

## Questions from Race to the Top Briefing June 9, 2010

### “What Would You Ask, if You Were a Reviewer of Ohio’s Application?”

#### Budget

- How will Ohio ensure Race to the Top (RttT) funds will be used to meet the proposal’s goals if there are reductions in state aid?
- Ohio is already fifth. How would the additional funding ensure success?

#### Goals

- If you want to go from fifth to first, that requires eliminating any gaps between Ohio and the current state leaders in education. Why, then, is the goal to simply *reduce* the gap by 50 percent?
- Implementation – how will the state of Ohio ensure that the multi-level coordination expressed in the application is managed such that incremental goals are set, worked toward, and met so that the four-year goals are met?
- What local examples can you identify of successes regarding Closing the Achievement Gap since the statewide gap had widened (local programs successes, local district successes)?

#### Implementation

- What is your plan for implementing RttT if there is a change of governor in January 2011?
- How is ODE linking statewide goals – such as improving the graduation rate – with local work plans from districts and charter schools?
- Explain how you will assure accountability for results in those districts serving highly mobile students most at risk for academic failure.
- How does the proposal show that it is a comprehensive plan that includes other community stakeholders, including community agencies that work with kids, along with the importance of a parent involvement component?
- How committed to your proposal are you? And to demonstrate that commitment, what have you already started to implement statewide without this funding?

- Faith-based and community organizations are often critical to school and student success.
  - Why is there no specific focus on what those community resources can offer as partners (within this application)?
  - How can these agencies advocate for themselves with districts that are overwhelmed by the scope and parameters of this work?
  - How will this work engage students' support networks (families)?
- How have you aligned RttT plans with SIG (the federal School Improvement Grants), and possibly i3, plans/priorities?
- How will/can you reach out to average Ohioans to explain the RttT application and program without using "education speak" and acronyms that most people don't understand?
- What (statewide) systems are in place to assure that very high-need populations would benefit from the RttT proposal – more specifically, at-risk parents and at-risk students?
- Given your experience as a collective bargaining state, what are the ways in which the controlling board process can enhance the transformational process and lead to meaningful and sustainable changes?

## Local Participation

- Why aren't all Ohio school districts participating in this application?
- Forty percent of districts have not signed on to RttT. How are you going to bring them on board and implement the goals?
- Previously, the Ohio application was "dinged" for not reaching 100 percent of students. While you have increased the number of students affected by RttT through an increase in the number of LEAs involved, how will the remaining students be impacted through what the state is offering?
- With the significant role that Ohio's boards of education play, what is in Ohio's RttT to help bring board members along and understand all of these changes that will come? With a 3-2 vote, *one* board member can shut down the most exciting innovations ever available to a district. Board members need PD (professional development), or "BPD" (board professional development).
- Explain your approach to engage the business community in your RttT program.
- How will you affect change in non-participating LEAs (Local Education Agencies)?
- I understand that Youngstown School District is the lowest-performing district in the state, academically. How would you justify your plan without the inclusion of this troubled district?

## Sustainability

- How does Ohio plan to support early college high schools, tech schools, and international schools after the grant period expires?

## Teacher Effectiveness

- How will tenure review and compensation reform mesh with collective bargaining agreements?
- Clarify the following:
  - In addition to test scores, what measures will be used to determine teacher effectiveness? Principal effectiveness?
  - What will be the ramifications of being determined not effective?
  - What will be the system of support for people deemed ineffective?
  - What employment consequences are there for being ineffective?
- Does your attention to the Great Teachers and Leaders section of the application reflect a lack of emphasis on building leaders, specifically principals and assistant principals?

## Charter Schools

- How will charter schools be involved? How will they set and meet goals?

## Higher Education

- What coordination exists among pre-school, K-12, and higher education programs? What role will universities play in Ohio's plan?
- What is the strategy to ratchet up access to dual enrollment options for urban and Appalachian students?

*To suggest additional questions, which will be shared with the Governor's office and the Ohio Department of Education, please email Keisha Hunley-Jenkins at [khunley@kidsohio.org](mailto:khunley@kidsohio.org).*

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