

Race to the Top News and Views

RttT.education.ohio.gov

A Bi-weekly Bulletin of RttT

Ohio | Department
of Education

Volume 2, Number 3, October 27, 2011



RttT Staff

Erik Bower,
Budget/Accountability Manager
(614) 728-0745
Erik.Bower@ode.state.oh.us

Adrienne Carr,
Professional Development Manager
(614) 995-5162
Adrienne.Carr@ode.state.oh.us

Scott Hoshor,
Federal Liaison
(614) 728-9618
Scott.Hoshor@ode.state.oh.us

Joan Nichols,
Communications/Outreach Manager
(614) 644-6327
Joan.Nichols@ode.state.oh.us

Michael Sawyers,
Deputy Superintendent
(614) 644-6818
Michael.Sawyers@ode.state.oh.us

Sandy Stewart,
Administrative Assistant III
(614) 387-2216
Sandy.Stewart@ode.state.oh.us

RttT Regional Coordinators

Clairie Huff-Franklin,
RttT Urban Coordinator
(614) 420-0296
Clairie.Huff-Franklin@ode.state.oh.us

Laura Keller, RttT Northwest Coordinator
(614) 420-0298
Laura.Keller@ode.state.oh.us

Maggie Niedzwiecki,
RttT Northeast Coordinator
(614) 420-0288
Maggie.Niedzwiecki@ode.state.oh.us

Jeff Royalty, RttT Southwest Coordinator
(614) 420-0003
Jeff.Royalty@ode.state.oh.us

Scott Spears,
RttT Central Ohio Coordinator
(614) 420-0297
Scott.Spears@ode.state.oh.us

Ivan Wilson, RttT Southeast Coordinator
(614) 420-0299
Ivan.Wilson@ode.state.oh.us

Race to the Top Annual Statewide Conference, November 1, 2011

Dear RttT Conference Attendees,

We have received several inquiries regarding ODE's decision not to provide food and/or refreshments for the upcoming Race to the Top (RttT) Annual Conference scheduled for November 1, 2011 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

Per guidance and direction directly provided from USDoE, food expenses are NOT an allowable expense if it is part of an activity that is considered to be entertainment. Meal services, including refreshments at an RttT-related conference are deemed to be unnecessary in accomplishing the overall objectives of the RttT program. Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are unallowable.

In general, if you determine that any food-related expenses are not "necessary and reasonable," RttT funds should not be used.

Many questions have been asked concerning how the RttT funds can be used while holding or attending a Professional Development opportunity or a conference. Mileage, food, lodging and transportation costs can be absorbed through your RttT funds when your local board of education and LEA deem these expenses as necessary and reasonable.

This guidance from USDOE also applies with the LEAs currently participating and receiving funds in RttT. As we move forward into Year 2 of RttT, please ensure that your entire RttT staff is aware of this policy and follows it.

If you have any further questions or issues regarding this policy, please feel free to contact your RttT Regional Coordinator or the RttT office via e-mail at racetothetop@ode.state.oh.us or the RttT Budget/Accountability Manager.



Thank You

Ohio's Race to the Top Team

RttT Conference Agenda and Program

Ohio's first annual Race to the Top (RttT) statewide conference – "Ohio's RttT Strategy: One Down...Three to Grow" – will be held on November 1, 2011 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio.

This one-day statewide education transformation and reform conference will convene stakeholders and education partners from Ohio and the nation at large. Dialogue and presentations will focus on innovative education reforms to support and accelerate academic achievement and progress to permit students to be college and career ready. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to participate in sessions that demonstrate the progress that Ohio, the RttT participating LEAs, or educational partners and vendors have made to date in implementing strategies necessary to support the transformation required in each application area of Ohio's RttT strategy while recognizing and planning for continuous growth and improvement.

