

Race to the Top–District Updates

October 7, 2014

Board of Education Briefs

At Tuesday night's meeting, the Board received the Update on Year 1 Implementation of the grant. Lisa Metzinger, the District's Director of the Race to the Top, shared a number of highlights from the first year including:

- Project 1 - Literacy and the Common Core: Summer Professional Development in 2014 in Reading Apprenticeship (grades 6-12) and Math Studio (grades K-12, all sites) was attended by over 200 teachers and 90% of them rated the sessions highly. Additionally, over 200 teachers, coaches and administrators in grades K-12, representing every site met this summer to create common core aligned units in E/LA, math, science and social studies. Teams are continuing this work over the next few years.
- Project 4 - Technology and Personalization: We accelerated the Chromebook rollout so that all 6-12 students received Chromebooks this fall. Chromebooks carts are being shared in all 3-5 classrooms at a ratio of 2:1. Recently, the Nexus 7 device was selected for K-2 students. Bids are due by October 27, and we hope to have devices in classrooms by January 2015. Survey and focus group interviews of students, parents and staff indicate an increased use of technology to personalize learning and to collaborate.

The grant's External Evaluators have completed the most recent Quarterly Report, which is an analysis of the first year implementation of the grant. The report summarizes the work in each project, and summarizes data collected from parents, teachers, and students regarding our progress so far. The evaluators noted that they had never seen a district implement so much so quickly, and were impressed with the district's work to date.

The Board adopted a resolution in support of Measure JJ which extends the city's current 1/2 cent sales tax enhancement, generating millions of dollars of revenue thereby preserving essential services such as police, fire, paramedic, library, youth and senior services in the City of Union City.

The Board also adopted resolutions in support of September being recognized as "National Preparedness Month" and September 15 thru October 15, 2014, being recognized as "Hispanic Heritage Month".

May 21, 2014

The Board of Education on Tuesday night received an initial draft overview of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), a comprehensive planning tool for the District's Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D) grant. As one of only 16 nationwide RTTT-D winners announced in December 2012 by the U.S. Department of Education, New Haven Unified is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, to personalize student learning, improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare all students to succeed in college and careers.

The LCAP outlines the District's goals and specific actions to achieve those goals for all students and each subgroup of students identified, including students with disabilities. A process that meaningfully engages

parents, students and other stakeholders, including those representing identified subgroups, in an advisory capacity is essential to the development of the LCAP.

May 12, 2014 **Race to the Top Survey**

As one of only 16 nationwide winners in the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D) competition, New Haven Unified is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, to personalize student learning, improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare all students to succeed in college and careers.

As part of the implementation process, New Haven families from time to time are asked to complete a survey, so the District can learn how to better serve them. District RTTT Director Lisa Metzinger is asking all parents/guardians to complete a brief survey, either online or in person at their school site, one survey per child. Here are the links to the online surveys:

English: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1650072/NHUSD-Year-1-Follow-Up-Parent-Survey-2014>

Spanish: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1650094/Distrito-de-Escuelas-Unificadas-de-New-Haven-Primer-Año-Seguimiento-Encuesta-para-Padres-y-Apoderados-2014>

Tagalog: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1658063/New-Haven-Unified-School-District-Pagsisiyasat-para-sa-Magulang-at-Tagapag-alaga-2014>

The survey closes June 6.

March 12, 2014

The Board of Education on Tuesday night received a report from the external evaluation team that reviewed initial implementation of New Haven's Race to the Top-District (RTT-D) grant. The District, one of only 16 nationwide winners in the U.S. Department of Education's RTT-D competition, is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, to personalize student learning, improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare all students to succeed in college and careers.

The evaluation team told the Board that the District's summer professional development (teacher training and onsite coaching) is effective, but more time is needed for Common Core State Standards knowledge-building and deeper implementation. The team also told the Board that parents feel welcome but that there are distinctions between schools being served by the Union City Kids Zone and others.

Among other highlights, the team also noted:

- A pilot group of teachers and administrators is encouraged by its initial progress developing an evaluation process for the superintendent and teachers.
- The District is building capacity in its efforts to improve technology and personalize learning but must bridge an existing gap between skills and needs.
- There are emerging needs for assessments aligned with Common Core standards and for a common grading system across sites.
- A foundation has emerged for trust between stakeholders.

March 4, 2014

Chromebook Rollout Accelerated

All New Haven students receiving Chromebooks will have them by sometime next year, instead of in 2015-16, after the U.S. Department of Education approved the District's request to accelerate the rollout of the personal notebook computers being purchased as a result of New Haven's successful pursuit of a federal Race to the Top grant.

As one of only 16 nationwide winners in the RTTT-District competition, New Haven is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, to personalize student learning, improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare all students to succeed in college and careers. Part of the grant is being used to purchase Chromebooks; one for every middle-school and high-school student and one for every two students to share at the elementary schools.

