



Massachusetts Executive Office of Education

One Ashburton Place, Room 1403, Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Telephone: (617) 979-8340

January 5, 2010

The Honorable Timothy Murray
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Lt. Governor, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Lieutenant Governor Murray:

The Race to the Top Fund is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build upon what we have already accomplished, accelerate current improvement and reform efforts, and catalyze bold and innovative strategies. Given the difficult fiscal situation in the state, we owe it to our students, our educators, and the future of the Commonwealth to secure a significant grant award for Massachusetts. We are eager to gain your public endorsement of our Race to the Top efforts to date, and are writing to respectfully request a letter of support from the Office of the Lt. Governor and the STEM Advisory Council to strengthen our application.

Our theory of action for the application is anchored in Governor Patrick's Education Action Agenda that was issued in June 2008, and reflects both ambitious goals for the state and challenges that we must address. Today, some but not all students in Massachusetts receive a world-class education, and some but not all teachers receive the preparation, training, and ongoing support that they need to provide all students with high-quality educational experiences. Our work will remain unfinished until we can demonstrate that we have significantly reduced achievement gaps among different groups of students, every student in Massachusetts can graduate ready for success in the 21st century, and every educator can help all students to reach their full potential.

Our proposed initiatives and strategies will enable the state to: 1) provide all of our students with a more personalized educational experience; 2) develop and retain an effective, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce; 3) allocate targeted instructional resources and more comprehensive support services to students and educators in our lowest-performing schools; and 4) increase college and career readiness for all students. Additional information is included in the attached PowerPoint presentation and fact sheet.

If we receive a Race to the Top award, we will also invest the funding to build the capacity of individuals, institutions, and the state to not only implement, but sustain our proposed initiatives and strategies. By engaging in this work, we will build upon our successes to date and also establish the foundation for the second phase of education reform in Massachusetts.

Our relationships with different stakeholders, including the STEM Advisory Council, are essential to the short- and long-term success of this work, and we look forward to continuing our partnership to achieve common goals.

In accordance with the final guidelines that were issued by the U.S. Department of Education, each state may submit letters of support from stakeholders, and we would appreciate it very much if you could write a one-page letter on behalf of the STEM Advisory Council. To guide the development of your letter, we offer the following outline for your consideration:

- Identify the primary goals and activities of the STEM Advisory Council, and describe how this work is in alignment with the Race to the Top Fund, our theory of action, and our proposed initiatives and strategies;
- Highlight the initiatives and strategies that are of most interest to you, and describe how the STEM Advisory Council will actively support state efforts to implement and sustain these strategies; and
- Describe the impact of the Race to the Top funding on students, educators, and other stakeholders in Massachusetts, with particular emphasis on the communities with which you work.

For example, the letter could include descriptions of the following (as applicable): the contributions of the STEM Advisory Council to the public education system in Massachusetts and a list of the members; recent activities with schools, districts, and other educational institutions that relate to the goals of the Race to the Top program and the four reform assurances; why you believe the proposed initiatives and strategies are important, and how they will facilitate and support your work; your partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), the Executive Office of Education (EOE), and other state agencies; and the potential impact of Race to the Top funding on student, educator, and other outcomes.

The letter should be addressed to Secretary Duncan at the following mailing address: The Honorable Arne Duncan; U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20202. The deadline for Phase I applications is Tuesday, January 19, 2010; **please submit a PDF version of your letter (on appropriate letterhead) by e-mail to Saeyun Lee in the EOE (saeyun.lee@state.ma.us) by Monday, January 11, 2010 to ensure that it will be included in the final application.** If you have any questions about submitting your letter of support, please contact Saeyun Lee (617.979.8351) or Carrie Conaway at ESE (cconaway@doe.mass.edu, 781.338.3108).

We greatly appreciate your continued contributions to the public education system in Massachusetts. Thank you in advance for your time, consideration, and support.

Sincerely,



Paul Reville
Secretary of Education



Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and
Secondary Education