Conference strand themes include:

- Building Cultural Capacity (Application Area A)
- Standards and Assessments (Application Area B)
- Data Systems to Support Instruction (Application Area C)
- Great Teachers and Leaders (Application Area D)
- Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (Application Area E)
- Innovative Models (Asia Society, AVID, Early College, New Tech, STEM, and "Other")

A Sample of presentation exemplars include:

- Specific best practices or story-telling of implementation to date in Application Areas B, C, D, or E
- Lessons learned during Year 1 implementation of Ohio's RttT Strategy at the LEA or SEA level
- Using data to improve classroom instruction (value-added, formative assessments, etc.)

- Innovative opportunities and models for Ohio's schools and education leaders
- Expanding effective educator preparation programs
- Integration of the new Content Standards and Model Curricula into the classroom
- Research-based high quality instructional practices
- Teacher evaluation systems that integrate student growth measures
- Ohio Principal and Teacher Evaluation Systems

KidsOhio is sponsoring and organizing a plenary panel discussion with key experts. Invited panelists include experts from across the nation:

- Matt Gandal, USDOE, Director of Technical Assistance and Support, Implementation and Support Unit
- Dr. Lillian Lowery, Delaware Department of Education, Secretary of Education
- Michael Sawyers, Ohio Department of Education, Deputy Superintendent
- Paul Toner, Massachusetts Teacher's Association, President
- Dr. Cathy Whitehouse, The Intergenerational School, Founder, Principal and Chief-Educator
- Moderator: Mark Real, President, KidsOhio

Their perspective will enrich the work of 1,200 front-line practitioners in a major Race to the Top state.

The panel is to begin at 1:15 p.m. and last 60 minutes, followed by 30 minutes of Q&A. In addition, many of the panelists will participate in a follow-up workshop.

Ohio's RttT conference program is available on RttT's webpage! (www.rttt.education.ohio.gov).

RttT Data Tools Analysis Survey

As a component of Ohio's Race to the Top objectives the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is working to ensure that quality data is available to monitor student progress and inform decisions and policy development. ODE is currently in the process of evaluating our existing Data Tools Catalog with the goal of simplifying access to these tools through implementing user-group specific "web portals" as well as an identity management solution which will reduce the number of individual user accounts required to access the full catalog of data tools.

To assist in this evaluation ODE has developed a survey which will allow end-users of the data tools to provide their input. The survey is designed to capture data on the usefulness of the data tools as they relate to various user groups.

ODE is asking for volunteers to please complete the survey by the end of the day on Friday, November 4, 2011. The entire survey is web-based and should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. If you so desire, you can also sign up to participate in future focus groups related to this effort. All responses provided will be kept confidential.

To access the survey please click the link below:

<http://survey.education.ohio.gov/se.ashx?s=60DA727075F282B2>

Should you have any questions regarding this initiative, please contact us via email at: DataToolsAnalysis@ode.state.oh.us.

Thank you for your valuable contribution in this important initiative.

Advanced Placement Network Launched with Grants to Ohio Schools

This week, the Ohio Department of Education announced that more than \$400,000 in Race to the Top (RttT) funds will be used to create the Advanced Placement (AP) Network. Ohio Schools were awarded a grant to participate in the network, committed to building, enhancing and expanding AP classes to prepare 21st century leaders.

These grants will allow schools to offer increased access to AP classes to more students. It also will allow AP teachers to receive the professional development they need to build a framework for success for the AP program.

The Ohio Schools awarded an AP Network Grant include:

School Building	County
Allen East High School	Allen
Antwerp High School	Paulding
Bethel High School	Miami
Bettsville High School	Seneca
Canfield High School	Mahoning
Cardington Lincoln High School	Morrow
Columbus International High School	Franklin
Dixie High School	Montgomery
Dunbar High School	Montgomery
FCI Academy	Franklin
Harrison Central Jr./Sr. High School	Harrison
Ledgemont High School	Geauga
Meadowdale High School	Montgomery
Mississinawa High School	Darke
Northeastern High School	Clark
Russia High School	Shelby
Shelby High School	Richland
Struthers High School	Mahoning
Unioto High School	Ross
Utica High School	Licking
Wayne Trace Jr./Sr. High School	Paulding

Schools were chosen through a competitive application process that required applicants to show their vision of building an AP culture. We know AP schools that thrive are those that have a culture of high expectations and a demand in rigor that includes AP and beyond.