The Chromebooks were to be rolled out over a three-year period, with approximately one-third of the total being distributed each year. After the first distribution was completed earlier this year, however, the District requested an amendment to the Scope of Work approved last October by the Department of Education, requesting that the remaining Chromebooks be distributed next year.

"We requested this because of concerns of inequity for students, based on feedback from teachers and principals," District RTTT-D Director Lisa Metzinger reports. "Teachers and students can look forward to receiving the student devices next fall."

A committee will be formed this spring to review device options for kindergarten, first- and second-grade students and make adoption recommendations prior to the end of the school year, Ms. Metzinger also reported. Another committee will meet during the same time period to make recommendations for devices for special education students.

The Department of Education also approved a District request to postpone implementation of a particular segment of professional development for teachers at Alvarado, Eastin, Emanuele, and Pioneer elementary schools until 2015-16. This request was made to better coordinate professional development (teacher training) activities, Ms. Metzinger explained.

March 3, 2014

Last October, our Scope of Work (SOW) was approved by the Department of Education. The SOW outlines our activities, deliverables and milestones over the grant period. Recently, we requested two amendments to the SOW in Project 1 and 4, based on input from the sites. The amendments were approved in February.

The amendment granted in Project 1 (Literacy and the Common Core) allows us to postpone implementing Stephanie Harvey's Comprehension at the Core professional development until 2015-2016 at Alvarado, Eastin, Emanuele, and Pioneer Elementary Schools. This request was made in order to better coordinate professional development activities at the school sites.

The amendment granted in Project 4 allows us to roll out all student technology devices next year, instead of rolling them out over the next two years. We requested this because of concerns of inequity for students, based on feedback from teachers and principals. Teachers and students can look forward to receiving the student devices next fall.

A committee will be formed this spring to review device options for K-2 and make adoption recommendations prior to the end of the school year. Another committee will meet during the same time period to make recommendations for devices for special education students.

February 10, 2014

This year, teachers at Emanuele, Hillview Crest and Searles Elementary have been implementing Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT). Implementing APTT is one of the activities in Project 2 of the RTT-D grant, meant to increase student achievement through parent involvement. Although this is a tremendous amount of work, teachers who have implemented it are seeing amazing results.

As part of the process, teachers hold three parent nights or afternoons throughout the year - in the fall, winter and spring. At those meetings, they share one or two foundational skills that are essential for students to master. For example, in the fall of kindergarten, all students need to know their letter sounds in order to become proficient readers. Then parents see a graph of how students in the class are progressing toward that goal. The students are numbered, so parents can see how their student did in relation to the class. Then the teacher models a game or activity that parents can use at home to teach the strategy, giving families all the materials they need. Parents then set a SMART goal for their student and spend the next several weeks working with their student to achieve the goal.

After the fall whole class meeting, teachers meet with parents individually in November during parent conferences to update progress. These conferences may be led by students in the upper grades. Then the families come together again in February as a whole group to see the progress on a graph and set new goals related to another foundational skill. These meetings are taking place now, and the results have been phenomenal. Parents and teachers alike are excited about the amount of growth they are seeing, and they are working together as a team to make it happen.

Janina Melgarejo-Carman, a kindergarten teacher at Searles says, "It did take hours to compile, but as a whole it is so worth it. The kids have been meeting grade level standards earlier than usual, which is amazing. It's only February, and I am in awe of their progress. I have had very positive feedback from parents, as well as myself, about the APTT. It's a really great step forward as far as the parent/teacher relationship."

In addition to the remarkable student growth, APTT meetings are increasing parent involvement and engagement in our schools. Attendance at the meetings has been higher than typical Back-to-School Nights, and many parents are arranging play dates to teach students the skills modeled in the meetings.

Jamila Williams, a parent in Andrea Nissan's class at Hillview Crest, stated, "Just like our first meeting, the second meeting was very productive and worthwhile. The presentation was comprehensive, easy to follow and fun. I am most appreciative of the time spent on the analysis, explaining the educational activities AND how she's able to engage the parents. I feel fortunate to be apart of this 'pilot' program, as I have seen my son's growth and enthusiasm to learn more! The resources provided are pretty phenomenal too."

Although this has been a lot of work for teachers and extra meetings for parents, the results have been worth it. We can't thank the teachers, coaches, parents, outreach coordinators and principals enough. Watch for APTT to begin at other sites over the next couple of years.

January 28, 2014

Some big changes are happening in the 9th grade Algebra 1 classes at Logan, thanks to the hard work and dedication of teachers and students. This amazing team of teachers is working to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed in Algebra. The changes they've made fall into three main areas: equitable practices and policies; implementing the Common Core and Math Studio; and collaboration. This work is part of Project 1 (Literacy and Common Core) and Project 5 (Grading and Assessment) in the RTTT-D grant.

