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## **Road Map Region Race to the Top Executive Committee Issues Preliminary Awards of \$2.2 Million for Teaching & Leading**

The Executive Committee for the Road Map Region Race to the Top grant recently issued preliminary awards of \$2.2 million in Investment Funds for Project 1 (Teaching & Leading) to districts participating in the consortium.

The consortium's Race to the Top grant includes 12 funded projects spanning from "cradle to career." Four of the 12 projects were specified in the grant as Investment Funds, whereby districts apply through a process to use the funds in ways that advance student achievement and help the Road Map Project reach its goal of doubling the number of students prepared to graduate from college or earn a career credential. These four projects, Teaching and Leading, PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Systems, College & Career Readiness and Community-School Partnerships, represent nearly half of the consortium's total grant, \$18 million out of \$40 million.

A total of \$7.6 million will be awarded through Project 1 (Teaching & Leading) in three disbursements. The first distribution of these funds totaled \$2.2 million and includes the following awards:

- Auburn School District: Distributed Leadership, \$184,317
- Federal Way Public Schools: School Change Teams, \$470,945
- Highline Public Schools: STEM Academy, \$440,000
- Kent School District: Problem-Based Learning, \$231,597; Secondary Math, \$260,928
- Renton School District: Leadership/Teacher Academy, & Summer Bridge for Math, \$374,120
- Seattle Public Schools: Seattle Teacher Residency, \$ 225,455

Project 1 (Teaching & Leading) is the first investment fund to be considered by the Executive Committee, and the largest single project in the consortium's Race to the Top grant.

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Project 1 creates a fund that districts may access to build teacher and principal content knowledge, to assist in the creation of personalized learning environments in the region's high-need schools. The emphasis of this fund is on scalable, high impact improvements in math, science and English language learner instruction as well as teacher/principal leadership.

"These proposals represent a significant investment of time, energy and research to implement strategies that will increase student achievement in our region," said Puget Sound ESD Superintendent John Welch, who also serves as a member of the Executive Committee. "The use of best practices, innovative partnerships with local and national professional organizations is inspiring and exciting."

Ten proposals totaling \$4 million were received in response to the Project 1 request for proposals. An independent panel was assembled to score the proposals and make recommendations to the Executive Committee. Award recommendations were made based on points received as well as other factors that impact the region such as return on investment and scalability. The Executive Committee made final decisions on awards on September 10, 2013. Following preliminary award decisions, PSESD will finalize the terms of each award with districts through a contracting process.

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*Project summaries are available starting on Page 3*

### **About the Road Map Region Race to the Top Grant**

The Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle and Tukwila school districts competed together for \$40 million in Race to the Top federal funding as the Road Map District Consortium. The districts' grant was among 16 winners picked from nearly 400 applications by the U.S. Department of Education. The Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) is responsible for managing the grant's implementation and functions as the fiscal agent. For more information visit [www.roadmapracetothetop.org](http://www.roadmapracetothetop.org)

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Project 1 Grants

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### **Auburn: Distributed Leadership**

*Problem of Practice:* Substantial demographic changes require the district to restructure its systems to effectively address achievement gap challenges in conjunction with high standards. Empowering teacher leaders and investing in quality professional development for them is where limited resources will have the greatest influence on changing instructional practice.

*Systems Level Plan & Theory of Action:* The school board, central office administrators, principals, and teacher leaders participate and lead targeted on-going professional development to distribute leadership from the boardroom to the classroom across the district in all 22 schools, including the district's 9 high-need schools. Central to the proposal is continuation of Auburn's Teacher Leadership Academy, which uses the Teacher Leadership Framework of the Center on Strengthening the Teaching Profession. The goals of the Academy are to:

1. Equip teacher leaders with knowledge and skills needed to implement change initiatives in their settings that will build teacher capacity to impact student learning;
2. Build leadership capacity across the district in order to increase involvement of teacher leaders in initiatives beyond their own classrooms; and
3. To connect a network of teacher leaders to each other and to needed resources.

55 teachers would participate in 2013-14. The theory of action is that the more teachers know, and the more skilled they become in their practice, the more successful our schools become at addressing preparation gaps, accelerated learning, and improving academic performance for each student.

*Progress monitoring tools:* Teacher leadership participant self-assessments seven times per year; DIBELS; MAP; state test scores; student perception or engagement survey

*Scale:* 55 teachers district-wide and 1,740 students in high-need schools are expected to be served. Targets were set, aligned with overall RTT targets, for reduced achievement gaps and performance for all subgroups in reading, math and science.