Each school will receive \$10,000 in the first two years of its three-year commitment. Each network school will receive two four-hour professional development sessions and will attend a free half-day workshop focusing on curriculum. They also have the option to receive funding support for expansion of virtual learning options to reach underserved groups of students, as well as priority registration for a summer AP training for teachers. This grant is intended to increase numbers in underrepresented areas, such as rural and urban.

RttT Workshops, Webinars and Trainings

Year 2 Webinar Series – Presented by Battelle for Kids and Ohio RttT

November 16, 2011— *Matrix of Achievement and Progress (MAAP): What is this tool? Where do I access it? How can I use it for school improvement?*

A new interactive tool has been introduced for all Ohio educators to quickly help you determine the relative strengths that exist across the district by schools, grades and subjects where Ohio value-added information is available. This tool allows users to: view progress and achievement data in the same report; interact with reports—toggle to district-, building-, grade- or subject-level views; rollover data points to get additional information; and display multiple years of data to depict change over time. Learn how this user-friendly tool can help you to communicate and share valuable information with your staff, colleagues, and even your community.

January 18, 2012— *Getting Ready for Teacher-level VA Reports: What every administrator needs to know*

An additional 30% of reading and math teachers in grades 4-8 are expected to receive value-added reports in September, 2012. This webinar is designed to help administrators become better informed about what the process for creating reports entails and what you and your staff should understand about teacher-level value-added reporting.

April 18, 2012— *The Genie is out of the Bottle: Important considerations and suggestions for building leaders about how best to leverage teacher-level value-added reports*

Teacher-level value-added reporting introduces a new dimension to our understanding of teacher quality. These reports provide valuable information that, if handled well, can be used strategically to advance your school improvement efforts. Of equal importance is that the delivery of such reports is sure to have an impact on various aspects of your school's culture. Join this webinar to increase your awareness about wise uses for these reports.

Don't Forget: Year 1 Value-Added Webinars Available Online

The four (4) value-added webinars that were offered in June 2011 by Battelle for Kids are available online. Webinar topics include:

- ▶ Webinar 1: Value-Added: Then, Now and in the Future
- ▶ Webinar 2: Link Before You Leap
- ▶ Webinar 3: Building Capacity Using Value-Added in School Improvement
- ▶ Webinar 4: Implications of Teacher-Level Value-Added Data

These webinars can be accessed through this link: http://portal.battelleforkids.org/Ohio/Projects/Ohio_Race_to_the_Top/ohio_Race_to_the_Top_webinars.html?sflang=en



A Sample of Ohio's Transformation Efforts

Five of our RttT Regional Coordinators wanted to share a sample of Ohio's LEA transformation efforts to implement 21st century reforms across the state.

Urban Ohio

Akron Public Schools — Pushing Forward With Application Area B Standards and Assessments



RttT Urban Regional Coordinator
Clairie Huff-Franklin

Akron Public Schools has accelerated the design and implementation of professional development courses in the Instructional Framework. The "IF" is an articulation of high quality standards-based teaching and learning developed in order to establish a common language and common understanding within their district. The goal is to offer high quality professional development using a hybrid model of face-to-face and online PD. Courses have been developed by teachers and administrators, in partnership with the University of Akron. During the first semester, APS has 600 staff actively engaged in IF course modules in Unit and Lesson Design. There are 23 cohorts of teachers and administrators from 15 schools participating in 18-21 hours of professional development. They are creating a culture of examining and enhancing their professional practice around implementing new standards and assessments. The cohorts meet with colleagues in sessions facilitated by district instructional coaches and teachers. The facilitators work with cohorts of 15-20 staff, engaging them in small group, pair and share, individual and whole group activities to introduce and experience design elements. Online 'field trips' provide teachers the opportunity to embed understandings into their professional practice and reflect on the academic impact. Online discussion board postings engage the participants in ongoing conversation as they implement design elements with their students. At the conclusion of the courses, each participant will be proficient in designing and implementing standards-based units or lessons.