The six teachers who teach 9th grade Algebra 1 and their math coach, George Oliviero, started by agreeing to three significant policy changes in grading, classroom management plan, and common formative assessments. They (also are striving) to use multiple entry points, multiple representations and error analysis as common practices. The focus is on giving every student an equitable opportunity to learn and show content mastery in the class, even if it means allowing students to make up assignments and retake tests as needed. The team has created common formative assessments, which allows teachers to determine which skills and concepts the students have mastered or need to work on, and then provide interventions as needed. (District equity consultant) Enid Lee has been consulting with the team to support them in developing and implementing these policies.

In addition to changes in policy, the teachers are rebuilding the Algebra 1 course based on the common core math standards. They are implementing their learning from Math Studio, infusing the Mathematical Habits of Mind and Habits of Interaction in their classrooms. This year teachers and students have had a particular focus on student discourse, as well as on functions and patterns.

Collaboration has been key in making all these changes. The master schedule was created to give them a common prep period, when the teachers can talk informally about their lessons, visit each other and discuss issues at length. The team has been meeting outside of school as well, often meeting after school, over dinner and on weekends to create units. They have been paid hourly for their work, but they have truly gone above and beyond.

The work by these teachers is extensive and difficult, but rewarding as well. The best news is that they are truly making a difference for students. There was a good improvement in the passing rate for students in the first quarter. At semester, the passing rate was about what it had been in the past. The Cohort is examining both its practices and student practices for future improvement, showing that with change it's often two steps forward and one step back.

Thanks to the Logan 9th Grade Algebra teachers for doing everything they can to make certain that all students succeed.

December 17, 2013

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS GET CHROMEBOOKS

Students at Alvarado and Cesar Chavez middle schools will receive their long-awaited Chromebooks this week at informational meetings for the students and their parents.

To make it as convenient as possible for families, there will be two meetings at each school, at 6 o'clock tonight (Tuesday) and Wednesday. Parents of students in those classes that are part of the initial rollout have been notified by school principals and invited to attend the informational meetings.

For New Haven students and their families, the Chromebooks are most obvious and exciting benefit of the federal Race to the Top grant won by the District last December. One of only 16 nationwide winners of the U.S. Department of Education's RTTT competition, New Haven is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, some of which is being used to purchase Chromebooks. The notebook computers will help meet the RTTT goals of personalizing student learning, improving student achievement and educator effectiveness, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students to succeed in college and careers.

As the Chromebooks are purchased and teachers are trained in their use, the notebooks will be rolled out over a period of three years. The initial rollout will impact roughly one-third of the District's approximately 12,500 students, with each school determining how its Chromebooks are distributed.

December 10, 2013

STUDENTS GET CHROMEBOOKS STARTING THIS WEEK

Several hundred New Haven students will receive their long-awaited Chromebooks this week at informational meetings for the students and their parents.

The first meeting, for students and parents at Decoto School for Independent Study, is at 6:30 p.m. tonight (Tuesday). Students and parents at James Logan High School can attend any of three meetings this week: at 6 p.m. Wednesday (Dec. 11) or 6 p.m. Thursday (Dec. 12) or 11 a.m. Saturday (Dec. 14).

Meetings for middle school students and their parents will be held next week. There will be two meetings at both Alvarado and Cesar Chavez middle schools, at 6 p.m. Tuesday (Dec. 17) and 6 p.m. Wednesday (Dec. 18).

The meetings will include “a session to learn about the purpose and guidelines for Chromebook use,” District Race to the Top Director Lisa Metzinger reports, along with “an overview of 21st century learning, information about Chromebooks, information about the intended use of the device (both inside and outside of the classroom), as well as information about purchasing insurance and low-cost Comcast internet.”

For New Haven students and their families, the Chromebooks are most obvious and exciting benefit of the federal Race to the Top grant won by the District last December. One of only 16 nationwide winners of the U.S. Department of Education’s RTTT competition, New Haven is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, some of which is being used to purchase Chromebooks. The notebooks will help meet the RTTT goals of personalizing student learning, improving student achievement and educator effectiveness, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students to succeed in college and careers.

As the Chromebooks are purchased and teachers are trained in their use, the notebooks will be rolled out over a period of three years. The initial rollout will impact roughly one-third of the District’s approximately 12,500 students, with each school determining how its Chromebooks are distributed.

December 3, 2013

CHROMEBOOK MEETINGS START NEXT WEEK

Parents of students receiving Chromebooks this year are urged to come with their students to informational meetings starting next week, before the notebook computers are distributed.

“During the meeting, they will be able to check out their Chromebooks after attending a session to learn about the purpose and guidelines for Chromebook use,” District Race to the Top Director Lisa Metzinger reports. “This session will include an overview of 21st century learning, information about Chromebooks, information about the intended use of the device (both inside and outside of the classroom), as well as information about purchasing insurance and low-cost Comcast internet.”

Multiple meetings are scheduled, to make attending as convenient as possible for parents. The schedule:

- James Logan High School: 6 p.m. Dec. 11; 6 p.m. Dec. 12; 11 a.m. Dec. 14.
- Cesar Chavez and Alvarado middle schools: 6 p.m. Dec 17; 6 p.m. Dec. 18.
- Decoto School for Independent Study: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 10.

