



NEWS

Karla Denny, Director of Communications (785) 296-4876

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TOPEKA—The \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund is the largest ever federal competitive investment in school reform. It will reward states for creating conditions for educational change and provide incentives for large-scale, system-changing reforms. Kansas is poised to reap the benefits of its past accomplishments and move forward significantly with future improvements; thus Kansas will compete with other states in the Race to the Top (RTTT) funding. We have contracted with Research and Training Associates, Overland Park, to assist us in the preparation of the application. Applications will be accepted in two phases. Phase 1 applications are due in Washington, DC, January 19, 2010, with awards announced in April 2010. It is estimated that up to 20 states will receive funding in Phase 1. A second phase of applications will be accepted on June 1, 2010, with awards announced in September 2010. The U. S. Department of Education estimates approximately 27 states will be approved during the two phases. Kansas will apply for funding in Phase 1 and reapply in Phase 2 if necessary.

We believe that Kansas is a strong contender for the RTTT funds based on our work thus far in the four core reform areas. These areas include:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

If the application is approved, Kansas could receive up to \$175 million. Fifty percent of the funds will be distributed to local school districts based on their work in meeting the core reform areas. The funds will be available for four years, or through the 2013-2014 school year.

For more information on the RTTT application process, contact Dr. Diane De Backer, interim commissioner of education at 785-296-3202.

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