A second round of district cohorts will be added during the second semester. They are gaining traction and building capacity to support shared beliefs and practices as their schools and individuals improve their practice.

APS is continuing to move forward to expand district professional development opportunities. In Fall, 2011, they established new teacher/administrator teams to develop our next two courses: **DIFFERENTIATION and CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**. Their target roll out of these courses is Spring, 2012.

APS will also be presenters at the 1st Annual RttT Convention on November 1. A team of APS staff will share the journey of the development the APS Instructional Framework. For more information on the above APS initiatives, please contact Peggy Greiner, Office of School Improvement, at pgreiner@akron.k12.oh.us.

Cleveland at the November 1st RttT Conference

The Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) Program targets low achieving minority males in eighth grade who exhibited the early warning signs that lead to dropping out of high school. These included students who had failed two or more core subjects, were absent 36 or more days (20%), were over age for their current grade level and/or were suspended five or more days from school. The program works in collaboration with parents, school administrators, principals, teachers and the community. Mentors, called Linkage Coordinators, are employed by the district to build relationships with students and monitor their academic, social and emotional needs. Academic tutoring and credit recovery are afforded to these young men in an effort to help them pass all five parts of the Ohio Graduation Test, thus positioning them to graduate from high school. Exposure trips, motivational speakers and intensive individual as well as group counseling sessions help their young men to overcome the non-academic barriers that often impede their achievement. In 2005, CMSD graduated 688 African American Male Graduates, while in 2011 they graduated over 900. The graduation rate for black students grew from 60.3% in 2009 to 75.1% in 2010. This school year, the CTAG Program has placed a heightened programmatic focus on the Hispanic male. The district is addressing the abysmal graduation rate of its Hispanic students (30.2%) by starting with a focus on the Hispanic male through the CTAG Program. January 26, 2012, CMSD will host a Hispanic/Latino Symposium for students, staff and community members. The symposium will be highlighted by Dr. Pedro Noguera, a leading educational expert in the area of closing achievement gaps. The November 1st Race to the Top presentation by

continued on p. 6

CMSD will be very interactive, including visuals that highlight actual stories of success. Don't miss this session that will be delivered by Race to the Top Co-Leads, Renee Cavor, Chief Strategic Implementation Officer and David Buttram, Art Teacher at Glenville. Contact Renee Cavor at Renee.T.Cavor@cmsdnet.net for more information.

Cincinnati Public Principal Development Academy is Underway

Cincinnati Public Schools has created a Principal Development Academy to help assistant principals to become better prepared leaders, under the leadership of Eric Thomas, Director of the Office of Innovation. They are not only working with Cincinnati administrators but have also extended themselves to other districts. In their first cohort, a total of four districts are represented from: Mt. Healthy, Springfield, Dayton, and Cincinnati. The Academy has included a mixture of online work as well as face to face sessions. On October 23, the second face to face session involved having participants give a presentation in which they had to use data and researched-based practices to explain how they would turnaround a failing school to which they were newly assigned. They invited Judith Monseur, ODE Associate Director of the Department of Teaching Professions, who helped Cincinnati create the vision for the program, and they also invited the mentoring principals and superintendents of the participants, and included members of their Application Area D, Great Leaders and Teachers Team, to see how the work of the written Scope of Work (SOW) is coming into fruition. Cincinnati is working in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati, Ohio Department of Education and other entities in the nine month training program which began in September. For more information, please contact Eric Thomas, Director of Innovations at thomaer@cpsboe.k12.oh.us.

