

# Education TURNKEY Systems, Inc.

256 North Washington Street  
Falls Church, Virginia 22046-4549  
(703) 536-2310  
Fax (703) 536-3225

---

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 18, 2015  
**TO:** TechMIS Subscribers  
**FROM:** Charles Blaschke and Suzanne Thouvenelle  
**SUBJ:** RTI Growth; Proposed ESEA Formula Change; Parent Involvement Gaining Traction; College Prep and Remediation; and Proposed Legislation for Juvenile Recovery

This interim June TechMIS report does not include any major development, such as ESEA reauthorization legislative debates, etc., which are scheduled shortly. The follow-on TechMIS report in mid-July will cover such debates, expected SIG guidance, and the annual report on the ISTE conference being held at the end of the month.

Included in this TechMIS issue are numerous Washington Updates, which could be of major importance to some specific TechMIS subscribers, who are encouraged to contact us for additional information relevant to individual subscribers. After a week vacation, Charles plans to attend the ISTE conference and would be pleased to meet with any subscriber in the exhibit area on Sunday afternoon, Monday, or Tuesday morning. Please call Charles at 703-362-4689 or email at [clblaschke7@gmail.com](mailto:clblaschke7@gmail.com).

Washington Update headlines include the following:

- **Page 1**  
Recent Reports Point to Continued District Growth (See List in May TechMIS Issue) in the Use of Response to Intervention Approaches as Solutions to Meet the Needs of Some Special Education Students and Other At-Risk Students, Particularly English Language Learners (ELLs)
- **Page 2**  
House and Senate Preliminary Priorities in Higher Education Act Reauthorization Could Provide Opportunities for Firms Addressing College Remediation/Developmental

## Education

- **Page 4**  
Parent Involvement/Engagement Gaining Traction at District Level
- **Page 7**  
CIC Conference Addresses Publishers' Dilemma Over "Changing" State Common Core Standards/Assessments
- **Page 8**  
A number of miscellaneous items are also addressed including:
  - a) The Senate-proposed reauthorization bill, Every Child Achieves, includes an amendment which would change the ESEA funding formula, particularly for Title II Teacher Quality, to ensure more funds go to states with districts serving high concentrations of students from low-income families.
  - b) On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the College Board and Khan Academy launched a new website to prepare students to "practice" taking the College Board's redesigned SAT, which will be implemented beginning March 2016.
  - c) A new SETDA publication entitled "State Digital Learning Exemplars" identifies innovative digital learning funding and policy initiatives among states, including competitive grant programs, which should be of interest to many TechMIS subscribers.
  - d) Slightly over 1,900 districts have signed the "Future Ready District Pledge" as part of the USED-Alliance for Educational Excellence Joint Initiative to foster technology use in education, as reported in our November 2014 TechMIS Washington Update.
  - e) Several reports indicate progress in the implementation of California's \$47 billion Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) initiative is being made, but slowly in certain areas.
  - f) A new USED report to Congress found that in 2011-12, 35,500 teachers in public schools were categorized as "highly-qualified" even though they were still receiving preparation through "alternative routes."
  - g) As expected, ranking House Committee Democrat Bobby Scott of Virginia has introduced a bill which would increase education and related opportunities for incarcerated youth during the school -- juvenile facilities -- returning to school "pipeline" and otherwise tighten procedures and reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

# ***Washington Update***

*Vol. 20, No. 6, June 18, 2015*

## **Recent Reports Point to Continued District Growth (See List in May TechMIS Issue) in the Use of Response to Intervention Approaches as Solutions to Meet the Needs of Some Special Education Students and Other At-Risk Students, Particularly English Language Learners (ELLs)**

