

# RACE TO THE TOP



## How can innovations be stimulated?

# Announcement of Race to the Top

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*"This competition will not be based on politics, ideology, or the preferences of a particular interest group. Instead, it will be based on a simple principle – whether a state is ready to do what works. We will use the best data available to determine whether a state can meet a few key benchmarks for reform – and states that outperform the rest will be rewarded with a grant."* – President Barack Obama

*"The \$4 billion Race to the Top program that we are unveiling today is a challenge to states and districts. We're looking to drive reform, reward excellence and dramatically improve our nation's schools."* – Secretary Arne Duncan

*"The race has begun. Those who have the innovative ideas that promise to deliver results, as well as the demonstrated political will to set conditions conducive to reform and the capacity and ability to execute well, will win.* – Joanne Weiss

# State Race to the Top purpose

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- \$4 billion from ED's ARRA share for Race to the Top competition
- **Purpose:** To encourage and reward States implementing comprehensive reforms across four key areas:
  - Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace
  - Recruiting, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals
  - Building data systems that measure student success and inform instruction and practitioner development
  - Turning around the lowest-performing schools

# Lessons learned about innovation

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- Build a program that supports grantees in solving existing problems.
- Recognize the right conditions for innovation.
  - Had support for reform, built on existing momentum
  - Need for infusion of funding
- Incentivize an applicant to provide a high level of specificity and evidence-based rationale for plans, not just promises.
- Provide flexibility for grantees to try out new ideas and create new structures and systems, to learn what works and doesn't.

How can we efficiently learn about whether innovations produce positive impacts?

# Program outcomes defined

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- The Race to the Top application created a framework for states to define program commitments, performance measures, and outcomes.
- Grantees expand on those plans through scopes of work and additional measures of success.
- Plans were used as a basis for performance management.

# Program outcomes measured

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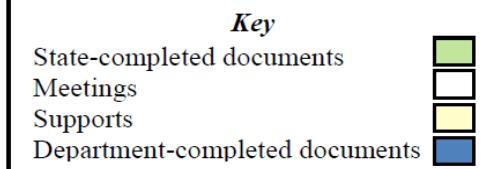
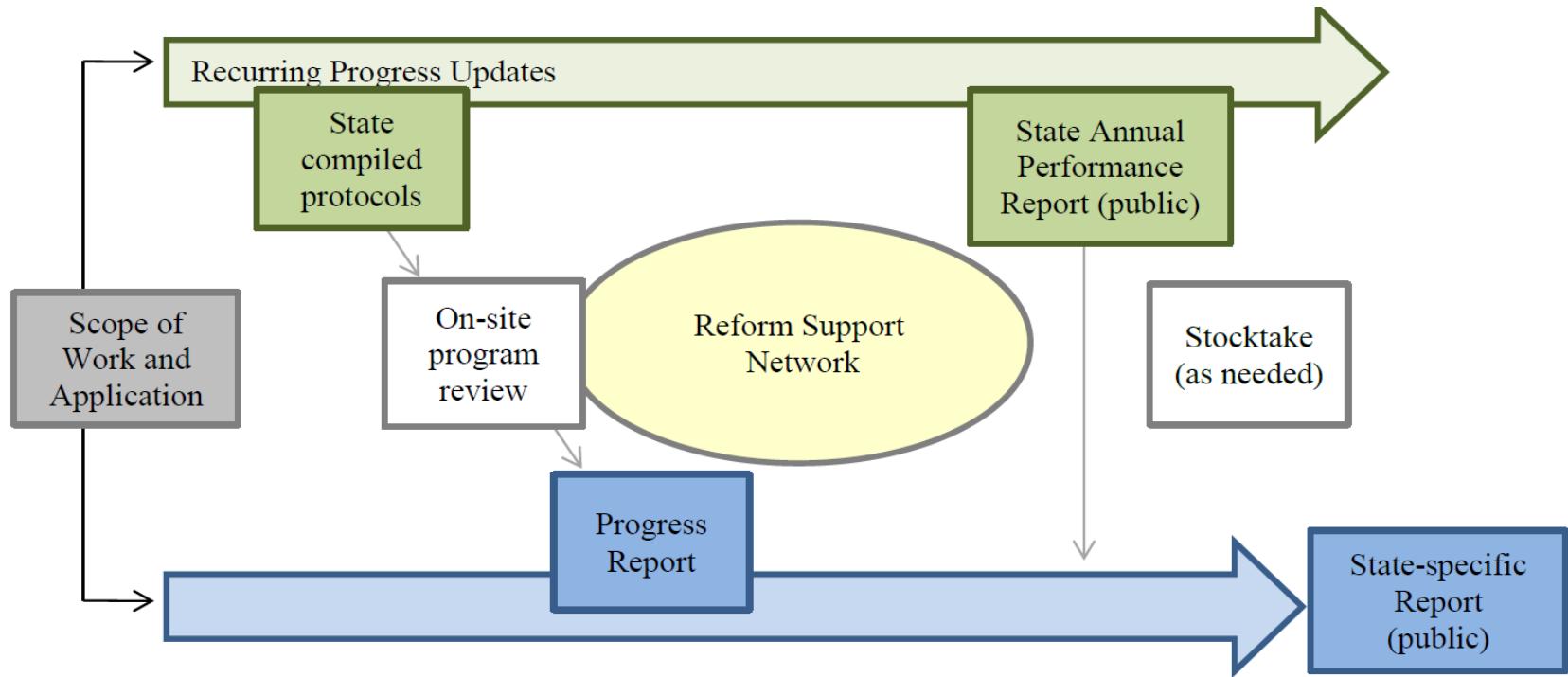
- Create a new kind of partnership with grantees
- Use performance management routines
- Be transparent in measuring and reporting on progress and outcomes