For New Haven students and their families, the Chromebooks are most obvious and exciting benefit of the federal Race to the Top grant won by the District last December. One of only 16 nationwide winners of the U.S. Department of Education’s RTTT competition, New Haven is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, some of which is being used to purchase Chromebooks. The notebooks will help meet the RTTT goals of

personalizing student learning, improving student achievement and educator effectiveness, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students to succeed in college and careers.

As the Chromebooks are purchased and teachers are trained in their use, the notebooks will be rolled out over a period of three years. The initial rollout will impact roughly one-third of the District's approximately 12,500 students, with each school determining how its Chromebooks are distributed.

November 26, 2013

CHROMEBOOK MEETINGS

Parents of students who will be receiving Chromebooks this year are urged to come with their students to informational meetings being held in December, before the notebook computers are distributed.

"During the meeting, they will be able to check out their Chromebooks after attending a session to learn about the purpose and guidelines for Chromebook use," District Race to the Top Director Lisa Metzinger reports. "This session will include an overview of 21st century learning, information about Chromebooks, information about the intended use of the device (both inside and outside of the classroom), as well as information about purchasing insurance and low-cost Comcast internet."

Multiple meetings are scheduled, to make attending as convenient as possible for parents. The schedule:

- James Logan High School: 6 p.m. Dec. 11; 6 p.m. Dec. 12; 11 a.m. Dec. 14.
- Cesar Chavez and Alvarado middle schools: 6 p.m. Dec 17; 6 p.m. Dec. 18.
- Decoto School for Independent Study: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 10.

For New Haven students and their families, the Chromebooks are most obvious and exciting benefit of the federal Race to the Top grant won by the District last December. The District, one of only 16 nationwide winners of the U.S. Department of Education's RTTT competition, is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period some of which is being used to purchase Chromebooks to help meet the RTTT goals of personalizing student learning, improving student achievement and educator effectiveness, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students to succeed in college and careers.

As the Chromebooks are purchased and teachers are trained in their use, the notebooks will be rolled out over a period of three years. The initial rollout will impact roughly one-third of the District's approximately 12,500 students, with each school determining how its Chromebooks are distributed.

"I'd like to thank all of the members of the District's Technology Department for their hard work preparing for the rollout," Ms. Metzinger said. "A large initiative like this requires an unbelievable amount of detail work, and they've put in a lot of long hours to get us ready."

November 19, 2013

OUR CHROMEBOOKS ARE COMING! OUR CHROMEBOOKS ARE COMING!

Most New Haven students involved in the initial rollout of notebook computers will receive their Chromebooks before winter break, District Race to the Top Director Lisa Metzinger reports.

For New Haven students and their families, the Chromebooks are most obvious and exciting benefit of the federal RTTT grant won by the District last December. The District, one of only 16 nationwide winners of the U.S. Department of Education's RTTT competition, is receiving more than \$29 million over a 4½-year period, some of which is being used to purchase Chromebooks to help meet the RTTT goals of personalizing student learning, improving student achievement and educator effectiveness, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students to succeed in college and careers.

“We're excited to see Chromebooks being used in classrooms as another tool in implementing the Common Core State Standards and 21st century learning,” Ms. Metzinger said.

As the Chromebooks are purchased and teachers are trained in their use, the notebooks will be rolled out over a period of three years. The initial rollout will impact roughly one-third of the District's approximately 12,500 students, with each school determining how its Chromebooks are distributed.

“Teachers whose students will be receiving the Chromebooks attended three days of professional development over the summer, and will attend a fourth day of professional development Dec. 2,” Ms. Metzinger explained.

At James Logan High, Cesar Chavez and Alvarado middle schools and Decoto School for Independent Study, students receiving Chromebooks this year and their parents will be invited to attend a meeting at their site before the devices are distributed.

“During the meeting, they will be able to check out their Chromebooks after attending a session to learn about the purpose and guidelines for Chromebook use,” Ms. Metzinger said. “This session will include an overview of 21st century learning, information about Chromebooks, information about the intended use of the device (both inside and outside of the classroom), as well as information about purchasing insurance and low-cost Comcast internet.”

Multiple meetings are scheduled, to make attending as convenient as possible for parents. The schedule:

- Logan: 6 p.m. Dec. 11; 6 p.m. Dec. 12; 11 a.m. Dec. 14.
- CCMS and AMS: 6 p.m. Dec 17; 6 p.m. Dec. 18.
- Decoto: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 10.

Students at Conley-Caraballo High will have two carts with Chromebooks placed in two classrooms. The carts and Chromebooks will be used immediately in those classrooms. The Chromebooks will remain in the classrooms for use at school. At the elementary schools, each site will receive two Chromebook carts to be shared between two classrooms.

November 18, 2013

Before Winter Break, most students involved in the Year 1 Chromebook rollout will begin to receive their Chromebooks. This rollout will impact approximately 1/3 of the students in New Haven Unified.