Central Ohio

Central Region – News and View

On Monday Oct. 10 and Tuesday Oct. 11, the *Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow* (ECOT) held a two day professional development event held at the Columbus Convention Center.

Mark Yoho, Central Region Specialist, participated in one of the later planning sessions. The plans were presented at their Transformation Team meeting in September. Although



RttT Central Regional Coordinator
Scott Spears

many ECOT staff members were involved in the planning and implementation of the day, Kristen Kask, Sue Bradley, and Mary Ann Latimer deserve a special shout-out for the work they put forward towards this event. Mark attended the PD event on the 11th and reports that there were probably 20-30 different breakout sessions offered each day ranging from advanced computer programming courses to intervention strategies for struggling students.

Mark asserts, “ECOT really set the bar high for what high quality professional development can look like. The ECOT folks targeted different individual needs, while allowing time for groups of teachers to get together and assimilate much of what they just learned and coordinate their efforts towards providing better instruction for their students in a multitude of ways.” Collaboration, distributed leadership, and high quality professional development support the work of great teachers and leaders – and are completely in line with the goals of Race to the Top.

It is efforts like their professional development that have led to ECOT to meet Value Added in both Math and Reading in the 2010-2011 school year. ECOT has an enrollment of over 10,000 and whose student and staff work is delivered virtually. In the face of this organizational challenge, ECOT clearly understands that the quality of teaching and learning drives student achievement- whatever the setting or delivery model.

Congratulations to the Kristen, Sue, Mary Ann and the rest of the ECOT Transformation Team!

Southwest Ohio

Using Student Aspirations to Increase Student Achievement



RttT Southwest Regional Coordinator
Jeff Royalty

Debbie Baker, Northmont City's Director of Curriculum Instruction and Technology, states, “Our district is known for academic excellence that includes a rigorous curriculum and exceptional extra-curricular and co-curricular programs; however, the increasing focus on standards-based education, along with the ever-increasing emphasis on testing and accountability, has forced the district to make certain it did not lose sight of educating all children and the whole child.” Therefore, centered in Northmont's Race to the Top Scope of Work is the implementation of Ohio's newly revised academic standards. This work though is most importantly accompanied by our district's pilot participation in the *My Voice* Project.

The movement to the common core standards in reading and math and revised Ohio standards in science and social studies are primary goals for the Northmont District. The Montgomery County Educational Service Center has been a good resource for districts in our region. Drawing from regional experts, the Montgomery County ESC has provided several workshops regarding the Common Core State Standards plus analyzing and using both achievement and value-added data. Members of the Northmont Transformation Team, administration, and curriculum staff have attended these workshops.

Our work though with the Quaglia Institute has taught us how academic progress can be leveraged for all students and twenty-first century skills developed. Northmont was selected as one of six Ohio demonstration sites for the My Voice Project. This project, funded by the Pearson Foundation, incorporates the research of Russell Quaglia and identifies the three principles of self-worth, active engagement, and purpose plus eight conditions that are influential in the development of students' aspirations. These eight conditions are:

- A sense of belonging
- Heroes
- Sense of accomplishment
- Fun and excitement
- Curiosity and creativity
- A spirit of adventure
- Leadership and responsibility
- Confidence to take action

Last spring, Northmont elementary, middle, and high school students participated in a survey to identify how they related to these eight conditions. Staff building teams were then created to examine the data from the surveys and goals were established for this year.

Dr. Michael Corso, from the Quaglia Institute, was the keynote speaker of the opening day general staff meeting. He reviewed the eight conditions with all staff and returned to Northmont on October 6 and 7 to meet with building level teams and high school and middle school students. During the fast-paced student assemblies, students were actively engaged in learning about their My Voice data. Student input was sought as to how staff and students could work together better. Students were also asked to volunteer to be on the school's Student Aspirations Team. December visits will include more training for building level teams and a focus on training student teams to deliver an interactive session to the staff members at their schools.