Last year, USED implemented its so-called Results-Driven Accountability Initiative which required states to report on student outcomes rather than to report on districts meeting compliance requirements of IDEA provisions. Under the old compliance reporting system, almost 40 states were found to have “met the requirements” of their compliance focused evaluation framework at that time, such as conducting timely evaluations. As reported in [Education Week’s On Special Education](#) blog (June 24<sup>th</sup>) under the new Results-Driven Accountability Initiative, only 15 states fell into the similar category of “meeting requirements based upon 2012-13 data.” Thirty-two states were characterized as “needing assistance,” which meant that if the state were so classified for two years in a row, it was identified as being “at-risk” and had to accept required USED technical assistance. Three states last year were reported as “needing interventions” (California, Delaware, and Texas), which meant that if they fell in this category for three years in a row, the states had to develop corrective action plans and would be required to spend their administrative set-aside funds to correct deficiencies. As the

blog notes, the District of Columbia had to spend a half million dollars on student evaluation programs. The whole purpose of the new initiative was summarized by Director of the Office of Special Education Programs, Melody Musgrove: “We need to focus energies on the areas that are most in need of improvement.” At that time, using NAEP scores, fourth-grade reading scores 69 percent of students with disabilities were below proficient compared to 27 percent of students without disabilities. The Department has subsequently created a \$50 million technical assistance Center on Systemic Improvement to help states meet the Results-Driven Accountability framework using student outcomes measures.

A report released this year by the National Center for Education Outcomes (NCEO) at the University of Minnesota entitled “2012-13 Publicly Reported Assessment Results for Students With Disabilities and ELLs With Disabilities” reported that students with disabilities continued to score much lower than their peers on state assessments even though their graduation rates improved. As reported in [Education Week](#) (June 1<sup>st</sup>): “In 2012-13, students with disabilities scored from 32-41 percentage points lower than their peers on state tests...the gap was lowest in elementary math and highest for middle school reading.” As the NCEO report notes, data were reported by subject in different levels by almost 50 states even though the nature and quality of the data varied among the states and also had other limitations. As [Education Week](#) reports,

“Nevertheless, the overall gaps remain stubbornly large and in some cases have actually gone up over the past six school years.” The assessment results reported by the states were on general assessments and alternative assessments that are used for Title I accountability purposes for the most part.

On the other hand, the number of states reporting on ELLs with disabilities remains at seven, which is the same number the previous two years. However, the NCEO notes that it might be expected that more states would have reported disaggregated data for this assessment, given the requirements of ESEA to report by subgroup for each state assessment. If more states began reporting evaluation data on ELLs, who have disabilities, it is likely that the numbers will grow proportionately and more and more districts will be “identified” for over-representation of ELLs in special education, and will be required to set aside the required 15 percent amount for Coordinated Early Intervening Services/RTI, as required by IDEA (see the list of about 1,400 districts identified as having set aside funding for RTI recently in the April TechMIS Special Report). About two decades ago, the number of ELLs with disabilities was estimated at about 500,000, which is likely to have grown significantly to more than one million today. This subgroup of the ELL student population should be considered a priority one target for appropriate RTI approaches and components.

## **House and Senate Preliminary Priorities in Higher Education Act Reauthorization Could Provide Opportunities for Firms Addressing College Remediation/Developmental Education**

Currently, the House and Senate appear to be placing higher priorities on ESEA reauthorization at the K-12 level; however, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is standing in the wings to move quickly if ESEA “stalls.” It includes several provisions that suggest increased technology-related opportunities in remedial and developmental education, which should assist firms in their planning.

The House Education and the Workforce Committee statement “Republican Priorities for Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act” would follow a number of principles, one of which is “promoting innovation, access, and completion” of college which addresses the needs of at-risk low-income students. While “innovation” initiatives such as increased online learning offer opportunities for lowering the cost, the statement argues that better access is not enough as “stronger policies are also needed to encourage all students who start a postsecondary education to complete their experience with a degree.” While acknowledging millions of dollars are currently targeted for at-risk students, “more must be done at the state, local, and institutional level to ensure every low-income or first generation student has the support necessary to earn a postsecondary degree.”

Republicans note that the Higher Education Act authorizes various programs to assist at-risk students, particularly those that provide

early outreach and student services “geared toward helping low-income and first generation students graduate from high school and higher education.” However, it argues that “data about whether these students are being served in the most effective way possible isn’t conclusive in improving the education outcomes of disadvantaged students is a leading national priority.” The House intent is to conduct better evaluations, especially of alternative innovative at-risk student remediation and support approaches.

