

Florida's

Race to the Top



A second year progress report on
Florida's Race to the Top

January 2013

Florida's Race to the Top

The title 'Florida's Race to the Top' is displayed in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. The word 'Florida's' is on the top line, and 'Race to the Top' is on the bottom line. A white outline of the state of Florida is positioned to the right of the word 'Florida's', overlapping the top line. The background features a blue gradient with horizontal lines and faint binary code (0s and 1s) scattered across it.

Florida has a strong history of reform, establishing a solid foundation that has led to groundbreaking results and earned national recognition. Race to the Top is an opportunity to broaden and accelerate our reforms to boost teacher effectiveness and the achievement of nearly 2.7 million students. It aligns with Florida's State Board of Education Strategic Plan and is supported through state law. These factors create the infrastructure for Florida's reform efforts to remain sustainable beyond the grant period.

After two years of improvements to our state's education system, Florida's ambitious objectives are closer to reality. The Florida Department of Education, educators, school leaders, stakeholders, and community partners have worked together to identify challenges, embrace opportunities, and coordinate innovative reform efforts.

Florida was one of 12 winners to receive federal education funding through the Race to the Top grant program in 2010. During the first year of the grant, the department supported districts as they revised teacher and principal evaluations and began the transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To broaden participation, the department also engaged education stakeholders through eight implementation committees. In March 2011, the Florida Legislature passed the Student Success Act which mirrored many goals of the state's Race to the Top application.

Florida's Race to the Top theory of reform is that highly-effective teachers and leaders are the key factors in improved student achievement. The vision is a student-centered school environment where all teachers are engaged in peer collaboration, use data to improve teaching and learning, and are consistently guided and supported by effective instructional leaders. We believe a strategic and sustained investment in human capital will yield an increase in student achievement.

Florida is making this a reality by implementing capacity-building activities across all assurance areas of the grant: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); Standards and Assessments; Data Systems to Support Instruction; Great Teachers and Leaders; and Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools. During the second year of this four-year grant program, Florida made considerable progress as 32 more projects moved into execution. The major accomplishments from Year 2 of the grant follow and we also provide a look ahead at what will be rolled out before the grant ends in June 2014.



STEM

Year 2 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Increased enrollment in STEM accelerated coursework (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment) and STEM career academies by five percent from 2010-2011. Participation increased by 33 percent since 2008-2009.
- ✓ Executed FloridaLearns STEM Scholars project providing increased access to accelerated STEM coursework for gifted and/or academically-talented students in 27 rural districts. The program serves 612 ninth- and tenth-grade students in 52 schools. Activities included parent nights, regional forums, summer challenges, and STEM counseling to support the academics.
- ✓ Realized significant progress at the 22 high schools that received additional grant funds to implement a STEM Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Academy:
 - 🍎 The number of registered CAPE Academies increased 118 percent since the 2009-10 school year with 87 total registrations for the 2012-13 school year.
 - 🍎 All schools now have at least one CAPE Academy. Three schools registered their first for 2012-13.
 - 🍎 Thirty-five new or struggling career and technical education (CTE) teachers have been paired with mentors from around the state.
- ✓ Executed UTeach replication project with Florida Institute of Technology which is partnering with Brevard County to implement *Florida Tech UTeach*. Teacher candidates will receive a dual major in math or science and education.
- ✓ Established Florida STEM Teacher Induction and Professional Support (TIPS) Initiative at the University of Florida to manage implementation of *Florida Tech UTeach* and to develop a STEM Induction Center statewide.
- ✓ Continued revisions to increase the rigor of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE):
 - 🍎 State Board of Education rule approved for competencies and skills on Mathematics 6-12 and Middle Grades Mathematics 5-9 exams.
 - 🍎 Completed standard setting for science fields.
 - 🍎 Developed and finalized item specifications for math fields.

What the Future Holds:

- Each participating district will open a new STEM career academy.
- Each participating district will offer additional, accelerated STEM coursework.
- The FTCE in STEM subject areas will have more rigorous teacher competencies and skills, as well as passing scores.
- STEM coaching programs will be developed for novice science and math teachers in Duval, Dade, and Palm Beach counties, and Northeast Florida Educational Consortium districts.
- UTeach graduates will be better prepared teacher candidates through successfully completing more than 250 hours of field experiences while earning both a STEM and education degree.



