

# Request for Letter of Support For The Arizona Race to the Top Phase II Application

Governor Jan Brewer is submitting an application for round two for the Race to the Top Fund. We are requesting a letter of support from you to be included in the application, indicating your willingness to support the application. We have enclosed the vision and goals for Arizona to help with the writing of your support letter.

## ***Framing of the Round 2 Application:***

### **Arizona Story**

- As Arizona approaches its centennial celebration, it is racing to retool itself for high performance in the next 100 years.
  - It is racing to build on five c's of citrus, copper, cattle, cotton, and climate to a new economy focused on the "abcde's" of aerospace, biotech, computer chips, development and (solar) energy
  - It is racing from a workforce strategy that imported talent to a new strategy of growing its own talent
  - STEM will be a major focus as it works to retool its education system to a focus on high performance
- It is also capitalizing on its strengths – its cultural diversity, its history of innovation, and its experience with what does – and doesn't – work

### **Vision and Theory of Action**

As Arizona approaches its centennial celebration, we deeply respect the courageous entrepreneurial spirit that built the first 100 years of our history and are determined to preserve that spirit as we boldly march forward to define our next 100 years. This future will rest on the success of our young people, and the success of our young people rests on the actions that we are taking now to transform our education system. The transformation of Arizona's education system will lead to a future where all Arizona students have the preparation to succeed in college, in careers, and in life. We are building on our innovative, entrepreneurial history of education reform, focusing on the one strategy we have learned is the most important to improving student learning – ensuring that all students benefit from effective instruction, year after year, in every grade, in every course, in every school, and in every area across the state. We are drawing on our courageous spirit to realize this strategy, aided by strong leadership and true partnerships among the State of Arizona, district and school leaders, teachers, the business community, communities, parents, and students.

### **Goal**

Arizona's educational goal:

- is to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their postsecondary education and career.

The State has selected several student performance indicators to measure the state's progress toward meeting its goal through the implementation of its Race to the Top reform plan, along with ambitious but achievable targets for student performance in these indicators by 2020. Due to Race to the Top, Arizona will be able to exceed many targets already selected, and expects that in 2014 it will be well on its way to meeting these higher targets.

**Scope of Work**

Arizona's Race to the Top application (Arizona Plan) addresses education reforms in four assurance areas:

- (1) standards and assessments,
- (2) data systems to support instruction,
- (3) great teachers and leaders, and
- (4) turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

The Arizona plan describes Arizona's goals within each of these areas and its policy and implementation strategies to meet these goals. Meeting these goals will require a strong partnership between the State and LEAs to plan, coordinate, and implement reforms.

I hope that you will agree to support this work. We intend to submit the application by the due date on May 28<sup>th</sup>, so we ask for your help as soon as possible. Please review the attached letter of support template, modify it to your liking, put it on your letterhead, sign and return it to Lydia Parma by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Please address letters to Governor Brewer (address block is below).

WestEd  
2020 N. Central Avenue, Suite 660  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

And by email: [lparma@wested.org](mailto:lparma@wested.org)

Thank you,



Paul H. Koehler, Ph.D.  
Director of the Policy Center at WestEd

**Please address support letters to:**

The Honorable Jan Brewer  
Governor of Arizona  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

**Arizona's Next 100 Years:  
A Plan to Transform Public Education  
to Ensure College and Career Readiness for All Students**

Arizona is poised to make fundamental changes to its public education system to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for the demands and opportunities of postsecondary education and careers.

These fundamental changes fall into two categories: policies to ensure effective instruction for all students and partnerships to ensure effective implementation of Arizona's reform plan.

Reform Area	Policies	Partnerships
Standards and Assessments	The State of Arizona will adopt the Common Core State Standards and implement common state assessments tied to college- and career-ready expectations.	In partnership with the State, regional support centers, and other partners, LEAs will participate in the state's rollout plan for the common standards, develop interim assessments, and provide professional development on the new standards and the development and use of formative assessments.
Data Systems to Support Instruction	The State of Arizona will build its statewide longitudinal data system and reporting capabilities to meet the America COMPETES Act elements.	In partnership with the State, regional support centers, and other partners, LEAs will adopt and implement local instructional improvement systems that provide educators with tools for improving instruction, curriculum, and interventions for students, including the Arizona Growth Model; provide professional development on the use of data to inform instruction; and make data available to researchers.
Great Teachers and Leaders	The State of Arizona will expand its Arizona Growth Model pilot statewide. The State of Arizona will develop a model framework teacher and leader evaluation system that includes 33-50% student growth or other student achievement data, at least four performance levels, and the involvement of teachers and leaders in the development of the framework. The State of Arizona will focus teacher and leader	In partnership with the State, regional support centers, and other partners, LEAs will adopt and use the Arizona growth model; use the State's model teacher and principal evaluation framework to develop, adopt, and implement a system that meets the State's criteria, including the participation of teachers and leaders in the development of the system, the use of at least four levels of performance, and the

	<p>recruitment, professional development, and compensation to ensure an equitable distribution of teacher and leaders. The State of Arizona will develop and publish a report card on teacher and leader preparation programs and expand the programs shown to graduate effective teachers and leaders.</p>	<p>incorporation of 33-50% student growth or other student achievement data; conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals; use evaluation results to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, full certification, and dismissal; develop and implement a plan to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools are not taught and led by ineffective teachers and leaders at higher rates than students in other schools; develop and implement a plan to ensure effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas; and provide quality professional development through school-based, job-embedded approaches, and where needed, provide common time within the school day for teachers and leaders focused on professional development; participate in research efforts to measure the effectiveness of professional development.</p>
<p>Supporting Struggling Schools</p>	<p>The State of Arizona will provide support and assistance to its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools.</p>	<p>LEAs will work in partnership with the State, regional support centers, and other partners to turn around the lowest-achieving schools through one of the four intervention models (transformation, turnaround, restart, or closure).</p>