



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 20, 2010

Contact: Christine Dufour
(651) 582.8720

Race to the Top Application Submitted to Washington with Overwhelming Support from Minnesota

Support from 300 school districts and 116 charter schools causes state to increase grant request to \$330 million.

(Roseville, MN...) – State education officials submitted Minnesota's official application for President Obama's Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative with overwhelming support from the state's schools and districts. The 1,000 page application is accompanied by memoranda of agreement signed by 300 school districts and 116 charter schools, representing over 93 percent of the students in the state. Because of the overwhelming support from local school districts, the state increased its grant request from \$230 to \$330 million.

"The overwhelming support we received from our schools, districts and stakeholders is a strong testament to the quality of our application," said Alice Seagren, Minnesota Commissioner of Education. "In keeping with Minnesota tradition, their support will make sure the reforms of Race to the Top are implemented to benefit the students of our state for years to come."

Over \$4.3 billion in RTTT grants will be awarded to 10 to 15 states nationally in a highly competitive process to reward education innovation and reform. Because of our recent efforts in education reform, Minnesota is in a strong position to receive more than \$330 million in RTTT funds.

- Minnesota has nationally recognized academic standards for students in math, language arts, science and social studies that have become the model for other states. The state's assessments are also on the cutting edge of technology, especially in science.
- More than 30 percent of Minnesota students are already being taught by teachers participating in Q Comp, the researched-based alternative pay program. Minnesota's application proposes to strengthen Q Comp by including pay-for-performance for principals, student outcome data in teacher and principal evaluations, and by providing a teacher and principal developed statewide system for evaluating teachers that districts may choose to use. These enhancements will ensure additional rigor while maintaining the collaborative union/management approach to developing a district's Q Comp plan.
- Minnesota was the first to pioneer the charter school concept and, according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, the state still has the strongest environment for charter schools in the nation.
- Minnesota's recent efforts in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) align with the Race to the Top application.

Race to the Top will provide funding to support Minnesota teachers and schools in their ongoing efforts to meet the goals of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. It's also an opportunity for states like Minnesota to demonstrate to the rest of the nation how they are improving student achievement.

“Minnesota is proud of its leadership in education reform and with Race to the Top, we look forward to present successful strategies to the rest of the nation,” added Seagren.

- xxx -