At the K-5 level, each site will receive two Chromebook carts to be shared between two classrooms. Because of this, Chromebooks will not be sent home with elementary school students. Chromebooks are being delivered to the sites late this week. Elementary staff can check with their principals regarding the exact dates the Chromebook carts will be delivered to classrooms.

At Logan High School, Cesar Chavez Middle School, Alvarado Middle School and Decoto School for Independent Study, students receiving Chromebooks this year, and their parents, will be invited to attend a meeting at their site before the Chromebooks are given to students. During the meeting, they will be able to check out their Chromebooks after attending a session to learn about the purpose and guidelines for Chromebook use. This session will include an overview of 21st century learning, information about Chromebooks, information about the intended use of the device (both inside and outside of the classroom), as well as information about purchasing insurance and low-cost Comcast internet.

Students at Conley-Caraballo High School will have two carts with Chromebooks placed in two classrooms. The carts and Chromebooks will be used immediately in those classrooms. The Chromebooks will remain in the classrooms for use at school.

The parent meetings at Logan High School, Cesar Chavez Middle School, Alvarado Middle School and Decoto School for Independent Study are tentatively scheduled on these dates:

Teachers whose students will be receiving the Chromebooks attended three days of professional development over the summer, and will attend a fourth day of professional development on December 2.

We're excited to see Chromebooks being used in classrooms as another tool in implementing the Common Core State Standards and 21st century learning.

November 5, 2013

“We are excited to share that our Scope of Work (SOW) has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. The SOW is a complete picture of all of the projects, activities, and tasks that we will engage in to accomplish our district's plan and goals, and it is aligned with the grant application and budget. It basically distills our plan into a manageable, actionable format, identifying the activities and tasks for each project and the overall plan.

“The SOW describes, in detail, the actions we will be taking over the next four years of the grant period. It is organized into eight projects: literacy and common core state standards; community connections; teacher and principal evaluation; technology and personalization; grading and assessment; college and career; implementation and program evaluation; and leadership. Within each project there are several activities, and within each activity there are several tasks to be completed. Each activity has deliverables and milestones.

“The approved Scope of Work (SOW) is posted on the district web site under the Race to the Top section (<http://www.nhusd.k12.ca.us/node/1808>). You can find the scopes for each project by scrolling down to the attachments section of the page.

“A big thank you goes out to all the project leads, Suzan Lee-Young, Melvin Easley, and Lori Valdes for their tireless work on preparing and revising the Scope of Work”.

October 22, 2013

(The 2013-14 school year) is a year of transition as we begin implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the 21st century learning skills of critical thinking and collaboration. In order to achieve the goals of the CCSS, students must be able to think critically and collaborate with others.

"Critical thinkers":

- Collect, assess, interpret and analyze relevant information.
- Reason effectively.
- Construct arguments.
- Make sound judgments and decisions
- Identify, define and solve authentic problems and essential questions.
- Reflect critically on learning experiences, processes and solutions.

"In order for students to collaborate well with others, they must:

- Demonstrate the ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams.

- Use technology tools for collaboration.
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member.
- Work productively in teams for sustained periods of time to develop high-quality products

"These 21st century skills are embedded in Technology Integration, Reading Apprenticeship, Math Studio, Stephanie Harvey's Comprehension at the Core, STEM, Writing Workshop and Critical Literacy. We know that through collaboration with grade level/ department colleagues, our technology specialists and your literacy and math coaches, we will be able to transform teaching in New Haven so our students graduate college and career ready."

September 3, 2013

More than 600 New Haven educators participated in one or more professional development opportunities during the summer, thanks to the District's successful pursuit last year of a federal Race to the Top grant.

Staff members received extra instruction in math, literacy, technology, academic parent/teacher teams and coaching, RTTT Director Lisa Metzinger reports. "The focus of all professional development was to implement the Common Core State Standards while infusing 21st-century learning skills in the process," Ms. Metzinger noted. "Sessions incorporated elements of the Five Cs: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, cultural competence and communication."

June 11, 2013

"This week, our focus is student assessment, which is part of many RTTT-D projects, including Project 1, 3, 4 and 5. Below are updates on what's happening with NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association assessments, used to measure individual student progress,) our new data and assessment management system, and coaching (as it relates to student assessment).

"NWEA: Given that next year is the initial implementation of the CCSS, and that the professional development being provided aligns to the CCSS, we will be transitioning to the CCSS aligned version of the NWEA benchmark assessments for K-6+ (this includes grades 7-9) math and reading. Students will still be given individual growth goals and RIT scores (from a curriculum scale that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement), and the goal areas and DesCartes (a tool that displays learning statements that enhance a teacher's ability to provide targeted instruction) will be aligned to the CCSS. In order for students to have accurate growth targets, it was advised that we begin the year with the CCSS aligned version. Sites will still be able to project proficiency based on the CST (California Standards Test) due to the norming study that links the current California standards with the NWEA RIT scores.

