

# Hawaii's Race to the Top

## Executive Summary

### June 2010 Phase 2 Application

Ensuring that *all* of Hawaii's keiki receive equal opportunity for success in college, career and life is our highest priority. The state's economic future and quality of life depends on the education of the children, especially in today's rapidly changing global economy, where technology has accelerated the rate at which information and knowledge increase. This sense of urgency compelled key partners in Hawaii—from government, education, civic, faith-based, cultural, philanthropic, and business communities—to join hands and support the state's Race to the Top application.

Hawaii's Phase 2 application seeks \$75 million over a four-year period for systemic, bold education reform. It builds on the strengths of the state's January 2010 application, while striving for broader impact and bolder transformation.

### Setting Clear Education Goals and High Expectations

Timing is everything. And, this time, Hawaii is poised to capitalize on its Race to the Top plan. Major goals of Hawaii's Phase 2 application include the *Common Education Agenda* performance outcomes, as adopted jointly by the Governor, Board of Education (BOE), Department of Education (HIDOE), and the University of Hawaii (UH). The *Common Education Agenda* performance outcomes are targeted, ambitious and feasible:

- **Raise Overall K-12 Student Achievement:** By 2014, Hawaii State Assessment (HSA) scores will increase to 90 percent in reading and to 82 percent in mathematics. *All* students will be proficient in reading and mathematics by the year 2018. Additionally, Hawaii students' National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores will meet or exceed the national median score by the year 2018.
- **Ensure College- and Career-Readiness:** By 2018, the overall high school graduation rate will increase from 80 percent to 90 percent and *all* graduating students will be earning the new "college- and career-ready" high school diploma, which requires that students meet STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) competencies.
- **Increase Higher Education Enrollment and Completion Rates:** By 2018, the college-going rate of Hawaii's high school graduates will increase from 51 percent to the national median of 62 percent. Through the Hawaii Graduation Initiative, UH also plans to increase the number of college graduates by 25 percent annually by the year 2015.

### ***About Race to the Top, Phase 2:***

"In order to win a Race to the Top grant, a state must demonstrate capacity for real, dramatic reform as well as the capacity to achieve these reforms."

*-Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education*

Race to the Top is a nationally competitive program with \$3.4 billion to be awarded to as many as 10 to 15 states.

Phase 2 of the competition has drawn applications from 35 states and the District of Columbia.

Designed to "incentivize excellence, drive reform, and promote the adoption and use of effective policies and practices," Race to the Top is supported by \$4.35 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Of that, \$350 million was set aside to improve the quality of assessments and \$600 million was awarded to Delaware and Tennessee—the only two states to win in Phase 1.

Phase 2 winners will be selected over the summer using the same review process as for Phase 1. Winners will be announced by the end of September 2010.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/35-states-and-dc-look-to-share-34-billion-race-to-top-fund>

- Ensure Equity and Effectiveness by Closing Achievement Gaps: By 2014, the gap between groups and *all* students in state assessment scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates will be reduced by 50 percent. By 2018, the gaps will be eliminated.
- Increase STEM Proficiency Statewide and Highly Effective STEM Instruction in Title I Schools: All new teacher hires in Title I (high-poverty) schools for STEM subject areas and other hard-to-staff subjects will be highly qualified/highly effective by 2011.

**Broad Commitment to Student Success**

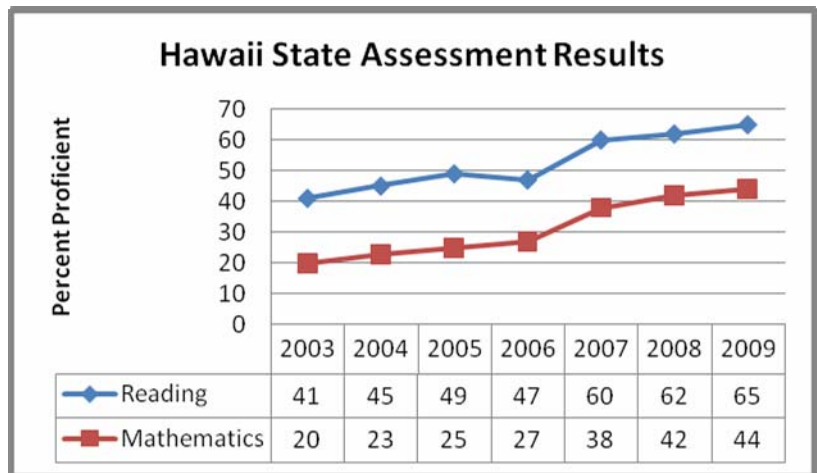
With overwhelming support from a diverse set of committed partners, this application unites everyone around a set of clear and bold goals:

