has decreased since 2009). The two largest for-profit programs -- A+ Texas Teachers and iteach Texas -- have produced more teachers than any other programs in the State, traditional or alternative.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reports that the Fort Worth school district has warned its student data contractor -- Dallas-based Tyler Technologies -- to correct the software problems plaguing the district's data system. The district paid \$4.9 million for the software system; the \$164,000-per-year service agreement is slated for renewal in July. District officials have threatened to terminate the contract or seek legal action if the problems are not corrected.

# Virginia Update

## December 2011

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A group of Virginia district superintendents have presented a strategic plan to help students become prepared for college and careers. As reported in Education Week, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, in its Blueprint for the Future of Public Education, suggested:

- measuring student progress and achievement throughout the year using a range of assessments, not just the current standardized Standards of Learning exams;
- utilizing more virtual instruction;
- offering better teacher development programs; and
- extending the traditional academic year.

VASS expressed opposition to “state promotion and funding of pay for performance models that are not supported by research or that are inequitable.

*Digital Directions* from Education Week notes that, last year, Virginia passed a law that allows school districts and private firms to operate online school programs. However, the way State funds are used to pay for these programs has created problems for State officials. Under the State’s funding formula, wealthy school districts receive much less in State per-pupil money than poorer districts. As a result, virtual school operators have an incentive to locate in poor districts where they receive more State money for their students who may actually live elsewhere -- even in wealthy districts. Current, State estimates show that average State and local funding for virtual schools is about \$6,600 per student -- far less than \$11,020 average for all students.

# Washington Update

## December 2011

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According to Education Week's *State EdWatch* blog, Washington State, faced with a \$1.4 billion budget shortfall, is seeking a temporary sales tax increase that would raise \$494 million for public schools. Governor Christine Gregoire is already calling for \$2 billion in cuts to her supplemental budget. Without the tax increase, according to the Governor, school districts would have to make even deeper cuts, possibly including shortening the school year from 180 to 176 days. Opponents of the Governor's plan say the State could save money through cuts in teacher salaries and benefits.

Education Week also reports that, among the cost-cutting measures considered by Washington Governor Gregoire is the elimination of State funding for school bus service. The State could save as much as \$220 million by cutting the transportation money. Some State education officials have expressed concern that such a cut could violate the State requirement that it pay the costs of basic education which includes student transportation. The Governor has said she does not support the proposed cuts but has no choice but to deal with the deficit.

# Wisconsin Update

## December 2011

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As noted in Education Week's *State EdWatch* blog, opponents of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker have begun their campaign to recall him. The Governor has seen public anger at his efforts to reduce the collective bargaining rights of public workers (including teachers). Under State law, the recall petition cannot be filed until January 3, 2012 when the Governor has been in office for one year. The recall effort will have to collect about 540,000 signatures (one quarter of the total 2010 vote that elected Walker).

A new Statewide survey of Wisconsin school superintendents addressed the effects of \$149 million in budget cuts over the past two years. With 83 percent of the State's 424 districts responding, the survey found that:

- Wisconsin school districts lost approximately 3,400 education positions this year, the effects of which were masked by more than 4,500 retirements;
- at least a third of the State's districts increased elementary class sizes;
- about 40 percent of districts are using one-time Federal stimulus funds to balance their budgets; and
- 20 percent of districts eliminated entire sections for vocational and technical training.

Two-thirds of the survey respondents anticipate that next year's staff cuts will be at least as bad as this year's.

Wisconsin is planning to implement an evaluation system for principals and teachers that would be based half on classroom practices and half on student outcomes. Among the features of the planned system are:

- Half of a teacher's evaluation would be based on ten classroom standards developed by a national consortium of educators.
- The other half of a teacher's evaluation would be based on student outcomes, including: improvement on State and local tests; meeting student, school, and district goals; and

schoolwide reading scores and graduation rates.

- Teachers and principals would be categorized as “developing,” “effective,” or “exemplary” based on their evaluations.
- “Developing” teachers would enter on “intervention phase” after which, if the teacher is still deficient, the district could remove the teacher.

Plans call for the new system to be pilot tested in some districts next Fall with full implementation by 2014-15 (in order for the State to qualify under a Federal waiver from NCLB requirements).

Wisconsin school districts, faced with economic difficulties, are seeking to avoid Federal sanctions for reducing special education spending. Until this year, districts could only cut special education budgets if there was an actual decrease in required expenses; any other reduction could result in the district losing Federal funds. According to the *On Special Education* blog at [EducationWeek.org](http://EducationWeek.org), the districts have asked that the penalties be waived if the district finds a more efficient way to manage its special education budget. Along with their request for the penalty waivers, the districts have promised that services for students with disabilities would not be reduced.

# Wyoming Update

## December 2011

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As reported in Education Week, some Wyoming legislators are concerned that high turnover in the State education department could undermine its ability to track student and teacher performance. Since the start of 2011, 39 department employees have left, generally through retirement or transfer, leaving the department with 22 vacancies (out of 160 positions). The lawmakers are working on a system that would hold teachers accountable for student performance. Such a system would rely heavily on accurate and timely data.

A new study in Wyoming has found that more than half of the new students entering Wyoming community colleges are not prepared for college-level English and math. In the Fall of 2006, seven percent of incoming community college students required remediation only in English, 33 percent needed remedial math, and 15.5 percent required remedial courses in both subjects. At the University of Wyoming, where 23 percent of entering students required remedial math, university officials are considering raising admission standards and providing more support for new students.