"Data and Assessment Management System: Our district has been in need of a data and assessment management system since we lost Data Director. Included in the grant are provisions for a new system that will enable us to access assessment information; (both summative and formative); create formative and summative assessments connected to the common core from an item bank; and formulate "user-friendly" reports allowing teachers to use data to inform instruction. Vendors will be interviewed (this) week, and we will make a selection soon after that.

"Coaches: All sites will have literacy and math coaches in the fall. We have hired nearly all of them ... As part of their work, coaches will be working with teachers to help them use assessments to inform instruction.

Beginning in 2014-15, we will have assessment coaches as well, to further assist staff in using data to support student learning.

“Since summer break begins next week, this will be the last RTT-D Update for the 2013-14 year. Thank you for your thoughtful questions and suggestions in response to the updates.”

June 4, 2013

“The work of Project 7 is to ensure the implementation, evaluation and sustainability of the RTTT-D Grant. I am the leader of this project, (and) ... to help lead us in this work, we have formed a Guiding Coalition. The Guiding Coalition is a team of over 50 representatives from each of the RTTT-D projects (staff and community members) who will come together three times annually to:

- Serve as an advisory team to create a vision of our work in reform and transformation
- Learn about each other’s work and how our work connects
- Support and learn from each other as we implement our reform effort
- Spread the word and create excitement about the work
- Share/learn about data on our implementation, our progress, and our ideas and plans for next steps

“The Guiding Coalition met (last week) to learn about the work going on in each of the projects and to see the connections and interdependence amongst them. The Guiding Coalition will meet three times each year to spread the word about RTT-D activities at their sites and in the community.”

May 21, 2013

CHROMEBOOKS COMING FOR STUDENTS

After several months of “discussion and compromise,” the Samsung Chromebook has been selected as the technology device to be purchased for New Haven Unified students as part of the Race to the Top-District grant, District RTTT-D Director Lisa Metzinger reports.

“The device selected for grades 3-12 is the Samsung Chromebook,” Ms. Metzinger reports. “All teachers will receive an HP Chromebook by the start of next school year. Teachers who are part of the Year 1 Roll Out will receive the device as part of the Summer Professional Development. A decision about the K-2 devices will be made next year, once we see how well the Chromebooks work in grades 3-5, and if they would be able to work with our youngest students.

“The student device roll out will take place over the next three years,” Ms. Metzinger continued. “The Year 1 Roll Out includes all sites, as each school will receive a certain number of devices. The principals, with input from their site leadership team and school staff, will determine how the number of devices allocated to their site should best be rolled out. The selection of which teachers will be involved is based on specific criteria ... Once sites determine their plan for roll out, principals will assist teachers with enrolling in the summer professional development. The Teacher Selection Guiding Principles are:

- Teachers who are willing to collaborate with other teachers;
- Teachers willing to commit to Summer Professional Development;
- Teachers who are willing to coach/mentor other teachers;
- Teachers who are willing to let others learn from their experiences.

“We send out a big thank you to all members of the Technology Committee, who spent many hours on this work,” Ms. Metzinger concluded. “It was not an easy task, but they rose to the occasion to all of our benefit.”

April 23, 2013

“The Evaluation Task Force has been meeting regularly to develop a new teacher evaluation system that is based on teacher professional development and support, as well as student growth. The task force met right before Spring Break. They reviewed the scope of work and timeline required to complete the work, discussed best models and practices we currently use, such as Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP), and started looking outside the District at other models and practices that grow teaching and learning.

“Based on these discussions, the Task Force formed work groups to look at specific elements of the evaluation process in greater detail. The work groups have organized to do the following tasks:

Reviewing the current evaluation language, which is Article 4 in the New Haven Teachers Association (NHTA) contract;

- Researching teacher evaluation programs in other districts;
- Examining how BTSA may inform our work, which includes studying rubrics, the CSTP, observation processes and coaching models;
- Studying, surveying, evaluating and making recommendations from pilots taking place this year;
- Coordinating with other RTTT-D districts or coalitions engaged in this work;
- Identifying which student data are valid and reliable and how that data can best be used to inform and improve instruction;
- Studying the link between teacher evaluation and the Common Core State Standards.

“These work groups are meeting now and will continue to meet over the next several weeks. The work groups will share their work at upcoming Evaluation Task Force meetings, which will eventually lead to a draft of a new teacher evaluation system. The task force is also connecting its work to the work of other groups, such as the Grading and Assessment Task Force, who will be included in future meetings and/or discussions around evaluation.”

April 16, 2013

One of the initial requirements of the RTTT-D grant is to submit a Scope of Work (SOW) within the first 100 days of the grant period. The SOW is a complete picture of all of the projects, activities, and tasks that we will engage in to accomplish our district's plan and goals, and it is aligned with the grant application and budget. It basically distills our plan into a manageable, actionable format, identifying the activities and tasks for each project and the overall plan.