### **Federal Way: School Change Teams**

*Problem of Practice:* There is an opportunity gap for students of color, males of color and ELL

students in reading, math and graduation. Federal Way experiences stagnation with pockets of successful programs, acceptance of failing students, and lack of family engagement.

*Systems Level Plan & Theory of Action:* The theory of action is that if leaders and teachers build “meta-capabilities,” they will successfully diagnose their own needs and priorities, choose the right set of change levers, and effectively lead the entire change process. The five meta-capabilities are: understanding the real problem; parents as real partners; leadership for accelerated change; teaching for zero failure; and culture of belonging and high expectations for all.

Federal Way will work with a consultant, The Learner First, to build a district leadership team that will meet with school leaders to conduct assessments of their main needs. The District Leadership team will bring together a change team of 6-12 people to oversee the change process. Schools will analyze evidence about student achievement to identify groups of learners needing acceleration, identifying capabilities to focus on first. Then, change levers will be identified, professional development needs will be identified, and resourcing and prioritizing will take place.

*Progress monitoring tools:* Credits attained; state assessments; pre/post interviews with parents and students; student engagement survey; district assessments; affective domain survey; monitoring every 6 weeks by the Change Leader to ensure solutions are valid and working.

*Scale:* 660 students, 239 teachers and 12 leaders will be served. Targets include:

- 100% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade African American, Hispanic and Native American students will be on target to graduate by spring 2014
- 100% of African American, Pacific Islander and Latino boys in grades 3, 5, 8 & 10 will see math as relevant and meaningful for their lives, and be achieving at or above standard in math by spring 2014.
- 80% of ELL students will read at grade level by the end of kindergarten, 90% by the end of 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and 100% by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

### **Highline: STEM Academy**

*Problem of Practice:* How do we ensure access to quality instruction in math and science for our most needy students and access to quality professional development for teachers to facilitate student learning in math and science in the classroom?

*Systems Level Plan & Theory of Action:* Based on its successful implementation and results

from a math teacher leader model, Highline aims to build a STEM Academy focused on both math and science, focused on elementary and middle schools. This strategy is tied to the Danielson framework. The plan is to build a professional learning community for STEM Specialists and STEM transition teachers focused on Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards.

There are four drivers of change for this model:

1. Developing a principled articulation of ambitious practices in math and science
2. Investing in STEM learning at elementary
3. Developing models of job-embedded professional development through which teachers can learn complex practice
4. Involving leadership

*Progress monitoring tools:* state assessments; district-created science benchmarks, chapter tests, unit assessments

*Scale:* 35 teachers, 6 leaders of color and more than 1,200 students would be served. Specific, ambitious targets were set by subgroup and school level. The goal is for 90% of elementary schools in the district to use this model by 2015-16.

### **Kent: Problem-Based Learning**

*Problem of Practice:* Overall student achievement on state science assessments varies too widely and large achievement gaps exist for students of color, low-income and special education students, as well as for ELL students. Elementary students enter middle school unprepared for middle school science. Further, there are missed opportunities to develop learning environments that attract and motivate students who have not been historically successful in science, there is not enough time to teach science, teachers lack content knowledge, and there has been a lack of fidelity to using the current FOSS science kit modules.

*Systems-Level Plan & Theory of Action:* The theory of action for this proposal is that by increasing teachers' capacity to use constructivist instructional methods like problem-based learning, Kent can make a broad impact on teacher leadership and student learning. If students in science classrooms are engaged in ways that activate their prior knowledge and immerse them in authentic scientific practices, then they will be better equipped to demonstrate knowledge on next-generation assessments that measure deep content learning and to pursue higher education or careers that depend on excellent K-12 science prep.

The proposal is to partner with the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy Problem-Based

Learning Network to provide ongoing, structured professional development to an Academy of 128 teachers from both elementary and secondary levels. Teachers would self-select. The district would maintain a library of exemplary problem-based learning units that have been field tested and revised by the Academy teachers. Units would be made available for other Road Map districts. Additionally, the FOSS science kits would be updated and leaders would travel to other schools/districts implementing large-scale problem-based learning initiatives.

*Progress-Monitoring Tools:* state tests; teacher surveys; district walkthrough data two times per year; student attendance during problem-based learning units; classroom unit assessments one time per year.

*Scale:* 128 teachers would participate in the Academy. There is potential for this program to impact other districts using problem-based learning by making exemplary units available across the region. The district has set extremely ambitious targets for state science test scores for students of color, low-income, ELL and special education students, well above overall RTT targets.

### **Kent: Secondary Math**

*Problem of Practice:* English Language Learners are the lowest performing subgroup in the Kent School District in both Science and Math.

