



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

March 29, 2010

Dear Governors:

Today I am delighted to announce the first Race to the Top grantees. Forty states and D.C. rose to the challenge, convened stakeholders, improved laws, embraced reforms, and developed proposals for reform. The schoolchildren in those states are already winners because of the bold ideas, courageous commitments, and considerable efforts our states have already made to compete in this historic program.

When we first announced the Race to the Top program, we said we would set a very high bar for success. We know that real and meaningful change in public education – the kind of effort that results in dramatically better outcomes for all of our students – comes from doing the hard work and setting the highest expectations. While we received many strong proposals from states all across America, two in particular stood out above all others: Delaware and Tennessee. They will each receive grants to fund their education reform agendas.

Every other state in America has an opportunity to apply for the next round of Race to the Top funding – and we urge you to do so. The good news is that there will be close to \$3.4 billion remaining in the Race to the Top fund. In addition, in order to fund as many strong applications as possible, we are requiring budgets for the next round to be within the ranges that were suggested in our original notice; we will not accept applications that exceed the top of the state's range. You can read about this change on the Race to the Top Web site.

The deadline to apply is June 1 and, to support you in developing your application, we are posting on the U.S. Department of Education Web site every state's application, comments and scores from peer reviewers, and videos of their presentations. We will also host a planning workshop on April 21 in Minneapolis. As part of that workshop, we've asked Delaware and Tennessee to present their proposals, discuss their plans and laws, talk about their approaches to building statewide collaboration, and answer your questions. We hope that representatives from your state will attend.

To the winners, I congratulate you. To others who applied, I salute you for your hard work, and I look forward to receiving even stronger proposals. To those who have not yet applied, I invite you to put your best foot forward. In our effort to compete for the jobs of the future and become the most educated country in the world, the Race to the Top continues today.

Sincerely,

/s/

Arne Duncan