The SOW will serve as a management plan for our projects and help us to guide the overall grant management. It will support ongoing communications, progress updates and program reviews with our assigned Program Officer from the Department of Education. The SOW will assist us in sharing information and progress on our plan with others. It will also help identify areas where technical support and assistance may be needed. It will be the foundation for program reviews by the Department of Education.

On Monday, April 8, we submitted the first draft of our SOW to the Department of Education for approval. This is an iterative process that may take several weeks of back-and-forth discussions and revisions before the Scope of Work is approved. Once we receive approval, we will let you know and post the SOW on the web site.

*A big thank you goes out to all the project leads and (Senior Executive Assistant) **Lori Valdes** for their tireless work on preparing the Scope of Work. I look forward to sharing it with everyone soon.”*

March 26, 2013

The focus of Project 6 is to ensure that all students leave our system college- and career-ready. Today, we're highlighting three areas that RTT-D will be funding: the creation of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) academy at James Logan High, enhancing college and career support at Conley-Caraballo High, and expanding the Puente program.

Funding for a STEM Academy at Logan begins next year. RTTT-D funds will be used to hire a STEM coordinator and to provide planning time for the coordinator to work with teachers to develop curriculum and recruit students to be in the STEM Academy. Money is also allocated for staff to attend the STEM Summer Institute. In addition, there is funding for STEM materials, hardware, software and textbooks.

RTTT-D funds are already being used at Conley-Caraballo High to support college and career counseling. This winter, we were able to expand counseling services by .40 FTE (full-time equivalent), so that Conley-Caraballo has a full-time counselor. The additional counseling time allows for more college and career guidance and support for students. The next step is to purchase My Ten-Year Plan software, which will support college and career planning for Conley-Caraballo students, as well as purchase materials for the new career center. All of this is funded through RTTT-D.

Logan's successful Puente Program will also be expanded next year using RTTT-D funds. Funds are allocated to hire a .40 FTE Puente teacher, adding two more sections. There is also funding to hire a .60 FTE counselor to provide support to Puente students.

Project 6, which is being led by our Chief Academic Officer Arlando Smith funds many more college and career supports that we'll highlight in the weeks to come.

March 19, 2013

“Project 1 focuses on extensive professional development and follow-up coaching to support teachers in teaching and assessing literacy and math that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Scott Pizani, Director of Student Interventions, is the leader of this project.

“As part of our initial work on building awareness of the CCSS, principals and teachers have been conducting professional development with their staffs throughout the year to build common core awareness. These modules are based on professional development they received at the Alameda County Office of Education last spring. In addition to staff professional development, Scott Pizani, Director of Instruction Olivia Lynch, and Chief Academic Officer Arlando Smith have held several parent meetings to build common core awareness with parents and members of our community.

The RTT-D grant provides extensive funding to support ongoing professional development in literacy and math that is aligned to the common core and personalized learning. This will include professional development in Reader's Apprenticeship, K-6 Literacy, and the Math Studio Project. The professional development will begin this summer, and teachers will be paid the hourly rate to attend the training. More specifics about the summer professional development and the audiences for the training will be coming later this month. There will also be ongoing professional development and coaching in literacy and math throughout the school year, both of which are funded by the RTT-D grant.

“Additionally, a new collaboration is being developed between the Division of Teaching and Learning and the preschools that feed into New Haven Unified. This collaboration has been formed to build awareness of the kindergarten Common Core State Standards and the academic expectations for kindergarten students.

“There is much more work ahead for all of us as we begin our initial implementation of the common core. It's an exciting time of new learning for everyone. Thanks to all the teachers and administrators who have been working hard on this!”

March 12, 2013

“Project 5 is the continuation of the district’s ongoing efforts and process to restructure how grading and assessment take place, both in preparation for the implementation of Common Core State Standards, and as a result of our drive toward educational equity throughout our District. The grading and assessment task force has been meeting together for nearly two years, working to develop, test, analyze, improve, and implement a grading and assessment system based on our educational reforms and the CCSS. RTTT-D funds are now being used to support this work. The task force is a committee of K-12 teachers and administrators, and they met last week, discussing, learning and working on:

- Updating RTT-D grading and assessment time lines and deliverables
- Common core standards and assessments and Smarter Balanced Assessments
- Drafting a grading and assessment document
- Aligning and being responsive to connections to other parts of the RTT-D grant (technology, Evaluation Task Force, literacy, math, community, college and career)

“Leading the work is K-12 Director Dr. Olivia Lynch. We thank the grading and assessment task force for their work over the last two years, and look forward to a new vision for grading and assessment in New Haven.”

March 5, 2013

“Much of the work in the project is an extension of the work Nancy and her partners have been working on for a while. Two of the main focus areas for the work in Project 2 are parent and youth engagement and ramping up the work of Kids' Zone.