In many ways, the My Voice project has reaffirmed what educators have always known - students need to be connected to what they are learning in school. The research is very clear about the value of involving students in the decision making process if we are to help them become prepared for college, work, and life. By looking at student aspirations and the connections with the eight conditions, Northmont now has a

framework that links to both academic and personal growth.

For further information contact Ms. Debbie Baker at dbaker@northmontschools.com

RttT Southwest Regional Coordinator Jeff Royalty

Southeast Ohio

Green Local School District in Scioto County



RttT Southeast Regional Coordinator Ivan Wilson

The Green Local School District in Scioto County made tremendous gains during the 2010-2011 school year. This was a direct result of using the Ohio Improvement Process and working with Race to the Top. Although the district faces many difficult obstacles, Green received an EXCELLENT rating for the first time ever, from the Ohio Department of Education for the improvements in student achievement. Over the course of the year, staff at the South Central Educational Service Center worked with the Green district leadership team to guide the OIP process. The leadership team had to merge Race to the Top goals with the OIP and align other district programs such as High Schools That Work so that one unified plan could focus improving student achievement. The group met eight times over the course of the year to set the course for the Green District.

Because of the staff leadership exhibited on the DLT, teachers' district-wide, began using data to guide their instruction. An intervention program was established at the elementary and high school buildings. This has really individualized instruction and promoted strengths while targeting areas of need. The Response to Intervention program helped the staff to rethink their teaching strategies.

In the district, communication approaches have expanded as well. Students understand what they are supposed to be learning and can keep track of their success through the online program, Progress Book. The students are also taking benchmark assessments that provide instant feedback. This provides both the student and the teacher the knowledge of what areas need attention. As the year progresses, the students can see their improvements with the quarterly benchmarking and the use of formative instruction.

Jodi Armstrong, elementary building principal has commented that "the school improvement process is long and grueling. The data is in your face and at times difficult to accept. But the results make our school a better place for both the students and the staff."

Northwest Ohio

North Central Academy (NCA)

North Central Academy (NCA) first opened its doors in the fall of 2009 as a start-up community school focusing on students in grades 6-12 that found it difficult to attend a traditional public school setting or just needed an alternative learning setting to find success. NCA is an alternative educational option that allows students to have individually structured learning plans to promote educational and personal success while successfully meeting all of the state graduation requirements. Individual learning plans are developed with the needs of the individual student in mind using a combination of direct instruction, online and project-based curriculum.

During the 2009-2010 start-up school year, approximately 85 students attended NCA with locations in both Tiffin and Fremont. By 2010-2011, enrollment had increased to approximately 110 students with a waiting list at both locations due to lack of classroom space. For the 2011-2012 school year, the North Central Academy moved its physical location to a new facility located in Tiffin. The new location affords the students additional options such as better science labs, a screen printing facility to learn about creating and running a business, a video production and editing area, and enough green space and gym facilities to allow for increased physical activity. The facility has allowed for increased capacity for growth, with enrollment now over 150 students and the ability to reach over 225 students in the future.

As the 2010-2011 school year evolved, NCA became involved with the Race to the Top. RttT has afforded NCA additional opportunities for professional development and the ability to utilize a curriculum consultant from North Central Ohio Educational Service Center. OGT results have improved from year one to year two of existence with nearly a 20% increase for overall OGT passage rate. The staff takes great pride in the successes of students as many of the incoming students were behind in credits, academic achievement and had not found academic success prior to enrolling at NCA. While NCA celebrates and recognizes the successes, there is the realization that the staff cannot be satisfied until 100% success rate has been reached for all students. NCA continues to focus on the Scope of Work that has been developed with the RttT and to utilize the professional development and academic strategies that RttT has to offer.