[<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance.html>]

- Annual performance reports
- State-specific reports
- Comprehensive report on Race to the Top program
- Independent evaluation by Institute for Education Sciences
- Grantee evaluations and reports

# Program review components

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# Changes to grantees' structures

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We will pursue four strategic priorities to support districts in reaching their ambitious goals

Expand kids' access to effective teachers and leaders

Expand families' access to good schools

Expand educators' access to resources and best practices

Expand public access to information and data

Effective state agency that serves as a delivery system to districts

Policies that remove bureaucracy and unleash innovation

Ethos of continuous improvement through measurement at every level

How can we use lessons to manage, reshape, and expand programs?

# Early results from Race to the Top

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- States are transitioning from predominantly compliance-driven organizations into systems that invest in comprehensive supports and tools for their school districts and educators.
- States and school districts are collaborating in new ways, using data to make informed decisions and developing comprehensive systems to provide feedback and support to teachers and principals.
- Teachers and school leaders have more resources, job-based coaching support and mentoring, professional development to transition to new standards and assessments, and opportunities to collaborate with their peers that did not exist before.

# Early results from Race to the Top

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- Students have more access to rigorous learning opportunities, college-level courses, Advanced Placement classes, and STEM education, as well as more opportunities to learn outside of school hours.
- States have created new systems of support for their lowest-performing schools, targeting significant resources at their improvement, and have created training and development programs to prepare school leaders for success in turning these schools around.

# Using lessons learned

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- Use Race to the Top lessons learned and proof points in inform future work.
  - Specifically, informed programs such as Title I School Improvement Grants, the Teacher Incentive Fund and the principles for ESEA Flexibility.
  - Use lessons learned in budget development and proposals to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Through technical assistance efforts with communities of practice, we're taking the lessons learned and promising practices from states and sharing them more broadly.

# Office of State Support (OSS)

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- Goals of the OSS:

- *To provide transparent, timely, high-quality, and differentiated support to States, in order to increase State capacity to drive implementation of K-12 comprehensive reform and differentiated accountability support systems, so that States can better assist districts and schools in developing and strengthening their instructional systems and close achievement gaps to improve student outcomes.*
- *To enhance our partnerships with States – to be more effective, efficient, and focused on results and quality of implementation.*