

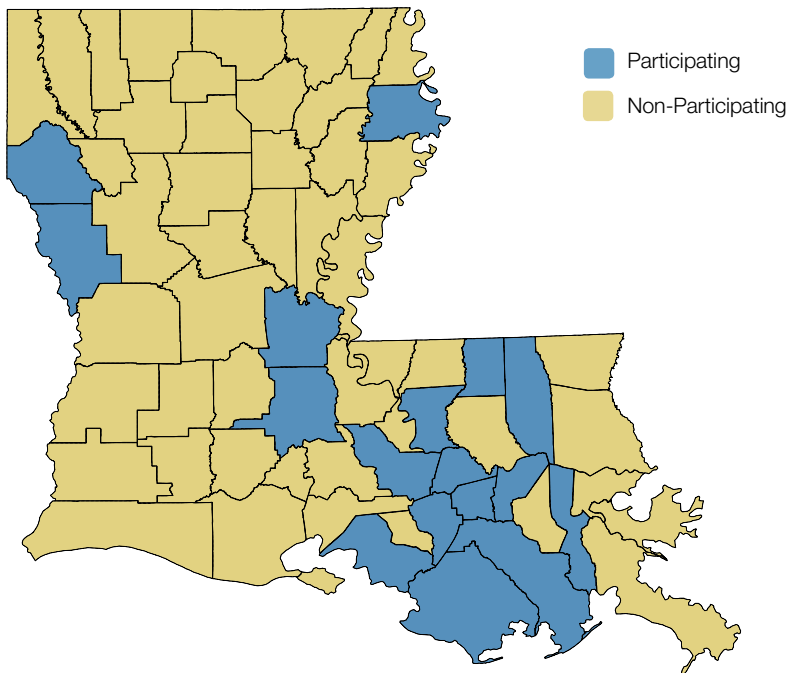
# Race to the Top

## What is Race to the Top (R2T)?

- In December 2011, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Louisiana over \$17.4 million in the third round of their R2T grant competition.
- R2T was authorized through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- The third round of R2T was created to support states that are implementing aggressive reforms and placing an emphasis on enriching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) initiatives.
- Louisiana is one of 18 states to be awarded R2T funds so far.

## Louisiana Districts Participating in Race to the Top

Programs funded by Race to the Top will impact 37% of the student population in Louisiana. Participating districts will receive R2T funds through the Louisiana Department of Education. The goal of R2T reforms is to impact every student in Louisiana.



526 schools in 20 districts are participating in R2T-funded programs, with a total enrollment of over 245,500 students.

In addition to the participating districts, 28 Recovery School District Type 5 charter schools located in Caddo Parish, Orleans Parish, and Ouachita Parish are participating, with a total enrollment of over 12,300 students.

On average, the schools participating in R2T have a higher percentage of minority and low-income students than the state.

Note: Participating districts not included in the map are Bogalusa City, Monroe City, and the Recovery School District.

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2011

# Race to the Top Reforms

## R2T Reform Focuses

### Standards and Assessments

Prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy

### Data Systems

Measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction

### Effective Teachers and Principals

Recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most

### School Turnaround

Turn around lowest performing schools

## Using Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers

Race to the Top funds will support the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's (BESE) teacher evaluation policies as prescribed by Act 54, which requires performance at every level of K-12 public education in Louisiana to be based on growth in student academic achievement. The policies will use growth in individual student test scores to measure teacher and administrator performance.

### ½ Test Scores ½ Observations

Teacher and administrator evaluations will be based half on student test score growth and half on observations.

### Accounting for Variables

Act 54 requires measurements of student growth to account for student- and classroom-level variables that affect performance, such as free and reduced price lunch eligibility and attendance.

### Certification and Employment Decisions

Certification and employment decisions will be based on the results of the new teacher and administrator evaluations.

## The STEM Goal Office

Race to the Top funds will be used to create a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Goal Office at the Louisiana Department of Education. The main focus of the office is to ensure students are performing above grade level in math. The following are strategies the office will use to reach its goal.

- Increase professional development resources available to STEM teachers.
- Provide teachers with access to real-time benchmark data to inform STEM instruction.
- Increase the number of statewide common assessments that can be used to measure student growth in STEM subjects.
- Expand successful programs to prepare STEM teachers through effective alternative certification programs.
- Invest in scaling and incubating high-performing charter operators, with an emphasis on STEM.
- Increase the number of STEM courses offered by school districts.