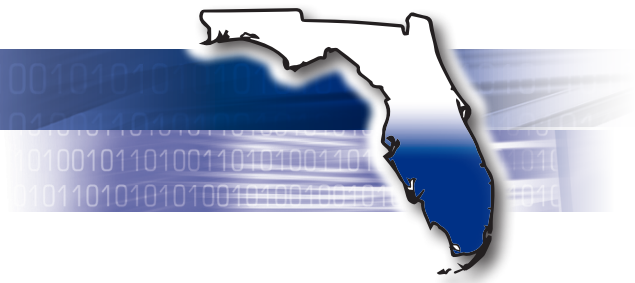
Standards and Assessments

Year 2 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Held four 2012 Common Core Summer Institutes.
 - 🍏 Trained more than 7,500 educators representing over 1,800 school and district teams.
- ✓ Implemented Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Kindergarten classrooms.
- ✓ Enhanced the Teacher Standards Instructional Tool (CPALMS):
 - 🍏 Migrated to a faster technology environment.
 - 🍏 Posted CCSS in a searchable format.
 - 🍏 Posted course descriptions for newly revised courses in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects that align with CCSS.
- ✓ Completed Text Demand Study comparing text complexity of high school instructional materials with commonly used postsecondary materials.
- ✓ Conducted Teacher Instructional Materials Survey where teachers identified which materials they use in the classroom.
- ✓ Completed two professional development toolkits in Reading Foundational Skills (grades K-2 and 3-5) that include student activities, teaching strategies, formative assessment, and lesson study materials.
- ✓ Made 213 items available to K-1 teachers for mathematics formative assessments and lesson study toolkits.
- ✓ Began interim assessment item development for “hard-to-measure” subject areas of world languages, career and technical education, health education, physical education, and fine arts through seven grants to four districts.
- ✓ Executed contract for Florida Item Bank and Test Platform, which will develop interim assessment items for mathematics, English language arts, science, social studies, and Spanish. The Item Bank will house these items along with the “hard-to-measure” items for district access.
- ✓ Administered approximately 1.3 million computer-based statewide assessments. Districts certify readiness for computer-based testing quarterly as a grant deliverable.

What the Future Holds:

- Revision of Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) to align to CCSS and integrate with the single sign-on portal. FAIR in grades K-2 will be available for student use on tablets as well as computers.
- Common Core Summer Institutes and additional professional development during the school year.
- Formative assessments and lesson study toolkits available for K-3 mathematics and K-8 English language arts.
- Fully functional Florida Item Bank and Test Platform for districts to access interim assessment items in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, physical education, health education, career and technical education, and fine arts.
- Florida student results on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) international exam.



Data Systems to Support Instruction

Year 2 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Developed single sign-on portal URL (www.fldoe.org/sso) and started work with contractor for software installation and configuration.
- ✓ Provided grants to 50 small and rural districts to help them acquire Local Instructional Improvement Systems (LIIS) that meet the state's minimum standards.
- ✓ Districts completed baseline survey of LIIS implementation progress.
- ✓ Hired instructional designer who led the creation of multi-media professional development kits on Data Mining and Data-driven Instruction that were presented to 289 school teams (more than 1,500 educators) at Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies.

What the Future Holds:

- Four new multimedia professional development modules on using data will be designed and delivered.
- Stakeholders will have access to six department tools through the new single sign-on portal.
- Each district will have an LIIS in place that will provide access to data for informing instruction in the classroom, supporting operations at the school and district, and facilitating research.

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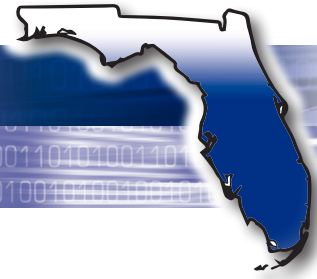


Great Teachers and Leaders

Year 2 Accomplishments:

- ✓ All districts implemented a revised teacher evaluation system in 2011-12.
 - 🍏 This required collaboration with local teacher unions and resulted in more districts with union support than at the beginning of the grant (based on number of Memoranda of Understanding with union signatures at time of Florida's application).
 - 🍏 Held Value-Added Model Technical Assistance Meeting August 1-2, 2011, to provide historical data to districts and train staff on using the new model.
 - 🍏 After revising the observation portion of their systems in 2010-11, districts determined the methodology for applying value-added data to their evaluation system and completed the bargaining process in 2011-12.
- ✓ All districts submitted a fully revised principal evaluation system for 2012-13; an optional state model was made available and technical assistance was provided.
- ✓ Provided technical assistance on revising evaluation systems for non-classroom instructional personnel.
- ✓ Held two Community of Practice meetings on the topics of Learning Goals and Performance Compensation.
- ✓ Three institutes of higher education partnered with districts to begin job-embedded teacher or principal preparation programs to serve approximately 150 educators.
- ✓ Executed Project PRIDE (Planning and Rewarding Instructional Diversity in Education) to recruit minority teachers and enrolled the first cohort of 45 candidates.
- ✓ Executed contract to train district personnel on evaluating professional development. There are eight modules on how to use evaluation data from instructional practice and student performance to plan and evaluate professional development.
- ✓ Executed project to enhance the electronic Institution Program Evaluation Plan (eIPEP), the annual self-assessment and report for each initial teacher preparation program.
- ✓ Established Commissioner's Leadership Academy.
- ✓ Executed contract to conduct a third-party evaluation of Great Teachers and Leaders activities and impact.

continued ...