RttT
Northwest
Regional
Coordinator
**Laura
Keller**

Northeast Ohio

Under Construction in the NORTHEAST

As I drive all over the Northeast meeting with leaders, teachers and community members I find myself amongst many barrels and orange flags. These orange flags and barrel's remind me of the work that is being accomplished with RttT funds, at each LEA. Barrels and orange flags, do not always mean a "New Road" is being constructed. It could mean there are renovation's occurring to an old structure. I find this to be similar to the work our LEAs are doing at their Transformational Team level. The RttT grant has given our LEAs a structure to continue the work that they have already started and/or a new face to an organizational model that wasn't going to be efficient enough for the 21st Century. The following schools are an example of some of the work that is occurring through-out the Northeast.

Coventry Local Schools

Having created Curriculum Maps aligned to the new standards in 2010-2011, Coventry Local's new full day Kindergarten classes are in full swing this school year using the new standards. As they move through the year, teachers are creating short-cycle assessments for implementation next year. Grade 1 & 2 are a logical step behind, creating their Curriculum Guides this school year in preparation for next year's class of students who have benefited from a full year of instruction under the new, more rigorous standards. Let's not forget the High School where targeted work this year will begin within the English department to explore existing instructional practices as they get ready to create curriculum guides across content areas. Grades 3-8 continue to meet quarterly throughout the year to analyze the results of short cycle assessments and examine the validity of such tools, updating where needed! It won't be long before Grades 3-8 are ready to revise their curriculum maps and short cycle assessments to match the higher levels of rigor in the new standards!

Barberton City Schools

Barberton teachers are gathering valuable information on implementation of best practices through walk-throughs. All teachers have committed to completing two walk-throughs each semester, using a common data gathering tool. Data from a common template is compiled and shared through multiple decision-making teams including the District Leadership Team, building leadership teams as well as teacher level teams! Such non-evaluative information helps guide professional development planning!



RttT
Northeast
Regional
Coordinator
**Maggie
Niedzwiecki**

Keystone Local Schools

Keystone Local Teachers at all grade levels are deeply engaged in work around creating and implementing “Clear Learning Targets” in their classrooms. Much like a GPS system, this effective instructional strategy serves to engage students in more effectively reaching their own learning destinations!

Parma

Parma is exploring the implementation PAR-peer assistance review to help improve instruction for teachers working in their district.

Ledgemont

Ledgemont teachers and administrators are enhancing their understanding of formative assessments as well as working toward their Application Area C commitments by having several teachers attend FAST training and building capacity within the organization.

Canfield

Canfield has decided that they want a voice and a seat at the table when it comes to teacher evaluation. Canfield's team has decided to research and organize their work this year to transform their old teacher evaluation model and to build their own evaluation model. Taking on this challenge at each LEA is important because you may need to build capacity for understanding these changes and develop goals around how best to roll out these changes. This work is unique to each LEA.

So, if you are reconstructing an old model or building a new structure for the future needs of our students, please consider the end goal. The goal of RttT is to “Accelerate achievement and progress for all students”. In order to know what road you should take, it is important to analyze your data. Build a plan that reflects the needs of your LEA. Ultimately, through all of our tough conversations, your student's achievement and progress needs, have to be your number one priority within your “construction plan”.



Professional Development Announcements

Race to the Top Professional Development Calendar

RttT PD Calendar - 2011-2012 is available on line at rttt.education.ohio.gov

Targeted Professional Development Revised Standards and Model Curricula

A number of workshops have been scheduled to help Ohio Educators understand Ohio's revised standards and model curriculum in the areas of: English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Focus 1: Standards & Model Curriculum: October – December 2011

Focus 2: Curriculum Revision: January – May 2012

Educators should plan to take one workshop session in each of the subject areas they teach during October – December and January – May. (Example – an elementary teacher who teaches all four subjects will take four workshops during Focus 1 and four workshops during Focus 2. A high school teacher will take one workshop during Focus 1 and one during Focus 2).