Even though the priority of encouraging online learning as an innovative method is a general postsecondary priority for those unable to attend college if they had to adhere to a traditional program, as we have noted in the past the use of distance learning/online learning in remedial and developmental education has been and continues to be a major way of delivering instructional programs for at-risk, potential dropout enrolling freshmen.

The other innovation, which the Republican statement strongly supports is competency-based education, which is referred to as “a collection of skills necessary for a given field of work, create assessments to measure them, and provide students with course materials, instructional mentors, and tutors and protracted exams that are aligned with competencies.” After chiding the USED for only beginning to provide regulations to implement a 2005 provision permitting competency-based education, the Republican statement calls for new ways of providing education and toward that end providing “for a competency-based education demonstration project, which will allow the Department to waive statutory and regulatory impediments to competency-

based education.” Such waiver authority would be provided and regulatory impediments removed to allow opportunities for personalized remedial support to students on an as-needed, on-demand basis. This could be a major boon to the expansion of online delivered remedial and developmental education for at-risk students.

On the Senate side, Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and ranking Democrat Patty Murray (D-WA) are reportedly forming a bipartisan working group which will address issues on which there appears to be bipartisan support. According to Education Week’s Politics K-12 blog (May 27<sup>th</sup>), the working group will address “accreditation, accountability, affordability, financial aid, sexual assault, and safety.” The Chairman also noted in the article his additional priorities, which include “eliminating unnecessary red tape, saving students’ money, and removing obstacles to innovation.” It would appear that the Chairman’s priority on saving students’ money and removing barriers to innovation would be applicable to the TRIO program, which include eight components designed to help low-income, first generation students, funded at slightly more than \$800 million; it includes Upward Bound, Gear Up, Student Support Services (SSS) and a number of other competitive grant programs designed to help minority postsecondary institutions at a general level. The Chairman’s priorities would appear to be somewhat similar to the House priorities of encouraging competency-based testing, which can reduce student time and cost for obtaining degrees and/or credentials, especially in colleges; and online learning to reduce the costs of, among other things, remedial developmental services and supports for entering freshmen

at-risk of dropping out, and not completing their degrees and/or graduation requirements. One of the areas that critics have argued needs significant reform is the Student Support Services grants to colleges, which is designed to help at-risk students complete college; grants for SSS amount to about \$300 million and support approximately 200,000 undergraduate at-risk students. According to *Ed Central*, the problem is that the rubric for scoring points for SSS competitive grants favors incumbent institutions, which some argue use out-moded, ineffective approaches for college remediation making it difficult for new entrants with more innovative approaches difficult to compete. USED has encouraged innovation by including additional competitive priority points for the use of non-cognitive skills development approaches, individual counseling based upon evidence-based research, and other innovative approaches which have been opposed by the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), which represents many of the existing institutions, according to *Ed Central*.

While there are differences between the House and Senate proposed approaches thus far, it is likely that technology-based approaches, particularly for at-risk students, who are likely to drop out, will be supported under the justification of reducing costs, especially through online instruction, competency or mastery testing, and evaluation of the use of new innovative approaches. However, unless the ESEA reauthorization hits a major roadblock resulting in a stalemate, the authorization of HEA will not occur in the immediate future.

## Parent Involvement/Engagement Gaining Traction at District Level

Parent engagement/involvement appears to be gaining traction and becoming institutionalized as a formal role and/or requirement for districts, according to Education Week (June 2<sup>nd</sup>), which cites a number of recent trends and developments.

One reason is more Federal and state funding streams are requiring increased active parent engagement and involvement. Even though the Administration has proposed increasing the Title I set-aside for parent involvement from one to two percent, and the creation of an SEA administrative set-asides for developing state capacity to facilitate parent involvement in the Title I formula program, such proposals have not been funded by Congress. On the other hand, a number of “earmarks” or set-asides require or encourage parental involvement in the Administration’s large competitive grant programs such as School Improvement Grants, Race to the Top, and Promise Neighborhoods, which have created initiatives at the grantee level, some of which appear to be expanding and becoming institutionalized in regular district-level operations. The Education Week article notes that large and mid-sized school districts such as Denver, Nashville, and Washoe County district in Reno, Nevada “have created positions and departments specifically geared toward parental involvement.”