- 100 percent of high school graduates will be college- and career-ready, able to earn a living wage and enter college without the need for remediation, and
- 55 percent of Hawaii’s working-age adults will attain a two- or four-year college degree by the year 2025.

To achieve the state’s goals, Hawaii will leverage its broad group of committed partners, tight-knit and caring communities, and robust portfolio of its education partnerships. Hawaii is a serious contender in this competition—the result of rigorous planning and extensive engagement of stakeholders. If successful, Race to the Top funding will rapidly propel Hawaii to achieving its ambitious goals. Regardless of the outcome of Race to the Top, these partners are committed to pursuing the goals and strategies through the HIDOE’s Strategic Plan for 2011-18.

**Hawaii = “State” of Readiness**

Student performance data are clear. Over the past seven years, Hawaii has dramatically moved the needle in reading and mathematics. Student performance in reading has increased significantly—from 41 percent meeting or exceeding state standards in 2003 to 65 percent in 2009. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding mathematics standards has more than doubled—from 20 percent in 2003 to 44 percent in 2009. Student scores also have increased across student subgroups.



This progress can be attributed to the implementation of high standards that are aligned to rigorous assessments, improved data collection and usage, and an increased focus on teacher effectiveness. Hawaii has been recognized nationally for its commitment to high standards – the state was just one of five states to receive an “A” for world-class student assessment standards, as graded by Harvard University.

Although measurable progress has occurred, more work remains, especially if the state expects to build a competitive workforce. Hawaii’s Race to the Top application seeks to eliminate the state’s persistent achievement gap and other challenges by giving schools the tools they need to prepare students who

are tomorrow's inventors, innovators, critical thinkers, problem solvers, strong communicators, and collaborators.

### **Driving Student Success with a Five-Point Plan:**

Hawaii has mapped out a comprehensive, systemic five-point plan for success—advanced in the state's Race to the Top proposal.

#### **I. Standards and Assessments: *Tying High-Quality College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments to a Statewide Curriculum***

##### *Standards*

Hawaii has joined 48 other states in committing to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a state-led process to develop internationally benchmarked K-12 standards in English language arts and mathematics that will prepare *all* students for college and career.

##### *Assessments*

HIDOE seeks to improve the quality of its comprehensive assessment system by continuing to ensure the rigor of its academic and proficiency standards and improving its suite of assessment tools. To that end, beginning in the 2010-11 school year, Hawaii State Assessments in reading, mathematics, and science will be administered online instead of with paper-and-pencil test booklets. An online field test in all three subjects was conducted February 16-May 26, 2010. Additional enhancements include developing the Data for School Improvement system—a rich bank of formative assessment items and an online repository of standards-aligned materials—and internationally benchmarking performance through the SMARTER-Balanced Assessment Consortium. These steps will assist in the development of common comprehensive assessments that can be used as state, district, and school accountability instruments.

