

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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NC Submits Race to the Top Application

Governor Perdue announced this week that North Carolina's \$459.5 million application for Race to the Top was submitted to the U.S. Department over the weekend. According to the Governor, North Carolina's application stressed four areas of improve and development for K-12 public education:

- Internationally-benchmarked standards and assessments;
- Development of data systems that measure success and improve instruction;
- Supporting effective teachers and leaders; and
- Turning around low-performing schools.

In all, forty states and the District of Columbia applied for the first round of \$4 billion in the Race to the Top Fund competition. The 10 states that did not apply by round one's January 19th deadline were: Alaska, Maryland, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Texas, Vermont, and Washington. States that did not apply, and any losing states from the first round, will be eligible to compete in the second round of competition, set for June 2010.

To read North Carolina's Race to the Top proposal, [click here](#).

President Seeks \$1.35 Billion Race to the Top Expansion

President Obama will seek \$1.35 billion in next year's budget to expand the Race to the Top competition, paving the way for the popular economic-stimulus grant program to become a permanent part of the administration's education armory.

In its fiscal 2011 budget request, the Obama administration will also spell out that it wants to open the Race to the Top competition to school districts. According to senior administration officials, districts would have their own grant contest and would not have to compete against states.

In addition, providing incentives for districts that are making progress on student achievement will be a key element of the Obama administration's plan for renewing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Race to the Top Expansion (cont'd)

“Even before states have received a single dime of [Race to the Top] taxpayer money, many of them have committed to instituting important reforms to better position themselves for a Race to the Top grant.... So, by rewarding some of these states submitting applications today, by extending the Race to the Top for states, by launching a Race to the Top among districts, and by applying the principles of Race to the Top to other federal programs, we’ll build on this success. We’re going to raise the bar for all our students and take bigger steps towards closing the achievement gap that denies so many students, especially black and Latino students, a fair shot at their dreams.”

-- President Barack Obama (1/19/2010), proposing continuation and expansion of Race to the Top

Senator Blue to Speak on Education Equity

State Senator Dan Blue, a Raleigh Democrat and chairman of the Duke University board of trustees, will be the guest speaker tomorrow at an event focused on how the state and federal constitutions influence equal education for all students. The event, sponsored by the Coalition of Concerned Citizens for African American Children, will be held from 10 a.m. to noon in the Johnston Building of Martin Street Baptist Church, 1001 E. Martin Street in Raleigh. For more information, contact Calla Wright at 919-231-9057 or visit www.cccaac.com (reservations are required).

Leadership: Charting a New Direction

Each spring the North Carolina Association of School Administrators (NCASA) hosts a dynamic conference designed to improve school leadership in North Carolina. The NCASA Annual Conference continues the organization’s mission to ensure quality learning experiences for all students through visionary and effective leadership as reflected by the theme for the 2010 conference, *Leadership: Charting a New Direction*.

Slated for March 25-26th at the Raleigh Convention Center, this is more than your average conference; it is a can’t miss event that requires every administrator to be present. The 2010 NCASA Annual Conference will provide countless opportunities for growth and improvement of North Carolina school leaders with powerful training and sessions focused on the key issues affecting K-12 public education today.

This year’s event opens March 25 with an important message from Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education. Dr. Meléndez de Santa Ana will address reauthorization of No Child Left Behind and the importance of school administrators' involvement in the decision-making at national and state levels with her keynote address, "A New Direction for K-12 Education." Friday, March 26, conference attendees will hear directly from Gov. Bev Perdue about the state budget and K-12 education and take part in a critical discussion, "PreK-20 Conversations," with North Carolina's education leadership.

Leadership (cont'd)

Do not miss your chance to be a part of this important event, visit www.ncasa.net to register today!

RTTT's Impact on States...

Nebraska Looks to Allow Charter Schools

In an effort to win some of the federal Race to the Top funding, Nebraska lawmakers are considering laying the groundwork for a new type of educational system in the state. Charter schools could be created in Nebraska under a bill (LB1028) introduced to the Legislature on Wednesday by state Sen. LeRoy Loudon of Ellsworth. The bill would allow nonprofit organizations and groups of at least three Nebraska residents to apply with the state to operate charter schools.

Loudon's bill would have the schools, which would be funded with public money but operated independently of local school boards, report directly to the Nebraska Board of Education. In addition, the schools would be for students in preschool through eighth grade and would have to be more than 7 miles away from the nearest elementary school.

Maryland Superintendent's Plan Criticized

Several state senators are balking at the Maryland state superintendent's proposals to alter teacher tenure and compensation as a way to win millions of dollars in federal funding through the Race to the Top competition. Superintendent Nancy S. Grasmick, in a Senate committee briefing Thursday, outlined the changes she will seek this year as Maryland seeks as much as \$250 million in Race to the Top money that the U.S. Department of Education is awarding to states with progressive school policies.

Grasmick says she wants lawmakers to extend the two-year teacher tenure process by at least a year, packaging that with added support for new teachers. She also wants to provide incentive pay for high-performing teachers who agree to work in low-performing schools.

Some senators, including Sen Paul Pinsky, a teachers union organizer for the past 15 years, said they are uncomfortable with the "carrot" of federal money driving state policy. Maryland was one of 10 states that did not submit an application in the first round for the federal funding.

Georgia Governor to Reform Teacher Pay

Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue has announced plans to support legislation that would overhaul the statewide teacher-salary schedule and allow teachers to opt into one that determines pay partly on performance-based measures.

The plan would go into effect in 2013, and current teachers could “opt into” the plan or remain on the current salary schedule. Teachers hired after January 1, 2014, would automatically be enrolled in the system. While most states have locally bargained salary schedules, other states with statewide schedules include Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington and West Virginia.