In addition to Federal funding increases in specific areas, certain states such as Massachusetts and California are funding large state programs, which require direct parent involvement in planning and operations. In California, the state requires

districts to involve parent/community in the development and updating, and implementation of the three-year Local Control and Accountability plans for the new \$47 billion initiative. One of the requirements is the district must follow the “family engagement framework” requirements for parent involvement, particularly in the school budget formulation process, which allows districts more flexibility in deciding with parents how the large influx of LCAP funding will be allocated and spent at the district level. Also, as the Education Week article notes, Massachusetts has required family and community engagement as one of four standards within its teacher evaluation rubric, which has led to the development of some parent engagement professional development programs.

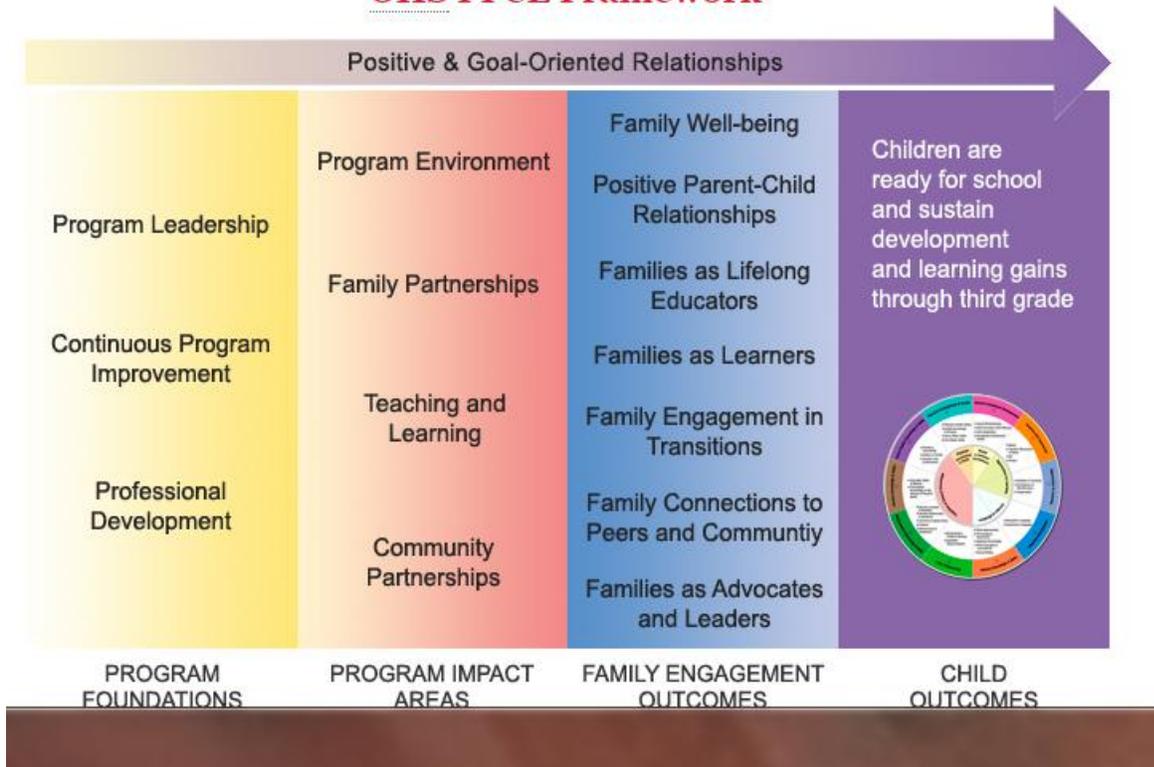
In addition to traditional parent-related associations such as the National PTA, among others, new associations are growing, such as the Washington-based Institute for Education Leadership, which has created the District Leaders Network. It has grown from 7 in 2009 to 125 urban, suburban, and rural districts with district-level administrator members now reporting directly to district superintendents, which according to Education Week gives “them an opportunity to infuse parent engagement efforts throughout their school system.” Following the Institute for Education

Leadership’s first-year conference held in Cincinnati last year, its upcoming Chicago conference on June 22<sup>nd</sup> is already sold out with the number of registrants doubling to 1,000 this year.