*Systems Level Plan & Theory of Action:* The leadership team in the Kent School District will improve this data via three focused goals:

1. Development of capacity in district, academic, and school leadership with ELL best practice understanding and application.
2. Advocacy for the lowest performing group through instruction and support
3. Creation of ELL support systems for professional learning.

If the Kent School district provides professional learning focused on ELL for administrators, then administrators will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to close the achievement gap. This proposal includes participation of 24 instructional coaches and specialists and 25 leaders in a 7 day Heritage University English Language Learner Leadership Academy in the summer of 2014, and each participant will develop an action research project to apply new learning.

*Progress monitoring tools:* MSP, Algebra enrollment data, teacher surveys, district walkthrough data (aligned to CEL 5D+ instructional framework), K-8 grades in Math and science, and Practicum Action Research Projects.

*Scale:* 24 Instructional coaches and specialists, 25 leaders, 2503 ELL students impacted in 12 schools. The district has set extremely ambitious targets for state science test scores for students of color, low-income, ELL and special education students, well above overall RTT targets.

**Renton: Leadership Academy, Teacher Academy & Summer Bridge Focused on Math**

*Problem of Practice:* Students lag behind peers in math 4<sup>th</sup> grade through 9<sup>th</sup> grade, especially in high-needs schools. There is an achievement gap in math for students of color, poor students, ELL and special education students. Further, most elementary teachers are not content area experts in math. There is a need to develop capacity for both leaders and teachers in math instruction.

*Systems-Level Plan & Theory of Action:* Provide focused, job-embedded professional development in math that incorporates strategies to differentiate instruction and provide personalized learning environments. The theory of action is that if student achievement is to improve at scale for ALL students, then teaching and learning in EVERY classroom must improve. This can only be accomplished if principals, assistant principals and other administrators are instructional leaders who recognize quality instruction and understand how to support teachers in improving their practice. There are three strategies in this proposal:

- Leadership Academy for principals, assistant principals, Deans, and interns for Common Core State Standards in math connected to the Danielson framework
- Teacher Academy for up to 30 K-12 teacher leaders per year to deepen understanding of Common Core State Standards in math and build on the Danielson framework.
- Lab Classrooms for second-year Teacher Leaders to host cadres of observers
- Summer Bridge of two weeks of intensive math instruction in mid-August for students from high-needs schools.

*Progress Monitoring Tools:* Math MSP, EOC, district benchmarks, end of unit assessments 6-8 times per year K-8.

*Scale:* 60 leaders, 120 teachers and 150 students in Summer Bridge would be served. Math MSP targets for 4<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades are ambitious for all subgroups and align with overall RTT performance measures. Targets for Math EOC scores for 9<sup>th</sup> grade and for students in grades 11-12 enrolled in at least 1 AP math course are aligned with the District Improvement Plan and are not as rigorous as overall RTT performance measures.

**Seattle: Seattle Teacher Residency**

*Problem of Practice:* The core problem of student learning that the Seattle Teacher Residency (STR) addresses is that on average, academic achievement among low income students, students of color, English language learners (ELL), and students who require *special education* (SPED) is lower than that of other students. Several data document the gap at Seattle Public Schools (SPS).

*Systems-Level Plan & Theory of Action:* The *theory of action* is that a rigorous, district-specific, classroom-based training program that embeds the work of teacher preparation directly into practice at high-need schools, and which focuses specifically on the needs of students of color, low income, ELL and SPED students, will improve academic achievement of these students and narrow the opportunity gap.

Urban teacher residencies (UTRs) adapt the medical residency model to teacher preparation. UTRs are systemic solutions designed to accelerate student achievement through the training, support and retention of excellent teachers. UTRs blend a full year of classroom apprenticeship with aligned, graduate-level course work and an intensive resident/mentor partnership. Distinguished from traditional teacher training programs, residencies are built around field-based work supported by theoretical learning, as opposed to university-based studies accompanied by field experiences. There is a stated desire for district wide changes to HR and other practices related to recruitment and retention based on “lessons learned” by this program.

*Progress Monitoring Tools:* Danielson Framework; Washington State Achievement Index ratings of “very good” or “exemplary,” and SPS staff annual survey. In addition, SPS expects that impact will be evident in MAP and MSP scores.

*Scale:* 25 residents, 25 mentors. Each resident has made a 6-year commitment to high-need SPS schools: one year of residency followed by five years of teaching. Cohort 1 teachers will work in 5 schools, two of which are RTT high needs schools. In the two high-need schools, 45 teachers, 625 students and two administrators would be served. Specific targets were set by subgroup for the percent of students with an “effective” teacher of record, the percent of students with a “highly effective” teacher of record, and the percent of students attending schools with Washington State Achievement Index ratings of “very good” or “exemplary.”