Facilitators for the meetings have been trained by content specialists at ODE. Contact hours will be awarded for attendance.

Registration information:

Please register for workshops in your area through STARS under Targeted Professional Development.

Participants should download training materials from the ODE website by searching keywords: Academic Content Standards, then choosing the content area from the left menu. From the content area page, select Targeted Professional Development Materials.

For more information about registering, contact lisa.simpson@ode.state.oh.us



RttT SOAR LEAs: Communication Tips on Teacher-Level Value-Added Reports

With teacher-level value-added reports being provided in grades 4-8, reading and math, through Race to the Top this school year, school leaders may begin to receive more media calls. The media may be interested in knowing what your teachers' value-added reports revealed. As a SOAR district, you are ahead of the curve as many of you have been using teacher-level value-added reports for a number of years to help inform your school improvement efforts.

Following are some suggested talking points to consider should you receive a media call on the topic of teacher-level value-added reports.

The Intro:

- We're excited to be one of the original 30 percent of Ohio school districts to participate in the Race to the Top 4-8 grade teacher-level reports. Our work will help Ohio move to a new evaluation system for principals and teachers. This adds one more tool to our school improvement process efforts. We expect that these reports will be one important component for measuring teacher effectiveness.

The Basics:

- Value-added analysis is a statistical method that helps educators measure the impact schools and educators make on students' academic growth rates from year to year. For teachers, value-added measures what you do with who you get, not just who you get.

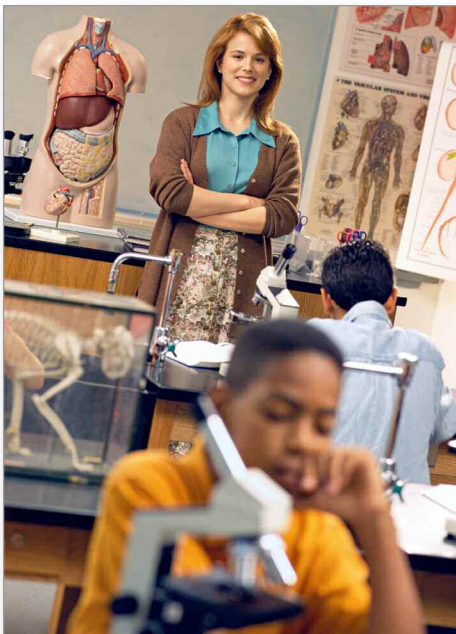
- Through value-added analysis, we can identify the progress made by individual students and the extent to which individual teachers, schools, and districts have contributed to that progress.
- A team of educators may discover that, for example, the current sixth grade math program works well for students who are at or above grade level but not well with students who are below proficiency.

The Cautions:

- As no single measure tells "the whole story," value-added data should be used in combination with other data sources to make decisions about teacher effectiveness.
- As Ohio moves to a new evaluation system for principals and teachers, we believe that having a three year rolling average, included with other measures of teacher effectiveness, will provide school leaders with the information they can use to improve their schools.

The Future:

- The new system of "value-added analysis" is part of the state's Race to the Top school improvement drive and will eventually expand statewide and will become part of the new teacher evaluation system. In 2012-13, teacher-level reports will be available statewide. House Bill 153 requires the implementation of teacher-level value-added by 2013-14 as a measure of student growth for the teacher evaluation system.



ODE Technology Projects at the RttT Conference

- Stop by Booth #37/38 for an update on the various projects underway at ODE include information regarding the Instructional Improvement System (IIS), Electronic Transcript, Student Record Exchange and the Statewide Student Enrollment and Cross Reference. Several handouts will be available along with ODE personnel to answer questions.
- Attend either the 9:30am or 2pm session in Room C212 to learn more regarding the State's Instructional Improvement System (IIS). Race to the Top (RttT) Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have committed to the active use of a qualifying IIS in the classroom, and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has committed to making a qualifying system available to LEAs interested in utilizing a State IIS.