The article notes that initiatives are underway among a number of family engagement advocacy groups to encourage districts to require rigorous evaluations of their initiatives, which are being implemented to garner results that can justify that parent engagement and involvement contribute to increased student performance and achievement and to identify what types of practices appear to work best under certain conditions and contribute to overall student and school and district improvement.

Head Start and Early Head Start grant programs funded directly by the Department of Health and Human Services, include foundational requirements that promote Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) as integral to all program activities. Head Start programs incorporate not only family literacy, but financial literacy and economic self-sufficiency with services designed to improve “engagement” through direct parent/interaction and the home environments of the families.

## OHS PFCE Framework



To promote better understanding of the components of Parent and Family engagement and the shift from Parent Involvement the summary at this URL is helpful <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/revised-parent-engagement-as-pi.pdf>. *Family Engagement as Parent Involvement 2.0* compares and contrasts the differences in these concepts and is helpful for positioning TechMIS clients' products that address Parent Engagement as part of their curriculum offerings.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs look for approaches and materials that address elements of the PFCE framework that can be directly used by family service staff, teachers and caregivers as they work to provide the broad family support required by regulations. Within the ensuing months the Office of Head Start will publish for comment expanded regulations regarding program operations and requirements. Additionally this will include revisions to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. The new Early Learning Outcomes Framework will emphasize the importance of viewing development as a continuum of learning from birth through five. Clients with offerings that reflect this understanding and that of the Family Engagement perspective in their materials and products will have enhanced opportunities in this market.

### **CIC Conference Addresses Publishers' Dilemma Over "Changing" State Common Core Standards/Assessments**

During the June 1-3 Content in Context annual AAP conference for supplemental

publishers, the dilemma confronting them created by Common Core standards was addressed -- whether to continue or expand efforts to align their curricula with Common Core standards when the standards themselves, at least on the surface, appear to be changing due to political and other factors. Jay Diskey, Executive Director of the Association of American Publishers PreK-12 Learning Group, which has been tracking state developments relating to Common Core over the last five years, and now implementation of the Next Generation of Science Standards, said that publishers "tried to align where we can" reports by *Education Week's Marketplace K-12* blog (June 5<sup>th</sup>). As our TechMIS reports have noted over the last three years, Diskey emphasized that certain states, such as Oklahoma, Indiana, and South Carolina, which have "dropped" the Common Core standards have created new ones only with "cosmetic" changes. About three years ago, USED began approving states (such as Alaska and other Western states) proposed "requests" to drop the name "Common Core" and replace it with the states' own name. In most cases, USED approved the "new" state standards because they were found to be "substantially similar." It would appear that some states have added standards; up to 15 percent of the total number of new standards (under the initial guidance developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers) were allowed to be added to the states' adopted Common Core standards.

As we and a number of other observers have argued, what will really drive the need for alignment of materials will be the specific Common Core assessments which are selected by the states. Over the last year,

most of the “turmoil” and changes at the state level have been around what specific tests states have selected, dropped, and replaced and to what extent test results during this first year of implementation have been relaxed for accountability purposes (e.g., over a dozen states have been provided “pauses” in having to count these first year results for accountability purposes).

And, in the immediate future, other issues will create uncertainties such as states reducing “cut scores” as the number of students failing to meet projected proficiency levels increases significantly. While the nature and extent of publisher curriculum alignment with Common Core standards will remain an issue, an opportunity that appears to be increasing rather dramatically is the need for remedial programs, particularly at the high school level and community colleges for entering freshmen, as groups such as the Education Commission of the States reported and we summarized in recent TechMIS issues (see related Washington Update item).

### **Miscellaneous (a)**

The Senate-proposed reauthorization bill, Every Child Achieves, includes an amendment which would change the ESEA funding formula, particularly for Title II Teacher Quality, to ensure more funds go to states with districts serving high concentrations of students from low-income families. This was the initial intent of ESEA, argues its sponsor, Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), who wrote in his op ed piece in *The Hill* (May 21<sup>st</sup>), the amendment “should completely remove outdated provisions in the bill that has frozen Federal support to states based upon population

numbers from 2001. I found that the removal this clause would finally equalize a disparity in funding, allowing resources to flow to where disadvantaged kids are living today, not where they lived in 2001.” The Senator argued that his amendment would provide more funding for Title II in 32 states and the District of Columbia, which “are being cheated out of Federal funds every year.”