How will HIDOE ensure a smooth transition to enhanced *standards* and high-quality *assessments*? It will not be easy. Hawaii faces the challenge of full and faithful implementation of high expectations for *all* students – especially for struggling students and schools. The following six steps have been identified to guarantee that *all* students successfully meet the standards:

1. Roll out the K-12 Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics, including statewide implementation of a consistent common core curriculum and high-quality, aligned instructional materials and resources.
2. Align high school graduation requirements and assessments with college-readiness requirements and state STEM goals, in cooperation with the UH System and private colleges and universities, coordinated by Hawaii's P-20 partnerships for education.
3. Analyze the capacity of schools to ensure equitable access to the internationally benchmarked expectations, standards, and graduation requirements, and develop a plan to act on those capacity gaps.
4. Develop, identify, or acquire, and implement high-quality formative and interim assessments.
5. Develop or acquire and deliver high-quality professional development to support the transition to the common core state standards.
6. Modify statewide response-to-intervention programs to prevent academic failure and remediation for *all* students and especially high-need students.

## II. Data Systems: *Improving Longitudinal Data Collection and Use*

Thanks to years of ongoing system improvements, HIDOE currently has the capacity to access and use historical and longitudinal data for *all* students. In fact, Hawaii now meets 11 of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act, and aims to fulfill the final element in Fall 2010. While HIDOE has been collecting robust sets of longitudinal data for decades, the state's *Common Education Agenda* intentionally puts data collection front and center by enhancing data collection from pre-school through postsecondary to enable further analyses and smarter decision making.

### *Making data-driven decisions to improve student achievement*

By July 2010, HIDOE will be positioned to provide rapid-time data to educators and instructional leaders to inform instructional strategies, management decisions, and program decisions. Here's a closer look at how data can be used:

**Teachers:** To increase available tools for teachers, including access to the Data for School Improvement (DSI) system, which contains a bank of formative assessments in English language arts and mathematics standards and benchmarks. This will assist teachers with differentiating instruction based on student performance. It also will give them access to grade-level curricula, aligned to common core standards, and linked to model lessons, differentiated instruction, and extended learning scenarios.

**Administrators and Leaders:** To help inform critical decision-making processes through the use of clear dashboards that will include a diverse set of indicators such as at-risk and early warning, on-track for graduation, teacher-student performance, and STEM cohort performance.

**HIDOE Administrators:** To provide guidance and improve the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and programs through an intentional and informed process of allocating resources and managing performance.

**Researchers:** To increase access to data through a formalized partnership known as the Hawaii Partnership for Educational Research Consortium—with the aim of pursuing research to improve instruction that leads to increased student success.

## III. Great Teachers and Leaders: *Cultivating, Rewarding, and Leveraging Effective Teaching and Leading*

Teachers have the greatest impact on student success in the classroom, while principals have a significant impact on teachers' ability to deliver instruction effectively. That's why, in *Race to the Top*, key stakeholders—including the state Legislature, teachers union, principals union and HIDOE—agree that principal and teacher effectiveness performance measures, which recognize gains in student learning, should be designed and immediately scaled up in a fair and reliable way.

Over the next couple of years, Hawaii's goal is to implement performance evaluation systems based on a mixture of the following:

- Vertically scaled Hawaii State Assessment (HSA);
- End-of-course exams; and

- Interim assessments for grades K-12 in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Student gains matter. To demonstrate their commitment to student success, HIDOE and the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) have agreed to negotiate how educators will be evaluated, guided by the following criteria:

- 50 percent based on student learning gains from the HSA, end-of-course exams, and interim assessments.
- 50 percent based on teacher practice as rated by multiple observers; stakeholder satisfaction; teacher knowledge and skills as measured by professional growth; and school-based leadership and service.

Similarly, a new principal evaluation also will be negotiated with the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). It will be based on:

- Student learning; school-wide student growth as measured by the HSA and student success in transitions.
- Supplemental measures:
  - Promotion of a positive climate for learning and an atmosphere of caring and respect for *all* students and members of the school community.
  - Leadership in school and instructional improvement based on observations by complex area superintendents, peers, and trained observers; and evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high proportion/numbers of effective teachers.
  - High standards of professionalism: principal's knowledge and skills.
  - Management of full scope of administrator responsibilities: managerial skills.

Complementary to these efforts, HIDOE plans to ramp up embedded professional development opportunities and adopt a more sophisticated approach to classify teacher effectiveness.

