

# American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Race to the Top

Overview and Implications for New York State School Superintendents

## Winter Institute

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# Purpose of RTTT:

## **Encourage and reward States that are . . .**

- serious about school **reform**
- creating conditions for education **innovation**
- achieving significant improvement in **student outcomes**
- closing achievement **gaps**
- improving **graduation** rates

# RTTT Core Reform Areas

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1. Adopting **standards** and **assessments** that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to succeed in the global economy
2. Building **data systems** that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can **improve instruction**

# RTTT Core Reform Areas (continued)

3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining **effective teachers and principals**, especially where they are needed most
4. Turning around our **lowest-achieving schools**

# President Obama's Challenge

“We want to challenge all the stakeholders . . .”

“. . . Parents, teachers, unions, school and administrators . . .”

“. . . to not only raise standards, but make the changes required to actually meet those standards.”

## The Obama Challenge (continued)

### **The challenge can be met by having . . .**

- the best teachers and principals;
- data that tells us if we are actually improving;
- student achievement tied to teacher assessment;
- a focus on low performing schools  
(2,000 high schools produce half the country's dropouts and 75% of our minority dropouts)
- standards that ensure graduates can compete at the international level.

# RTTT: Facts at a Glance

- U.S. Department of Education Grant Program
- Authorized under section 14006 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
- Largest discretionary package for education in history
- \$4.35 billion total
- Competitive by design
- N.Y. State eligible for up to \$700 million

## Facts at a Glance: (continued)

- Phase 1 applications due January 19, 2010  
awards made spring 2010
- Phase 2 applications due June 1, 2010  
awards made by September 30, 2010
- 4 year spending period
- Point system
- Expert reviewers

# Reflection: How Can RTTT Help Superintendents?

- Sets the stage and expectation for innovation
- Encourages us to challenge the status quo and our districts' comfort zones:
  - > instructional practices
  - > professional development
  - > teacher evaluation/assessment
  - > principal evaluation/assessment
- Sharpens the focus of our work

# RTTT Point System

## Part A: State Success Factors

- |                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| -State reform agenda articulated      | 5 pts.  |
| -MOU's of support from districts      | 45 pts. |
| -Broad support for achievable goals   | 15 pts. |
| -Capacity to implement demonstrated   | 20 pts. |
| -Support for Implementation           | 10 pts. |
| -Progress on 4 Reform Areas evident   | 5 pts.  |
| -Gains in student achievement evident | 25 pts. |

TOTAL: 125 pts.

# RTTT Point Distribution

## Part B: Standards and Assessment

- Participation in state consortium to develop and adopt common standards 40 pts.
  - Plan to develop high quality assessments via consortium 10 pts.
  - Support for transition to new standards 20 pts.
- TOTAL: 70 pts.

# RTTT Point Distribution

## Part C: Data Systems

- Statewide longitudinal system  
in place 24 pts.
- Plan for accessing State data 5 pts.
- Plan for using data to improve  
instruction 18 pts.

TOTAL: 47 pts.

# RTTT Point Distribution

## Part D: Great Teachers and Leaders

- Creating quality pathways for teachers and principals 21 pts.
  - Improve teacher and principal performance based on evaluation 58 pts.
  - Equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals 25 pts.
  - Improve effectiveness of teacher and Principal preparation programs 14 pts.
  - Provide support for teachers and principals 20 pts.
- TOTAL: 138 pts.

# RTTT Point Distribution

## Part E: Turning Around Schools

- State authority to intervene 10 pts.
  - State “turn around” plan in place with ambitious, yet achievable annual targets 40 pts.
- TOTAL: 50 pts.

# Highest Point Receivers

- Improve teacher and principal performance based on evaluation 58 points
- MOU's of Support from districts 45 points
- Common Standards Adopted 40 points
- Turning around the lowest achieving schools 40 points

*NOTE: Next item drops to 25 points*

# Using Points to Forecast Policy

1. National Standards
2. Innovation, Collaboration and Competition (new pathways and program providers)
3. Emphasis on teacher and principal evaluation systems tied to student achievement
4. Compensation tied to student achievement
5. Improving teacher and leader preparation programs (tracking performance of graduates)
6. Use of data to improve instruction
7. Support for principals as instructional leaders

# Opportunity Knocks for Superintendents

- Provide feedback on new principal evaluation system
- Review existing evaluation criteria against ISLLC Leadership Standards
- Develop regional professional development for principals through BOCES
- Reach out to Area Colleges/Universities and other providers to transform leader preparation programs

# RTTT Core Components

**Reward past accomplishments and create incentives for future improvements in 4 key areas:**

1. Toughening academic standards
2. Recruiting & retaining effective teachers
3. Turning around failing schools
4. Tracking the performance of students and teachers