As reported in *Education Week’s Politics K-12* blog (April 30<sup>th</sup>), the formula would be changed so that 80 percent of ESEA funding for Title II would be based upon poverty and 20 percent on population, compared to the current formula, which is based 65 percent on poverty and 35 percent on population, which was passed in 2001 as part of No Child Left Behind.

In its bill to reauthorize ESEA, which at the last moment was withdrawn several months ago, the House also addressed ESEA funding formula, especially for Title I. The focus was on the Title I formula where the House proposed change would allocate more funds to districts based upon student poverty counts and not just general population members which was sponsored by Representative Glenn Thompson (R-PA). It is interesting to note that Senator Bob Casey, also from Pennsylvania, opposed Senator Burr’s amendment during the debate on the Senate side. The *Politics K-12* article correctly reports that changing the Title I formula, which has been supported by groups such as AASA, and has been opposed vehemently by the Council of Great City Schools, would be one of the most contentious issues in subsequent floor debates. The blog also cites a 2009 study by the non-partisan Congressional Research Service, for Congress which found that

high-poverty rural districts were among the “hardest hit by the formula discrepancy, but so were high-poverty, urban districts like Rochester, New York; Flint, Michigan; and Bakersfield, California.” Adding more fuel to the fire was a study conducted by Dr. Bruce Baker, Dr. Lori Taylor, Dr. Jay Chambers, et. al. which found that if one takes into account differences in district purchasing power, cost of living, and other factors, Title I funding favors rural districts in low cost-of-living states under the current Title I formula.

Even if the floor debates in the House and Senate do not result in a reauthorization, it is clear that if changing ESEA and Title I funding formula are proposed, the debate on formula changes will most likely be the most hotly contested in the entire reauthorization process.

### **Miscellaneous (b)**

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the College Board and Khan Academy launched a new website to prepare students to “practice” taking the College Board’s redesigned SAT, which will be implemented beginning March 2016. The test prep practice tool is designed to provide personalized feedback for each student as they go through the test prep exercises, and provides detailed analysis of test takers’ missed items on the math, reading, and/or writing sections. College Board and Khan Academy announced a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, which is designed to help students work through the online practice materials in their after-school clubs, according to Education Week (June 2<sup>nd</sup>). As one of the larger providers of after-school programs and SES-type activities funded under Title I set-asides and 21<sup>st</sup>

Century Learning funding, the Boys and Girls Clubs will be piloting the online test prep practice tool in several of the 4,000+ sites across the country, and will become part of its overall college access program, according to Boys and Girls Club officials, as reported by Education Week.

The article also reports that commercial test prep companies, including Kaplan, are updating their materials to prepare for changes not only to the SAT, but also to the ACT, to meet the increased demand, which a number of observers predicted would increase dramatically after the first year results of the new Common Core state assessments are released. This is happening now in many states, although some states have gotten waivers to “pause” in using the test results in their accountability reporting system this year. As we have reported over the last year, the number of states, which have created and are beginning to implement college-level remediation and developmental programs and support services for at-risk students has increased (see April 2015 TechMIS Washington Update highlighting surveys conducted by the Education Commission of the States). This niche market, in combination with the college test prep niche market, represents a growing segment where expenditures of funds from various sources exceed several billion dollars.

### **Miscellaneous (c)**

A new SETDA publication entitled “State Digital Learning Exemplars” identifies innovative digital learning funding and policy initiatives among states, including competitive grant programs, which should be of interest to many TechMIS subscribers.

For states with “exemplary innovative” funding streams and policies, the questions include whether the state has passed legislation which promotes statewide innovation and whether the state has “leveraged” existing funding streams or created new ones to support digital learning. In the area of “digital content,” the questions include whether the state has a legal definition of content that allows use of digital resources and whether it has an “adoption” process for such resources. It also identifies whether or not the state addresses “open education resources (OER).” Below are several examples.