In an effort to cultivate the best educators and deploy them in the state's neediest locations, HIDOE plans to provide highly qualified teachers working in Zones of School Innovation with \$3,000 and highly effective principals with \$10,000. All highly effective teachers will be offered a 20 percent increase in pay. Finally, the state will work to fully leverage its effective teachers through the increased use of distance learning collaborations.

Hawaii is serious when it comes to fostering great teachers and leaders. And, students will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

#### **IV. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: *Providing Targeted Support to Struggling Schools and Students***

HIDOE strives to provide *all* public school students with the education they need and deserve, and HIDOE is committed to ensuring that its lowest-performing schools improve dramatically. How? The state has created a three-pronged plan that will work in tandem with complex area superintendents to transform the lowest-performing schools. Specifically, HIDOE will:

- Create the **Office of Strategic Reform** (OSR) and identify a turnaround partner to help Priority Schools and Zones of School Innovation (ZSI) Schools;

- **Establish conditions for success in the ZSIs** by implementing “Reform Action Plans” and providing additional operational, curricular, and family/student supports; and
- **Monitor implementation and evaluate** intervention efforts to identify successful practices that might be replicated in other schools and complex areas.

Today, there are currently 3,257 students enrolled in the state’s six “Priority Schools”—the state’s lowest-performing 5 percent—and nearly 11,000 students enrolled in schools that occupy ZSIs — comprised of the six Priority Schools, plus eight neighboring or feeder schools. HIDOE is determined to make a difference for those students by turning itself around first, to effectively facilitate turnaround strategies across Hawaii’s struggling schools.

These turnaround efforts will impact ZSI students and their families by:

- Increasing **early childhood education support** through subsidies aimed at helping young children enter kindergarten ready for success.
- Providing resources to **extend learning opportunities** through a longer school day and school year.
- Expanding **student engagement efforts** to identify students at risk of dropping out. Programs such as New Tech High and other STEM initiatives will be enhanced.
- Enhancing **comprehensive supports** that address specific barriers to learning and other non-academic issues that have a bearing on student success.

#### **V. A Shared Vision for Getting the Job Done: *Aligning Organizational Functions to Support Reform Outcomes***

HIDOE is poised to reconfigure itself to align with the major elements of its Race to the Top education reform plan. Successful reconfiguration requires HIDOE to change how it approaches human resource management, information technology, curriculum, student support, resource allocation, and performance management to support the reforms advanced in Race to the Top. But this reconfiguration is bigger than HIDOE – it will ultimately impact the future of Hawaii’s keiki.

#### ***Community Support***

In Hawaii, a state impacted by its geographic isolation and challenged by its archipelago profile, tight-knit, close communities are the norm. To achieve transformational and sustainable change in education, community support must be broadened by developing a shared understanding and vision for student success.

Building community support is an ongoing process. That said, numerous notable community commitments have been secured. Major commitments include:

- The HSTA and HGEA, which together represent teachers and principals statewide, have committed to negotiate with the state to attain the goals of Race to the Top.
- Hawaii’s public schools (257 non-charter and 31 charter schools) and community partners are committed to ensuring positive outcomes for *all* students.
- Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education is a statewide partnership led by the Good Beginnings Alliance, HIDOE, and the UH System that works to improve Hawaii’s education outcomes. Members of the Hawaii P-20 Council, including legislative, business, early education,

- Kamehameha Schools (KS) is committed to working with the HDOE to close the achievement gap for Native Hawaiian students. In 2008-09, KS invested \$24.9 million to support HDOE efforts with Hawaiian Focused Charter Schools, and has committed to continuing its support for programs serving communities with Native Hawaiian students. This support includes programs such as New Tech High Project based at Nanakuli and Waianae high schools.

***Moving Forward...***

Hawaii has never been more prepared for this \$75 million Race to the Top award. The grant will heighten the state's efforts to implement its five-point plan, which will result in lasting change. This change will be obvious: increased instructional materials for *all* students, increased supports for promoting student interventions, enhanced teacher professional development and other human capital initiatives, and targeted initiatives to turn around Hawaii's struggling schools.

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