The bill is linked to the state’s Race to the Top Fund application in that the state board of education would draw from examples of performance-pay systems developed through Race to the Top funding.

Forum News...

Seeking Jay Robinson Award Nominations

The Jay Robinson Leadership Award was established by the Public School Forum Board of Directors in recognition of outstanding leaders in the field of public education. The award may be given to anyone who has displayed innovative, creative, effective leadership for the public schools of North Carolina.

Past winners include Laura Bilbro-Berry, the first Teaching Fellow to be named North Carolina Teacher of the Year; Tom McNeel, superintendent of Caldwell County schools; Jim Causby, two-time state Superintendent of the Year and executive director of the NC Association of School Administrators; Robert Bridges, former superintendent of Wake County Schools and former chair of the state’s Raising Achievement and Closing Gap Commission; Superior Court Judge Howard E. Manning, Jr., the trial court judge in the *Leandro* school finance case; Dr. Ann Denlinger, former superintendent of Durham Public Schools and Wilson County Schools and currently President, Wake Education Partnership; Phillip J. Kirk Jr., Vice President for External Relations at Catawba College; Bill Harrison, former superintendent Cumberland County Schools and Chairman of the State Board of education; and Dr. Dudley Flood, retired educator and consultant.

The nominations must be postmarked by March 1, 2010. Nominations postmarked after that date and nominations delivered in person will not be accepted. The award ceremony will be held on June 21, 2010, at the Raleigh Crabtree Marriott Hotel. Admission will be by invitation only. The honor includes a cash award sponsored by BB&T.

To obtain an application, contact Claire Ancelet (cancelet@ncforum.org) at 919-781-6833 or you can download a copy at www.ncforum.org.

Last Weeks to Register for SYNERGY Conference!

The NC Center for Afterschool Programs' 2010 SYNERGY afterschool conference, *Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics: STEMulate Your Afterschool Program*, will be held at the Joseph S. Koury Center in Greensboro on March 1-2, 2010. Join hundreds of afterschool directors, front-line staff, state administrators, and funders from across the state for two days of workshops, engaging keynote speakers, networking opportunities, and a special Youth Forum on Afterschool before an audience of elected officials.

Sample workshops include:

- **Easy, Fun and Inexpensive STEM Activities**, *Thomas Ray, 4-H Youth Development*
Program participants will enjoy hands-on participation in a variety of STEM activities, including curricula and resources that are free or low-cost. For each activity, participants will receive a materials list, instructions and experiential learning model framework for the activity.
- **Beyond Race: Teaching Social Justice in 2010**, *Eric Rowles, Leading to Change*
To effectively connect and engage with young people, practitioners must first become aware of their own levels of bias, assumption, and knowledge of culture on a larger scale than just race. This workshop is designed to teach participants how to create safe settings for powerful discussions of power and privilege with their young people.
- **TechXcite: STEM in the Afterschool Setting**, *Dr. Paul Klenk, Duke University*
TechXcite, a partnership between Duke University and 4-H, is a successful afterschool engineering program replicable nationwide. This workshop will introduce the program and basic activities for introducing engineering to an afterschool setting. To illustrate these concepts, coordinators will facilitate a few of the activities from the TechXcite Wireless Burglar Alarm module.
- **Mission Critical: REAL Students, REAL Problems, and REAL Solutions**, *Kenston J. Griffin, Dream Builders Communication, Inc.*
This session is designed to support and motivate afterschool educators, while sharing successful techniques to avoid "Burn-Out", reduce stress, and demonstrate effective strategies to get the most out of students after school until the end of the academic year. The areas of focus will be how to empower students, manage the workload, and emotions, as well as provide strategies on getting and staying on task with class work, homework, and testing.
- **Coalition Building for Program Sustainability: Public Housing Leadership**, *Dr. Bricca Sweet and Rudy Davis, Statesville Housing Authority*
Developing vibrant partnerships is key to successful afterschool and summer program sustainability. Public housing authorities have existing relationships that can build dynamic coalitions and ensure that providers reach the neediest student and family populations. Gain skills from our Housing Authority coalition experience that you can put to immediate use!

SYNERGY Conference (cont'd)

For a special deal, register 4 staff members to receive the 5th registration free. Book your hotel room by contacting the Sheraton Four Seasons/Koury Center Hotel at 1-800-242-6556. Be sure to mention "NC CAP SYNERGY" when booking to receive the low \$124 rate for rooms that can accommodate up to 4 people at this low rate. Rooms will be released to the general public on January 30, so book your room today to secure the special rate.

Registration forms and vendor applications are available on www.nccap.net. For more information, contact Katie Biggerstaff at kbiggerstaff@ncforum.org or (919) 781-6833 ext 132.

Become a Fan of NC CAP on Facebook!

NC CAP has joined the ranks of nonprofits using social media networks to expand its reach across the state. Our new Facebook page connects afterschool supporters with the latest news about our work, including updates on SYNERGY, opportunities for resources and prizes, such as tickets to sports games across the state, and other news. There also opportunities to join discussion boards and share pictures of your afterschool events.

Help us spread the word by suggesting 3 of your friends become "Fans" today! Click the



Facebook icon or link below to join the site.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Raleigh-NC/NC-Center-for-Afterschool-Programs/354717190581>.

NC CAP has also recently updated its "Action" page on the NC CAP website. Be sure to visit <http://www.nccap.net/about/useful.cfm> for the latest updates on state afterschool standards, advocacy tools, free resources, and sign-up information for NC CAP's listserv.

The *Friday Report* is published weekly by the Public School Forum of NC and is distributed to Forum Board members, legislators active in education policy, the press, and Forum subscribers. Archived editions can be found at www.ncforum.org/doc.