Indiana provides grants for 10 to 12 district of \$30,000 for planning how districts will convert to digital learning. Larger grants of approximately \$100,000 each can be used to implement blended learning models to innovate or try out the new models. According to the SETDA report, Kentucky has a “robust” competitive grant program which, among other things, gives all school districts the option to conduct school through virtual and other non-traditional means on snow days or days when school is off, and supports special projects such as providing students with devices putting wireless access points in buses, and allows personal learning to incur anytime, anywhere. Working with Georgia and North Carolina, Kentucky is also developing the “continuous instructional improvement technology system” and is currently evaluating English/language arts and math OER materials using a rubric to evaluate the quality of the content.

North Carolina’s state department has contracted with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation to assist in a number of efforts to implement its statewide

transition to digital learning by 2017. Utah has initiated a number of policies to further digital learning, including the recently created “Smart Schools Technology Program,” which provides schools funding for one -- to one implementation and the establishment of competency-based education, which has created a legal basis for students to enroll in classes from anywhere in the state. The state has taken a leadership role in OER and has a database on recommended instructional materials and participates in the 12-state K-12 OER Collaborative. It should be noted that Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) was the sponsor of the recent I-TECH amendment attached to the Senate Every Child Achieves Bill to reauthorize ESEA, which strongly supports OER.

The SETDA report also includes links to exemplary state initiatives and policies, including funding streams, competitive grants, etc. mentioned in the states’ write-ups in the report. The report entitled “State Digital Learning Exemplars” is available at: [www.setda.org](http://www.setda.org).

### **Miscellaneous (d)**

Slightly over 1,900 districts have signed the “Future Ready District Pledge” as part of the USED-Alliance for Educational Excellence Joint Initiative to foster technology use in education, as reported in our November 2014 TechMIS Washington Update. The superintendents taking the Pledge and their teams, which have attended nine of the 13 regional summits, have promised “to foster and lead a culture of distance learning within their schools among other things,” according to *Education Week’s Marketplace K-12* blog (June 9<sup>th</sup>). The districts are

supposed to develop plans based on a needs assessment to determine what initiatives are required in their district to foster “digital transformation.” The Interactive Planning Dashboard to assist districts develop and then post plans, which is available to those districts who take the Pledge, is available at [www.dashboard.futurereadyschools.org/](http://www.dashboard.futurereadyschools.org/)

The list of districts which have made pledges by state is also available at: <http://futureready.schoolwires.net//site/Default.aspx?PageID=57>

The last four regional summits will be held in Orange County, Pittsburgh, Denver, and Chicago. As we have noted, since this initiative relies heavily on funding under the new E-Rate Modernization Initiative, it is very likely that most of these districts have applied for E-Rate discounts; some are very likely to have paid the full price of products and services under Priority 1 and 2 in order to receive E-Rate discount refunds later, which can be used to purchase instructional and directly-related products which are not eligible Priority 1 or Priority 2 products or services.

### **Miscellaneous (e)**

Several reports indicate progress in the implementation of California’s \$47 billion Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) initiative is being made, but slowly in certain areas. Under proposition 30 and the Local Control Funding Formula, K-12 funding has increased to slightly more than \$11,000 per student, which is about a ten percent increase over 2013-14. Under the LCFF, several categorical programs (e.g., education technology, instructional materials set-aside) have been combined into block grants; however, additional funding over the

base per-pupil allocation has been increased significantly for disadvantaged students, including English language learners and students in poverty. Newly emphasized state priorities include school climate (e.g., reducing student suspensions) and parent involvement, which requires parent engagement in the development of LCAPs plans and direct engagement in their implementation.

According to New America Foundation’s *Ed Central* blog, a recent report by Californians Together and the Center for Equity for English Language Learners found that in a sample of 25 districts, the majority of them did not detail specific amounts of funding devoted to the English language services and programs, nor did the districts pay much attention to implementing the state’s new English language development standards. As *Ed Central* notes, “Sadly, the report’s findings add to the growing evidence that the LCFF has not yet led to better supports and programs for ELLs. A January 2015 review of 50 districts LCAPs by the State Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) highlighted similar shortcomings.” According to Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, Executive Director of Californians Together, the language in the new legislation does not require funds to actually be spent on ELL students.

