



**Education**



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## **Race to the Top: Summary of Year 1 Ohio Report and Implications for Hispanic Students**

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education Awarded Ohio with a Race to the Top grant, with the purpose of creating a competitive 4 year grant program designed to create education innovation and reform in order to meet the following goals:

- Increase high school graduation rates by .5% per year to approximately 88% by the end of grant period;
- *Reduce the graduation gap by 50% between underrepresented and majority students participating in LEAs (Local Education Agency) and community schools (charter schools);*
- *Reduce academic performance gaps by 50% on national and statewide assessments for the same students;*
- Reduce the gap between Ohio and the nation's best-performing States by 50% on national reading and mathematics assessments; and
- *More than double the increase in college enrollment of students ages 19 and below to 14.5% by fall 2013, and more than double the increase in college persistence of enrolled students to 10.35% by the same period.*

This summary report consists of a brief and informative update on the status of the Race to the Top program in Ohio, with a specific focus on the implication of reported successes and challenges on Hispanic students. Consequently, OCHLA staff will focus on accomplishments, challenges, and year 2 plans as they relate to Hispanic students by continuing to monitor, report, and advise the process through the commission's inclusion in the Race to the Top Steering Team. The following information is taken from [Race to the Top Ohio Report Year 1: School Year 2010-2011](#) (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

### **Race to the Top Accomplishments with Hispanic students in Year 1: 2012-2011**

- A reduction in the English and Language Arts achievement gap between Hispanic and White students from **16.7% to 14.5%** (U.S. Department of Education, 8).
- Hispanics have reached a 71.9% overall proficiency rate in English and Language Arts (U.S. Department of Education, 8).
- A reduction in the Mathematics achievement gap between Hispanic and White students from **19.8% to 17.5%** (U.S. Department of Education, 9).
- Hispanic students have an increased, albeit low rate of overall proficiency in Mathematics of **64.7%** (U.S. Department of Education, 9).

### **Race to the Top Challenges for Hispanic students in Year 1: 2010-2011**

- While “Hispanic” achievement gaps were reduced, the Not Limited English to Limited English achievement gap in English and Language Arts increased in year 1, from **18.9% to 25.8%**. Assuming that a certain number of these students are Hispanic, it is of real concern moving forward (U.S. Department of Education, 8).
- Not Limited English to Limited English achievement gap in Mathematics increased from **18.6% to 23.6%** (U.S. Department of Education, 9).
- While more comprehensive and integrated systems are made easily accessible. There exists the possibility of barriers to understanding Hispanic student progress because of the traditional limitations that come with collecting demographic data on Hispanics. For example, many Hispanic students consider themselves to be White, Black, or may fall within other statistical categories.
- With the provision of innovation grant funds to Ohio schools, the question must be asked, how can lowest-performing schools, which may have a large number of Hispanics, compete with traditionally higher performing schools for competitive grants?
- The bureaucratic and general nature of the program will make it a challenge to implement specific, culturally competent practices for Hispanic students.

### **Looking Ahead: Year 2**

The year 1 progress report reflects the first year that Ohio received the grant, which was used primarily to establish partnerships, analyze and reorganize systems, agree on standards and assessments, and put the mechanisms in place to implement the program. Thus, there is not enough to assess the impact of the RttT program for Hispanic students. While there were some

successes as pointed above, they could have easily been the result of other initiatives or programs, since RttT is only beginning in its implementation stages. Additionally, the sharp increase in achievement gaps in English and Math for Limited English students suggests that OCHLA must play a vital role in advising the Steering Committee on ways to ensure that RttT meets its goals with regards to underrepresented students.

OCHLA will continue in its effort of monitoring the RttT effort, and will proceed by following up on how school districts with relatively high numbers of Hispanic students are performing with RttT initiatives. Barriers, challenges, and inadequacies will be noted and shared with the group and with the community, with the intention of creating the collaboration necessary to address such issues. To find out more about RttT and read more specifics on year 1, please see the official report, which can be accessed by visiting:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance/ohio-year-1.pdf>.