Great Teachers and Leaders (Continued)

What the Future Holds:

- Graduates of the job-embedded principal preparation programs will become strong turnaround leaders who are prepared to increase teacher, administrator, and staff effectiveness while raising academic achievement for all students.
- Graduates of the job-embedded teacher preparation programs will have a positive impact on student learning by demonstrating Florida Educator Accomplished Practices and high effect instructional strategies.
- Community of Practice meetings will continue district collaboration on important implementation topics.
- Place at least 42 graduates of Project PRIDE in teaching positions in high-minority/high-poverty elementary schools in Polk County.
- Participating districts will revise compensation systems so the most significant gains are tied to teachers' evaluation results.
- Conduct Common Core Institute for higher education.
- Revise continued approval standards (including performance outcome measures) for teacher and school leadership preparation programs.
- Enhancements to eIPEP will allow the review of Initial Teacher Preparation programs, Educator Preparation Institutes, educational leadership programs, and District Alternative Certification programs. eIPEP will integrate with the single sign-on portal and include a public access page with report ratings of teacher preparation programs.
- Teacher and student learning simulations will be complete and accessible statewide.





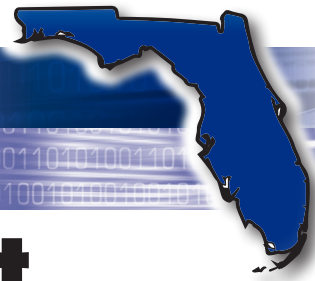
Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Year 2 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Recruited and trained nearly 300 Teach for America (TFA) corps members for placement in two districts with a high number of persistently lowest-achieving schools.
- ✓ Began training more than 100 aspiring turnaround principals and assistant principals through the Florida Turnaround Leaders Program.
- ✓ Began turnaround leadership program for superintendents, school board members, and district staff in 10 rural districts.
- ✓ Held five Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies for 289 low-performing schools (more than 1,500 educators attended).
- ✓ Executed agreement with Microsoft to implement 214 new Information Technology (IT) Academies in middle and high schools. More than 32,000 students are enrolled in courses that have infused the technology skills taught through the Microsoft IT Academy. Enrolled students have earned 2,510 industry certifications and teachers in these schools have earned 62 certifications.
- ✓ Executed four contracts with community-based organizations in four urban districts to implement community compacts aimed at increasing student attendance, family literacy, and parent involvement.

What the Future Holds:

- ✓ More than 100 aspiring turnaround school leaders, including those in charter schools, will complete their year-long practicum in 2012-13 and a six-month internship in the first semester of 2013-2014. At the end of the project, sponsoring districts will consider the participants for school leadership positions.
- ✓ Ten small and rural districts will complete the strategic planning process for turnaround leadership and begin to implement the program.
- ✓ A total of 800 TFA corps members will be placed in Duval and Miami-Dade County. TFA national headquarters has selected Duval as a summer institute site for summer 2013.
- ✓ New charter schools will open in feeder patterns for low-performing schools.
- ✓ New community engagement projects.



Student Achievement Highlights

Florida identified four student achievement goals for Race to the Top:

- 🍏 Double the percentage of incoming high school freshmen who graduate from high school, enter a postsecondary institution, and earn at least a year's worth of college credit ("graduate, go, and earn").
- 🍏 Cut the achievement gap in half on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2015.
- 🍏 Increase the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on NAEP by 2015 to or above the performance level of the highest-performing states.
- 🍏 Reduce the percentage of students scoring non-proficient on statewide assessments in half by 2017.

We have met our individual target goals for graduation rate and college credits earned, as well as our target for the percentage of students who "graduate, go, and earn."

On NAEP, we met our targets for closing the achievement gap between white and Hispanic students in grades 4 and 8 in both math and reading.

Also noteworthy is Florida's performance on recent international assessments. Results of the 2011 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) show Florida students outperformed many of their national and global counterparts on both tests. Florida's participation was funded through Race to the Top.

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

The average scale score of Florida fourth-grade students is 569. That is the second highest (behind Hong Kong) among 53 participating education systems, above the U.S. average of 556, and significantly higher than the PIRLS average scale score of 500. In addition, Florida ranked second behind Singapore in the percentage of fourth-grade students scoring in the advanced level, with 22 percent of students reaching that benchmark. Florida was the only state in the U.S. to participate at a level that allows state-level data to be reported.

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

Mathematics

Fourth-grade student results show Florida's average scale score of 545 in mathematics is ninth among 57 education systems, four points above the U.S. average, and notably higher than the TIMSS average scale score of 500. Florida's eighth-grade average scale score of 513 is above both the U.S. average scale score of 509 and the TIMSS average scale score of 500, and ranks sixteenth out of 56 education systems.

Science

Florida fourth-grade students' average scale score of 545 ranked seventh, slightly above the U.S. average scale score of 544, and above the TIMSS average scale score of 500. Eighth-grade students' average scale score of 530 placed them seventeenth, above the U.S. average of 525 and the TIMSS average scale score of 500.



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