In a related area, there are increasing pressures within the State legislature to increase funding for the After-School Education and Safety program (ASES), which is the largest of all state-funded after-school programs totaling about \$550 million, serving 400,000 elementary and middle school students in about 4,100 programs. The Partnership for Children and Youth recently conducted a survey that

found that almost 90 percent of ASES programs said the state's funding formula makes it difficult for programs to continue and 81 percent said it makes it more difficult to retain and recruit qualified staff. About three-quarters of surveyed respondents said they would have to cut back on enrichment activities, and that student waitlists are growing significantly due to the lack of funds. State funding for the program has remained at \$7.50 per student since 2006, while the average cost per student has increased slightly more than \$20 per student. After-school advocacy groups and more than 25 legislators have proposed increasing the ASES budget by \$50 million and to establish an annual cost of living adjustment.

One can expect parent advocacy groups and perhaps the influential legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) to be conducting similar studies about the progress being made in supporting active parent involvement in the development and implementation of Local Control and Accountability Plans at the district level.

### Miscellaneous (f)

A new USED report to Congress found that in 2011-12, 35,500 teachers in public schools were categorized as "highly-qualified" even though they were still receiving preparation through "alternative routes." As reported by Education Week's Teacher Beat blog (June 3<sup>rd</sup>), there were 2.3 percent of all teachers in high-poverty districts, twice the percent in affluent districts; 1.9 percent in special education, and 2.3 in urban settings. In a written statement, the Coalition for Teaching Quality, which opposes "alternative routes,"

stated, "It reaffirms the same patterns we've seen in past data sets on fully-credentialed teacher distribution: high-poverty students get the short end of the stick, with the least trained and least experienced teachers."

The congressional report also listed the percentages of teachers, who had completed "alternative routes" and found that more were likely to focus on technical and occupational subject areas than were candidates in traditional programs (e.g., four years in college). Forty-four percent of those alternative route completers were in business, followed by 24-26 percent in science, career and technical education, foreign language, and middle school education. Slightly less than ten percent were in bilingual education, arts, early childhood education, and elementary education, according to the report to Congress. As *Teacher Beat* notes, only 16 of 48 states reported they had any "ELL teachers," who were on "alternative routes."

### Miscellaneous (g)

As expected, ranking House Committee Democrat Bobby Scott of Virginia has introduced a bill which would increase education and related opportunities for incarcerated youth during the school -- juvenile facilities -- returning to school "pipeline" and otherwise tighten procedures and reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system. During the Council of Great City Schools Annual Legislative March Conference (see March TechMIS Special Report), in a sidebar discussion with Scott, he emphasized his priority will hopefully be in legislation to reauthorize ESEA or if not as a standalone piece bill, for which he said bipartisan support is being garnered.

According to Education Week's Politics K-12 blog, his school-to-facility-school "pipeline" priority has been generally addressed in a Senate bill introduced last December. Over the last decade, opportunities have grown and emerged in certain states for companies which provide a range of education and directly-related services to potential as well as returning previously incarcerated youth ranging from academies designed to identify and prevent high school dropouts, "status offenders" (truancy violators, juvenile delinquents, etc.), and youth suspended and/or sent to detention and related juvenile facilities. Many such programs also rely very heavily upon technology-based solutions for remediation, credit recovery, and other forms of individual supports.

As highlighted in Education Week (June 11<sup>th</sup>), the reauthorization proposal introduced by Congressman Scott would:

- eliminate or reduce the situations when youth are held with or near adults;
- strengthen protection for youth who commit "status offenses"; and
- create a new grant program for communities to plan and implement evidence-based prevention and intervention programs specifically designed to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang involvement.

A recent report from the National Disability Rights Network entitled "Orphanages, Training Schools, Reform Schools, and Now This?" has estimated that 60-70 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have mental health disabilities. The group argued that young people with disabilities should not end up in jail in the first place, according to its Director, Curt Decker. As reported in Education Week's On Special Education (June 12<sup>th</sup>), one of the suggestions and recommendations for policymakers in the NDRN report is that, "States should develop individualized reentry plans for youth that include academic instruction and vocational and life training skills." About six months ago, the Department of Justice and USED released joint guidance which was designed to improve the educational outcomes for incarcerated youth.