Parent and Youth Engagement:

To increase parent and youth engagement, we will start implementing Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) this fall at three sites. APTT is a research-based model of engaging parents in helping their children meet or exceed standards. Staff will be trained in implementing the model, which includes three team meetings a year with the classroom teacher and parents where they share aggregate and individual student performance data with parents; work together to set 60-day goals for each student based on the data; and model and practice learning activities for the home. There will be follow-up meetings with the parents to share formative data, evaluate progress and create an action plan for continued student improvement. Teachers will be compensated for the training time and for parent meetings scheduled outside the school day.

We will also build on the great work of the Puente Project and ICL to create a broader youth development program that is youth designed and led, and focuses on the hardest to engage students. We will identify and train youth and parent leaders to conduct quarterly community meetings or forums, creating a sense of community ownership for engagement in the schools. Finally we will provide various workshops for parents such as Family Literacy, Parent Project in Spanish, and technology training, just to name a few.

Ramp Up Kids' Zone Work:

The Union City Kids' Zone addresses development of children and their families in the Decoto Community, by partnering with multiple community organizations to create an accessible pipeline of services needed for "cradle

to career" success. The RTT-D Grant provides much needed funding to support the infrastructure of Kids' Zone, such as staffing for clerical support and for community liaisons to work with the Decoto neighborhood.

We will support and expand existing services by adding teacher hourly and instructional materials for the 21st Century Community Learning Center after school programs at Emanuele and Searles Elementary Schools and Cesar Chavez Middle School; increase school readiness support for pre-K services to children living in the Kids' Zone; and add mental health interns at Searles and Emanuele.

In addition, we will establish a satellite Sparkpoint Center in collaboration with the City of Fremont, Family Resource Center. This is a project developed by the United Way that provides financial coaching, goal setting and monitoring to low income adults and families. It also offers saving match programs.

We are excited about the Community Connections Project and all the support and services it will bring to the New Haven community”.

Feb. 26, 2013

This project, currently facilitated by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Arlando Smith, involves a committee of classified, certificated and administrative staff, community members, students and parents who have been working hard over the last several weeks. Their task is to review research based evidence of best practices and structural configurations to most effectively meet the technological needs of NHUSD. They have been learning about 21st century education and the skills students will need to be successful in this ever changing world. Specifically, the task force is charged with recommending a plan based on the requirements of the RTT-D Grant and the personalization requirement therein. The task force has six subcommittees:

- User Policy
- Product Review
- Professional Learning/Professional Development
- Personalization and Product Usage
- Online Forms and Blended Learning
- Infrastructure

These committees are working to identify specific outcomes for all students and staff concerning technology use; recommend a model or series of models to the superintendent that effectively address the needs of all staff and students in the district; recommend plans for implementation; recommend plans to engage and communicate to stakeholders any proposed changes; and recommend models based on research to address the needs of all students in the district.

Most recently, a subgroup from the committee visited New Tech High School in Napa, and another group will soon be visiting Apple to learn about successful practices in other schools and districts in order to incorporate those best practices into our plan.

Feb. 19, 2013

This project builds on the work started last spring by the Evaluation Task Force, a team of New Haven Teachers Association and administrative representatives from the elementary, middle and high schools. The Task Force will continue to meet this year and next, piloting models of evaluation, seeking input and feedback from staff on the models, analyzing the data, and implementing improvements. The Task Force's philosophy statement emphasizes that NHTA and the District “have a mutual interest in improving the teacher evaluation system to ensure that students and teachers in our school community are well served. Research supports a framework for practice that enhances teacher knowledge, skills and performance. The key goal of any teacher evaluation

system should be to grow and strengthen teaching and learning and must include evidence from multiple sources of teacher and student growth”.

The RTTT-D grant provides NHUSD with a unique opportunity to continue and expand the inquiry it has already started into frameworks for professional practice and will provide the funding support for collegial learning and implementation. Specifically, through The Evaluation Task Force (ETF) and other forums, the District and NHTA are actively engaged in studying the best practices for evaluation and in gathering information and input from our educational community for the purpose of making recommendations to the Bargaining Team and the Superintendent for eventual import of an evaluation redesign in 2014.

We are confident the collaboration between the District and NHTA will produce a teacher evaluation process that will be ratified by the NHTA and the District and also meet the assurances of the RTTT-D grant. The philosophy statement originates from the Evaluation Task Force, and is based in part on CTA's Guiding Principles for Evaluation and the Specific Assurance Form from the Race to the Top-District Grant. The grant assurances relating to teacher evaluation are as follows: Teacher evaluation system means a system that: (1) Is used for continual improvement of instruction (2) meaningfully differentiates performance using at least three performance levels; (3) uses multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including, as a significant factor, data on student growth for all students (including English learners and students with disabilities), as well as other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys); (4) evaluates teachers on a regular basis; (5) provides clear, timely and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies and guides professional development needs; and (6) is used to inform personnel decisions.

The tentative dates for the Evaluation Task Force meetings are Feb. 28, March 28, April 25 and May 23.

Nov. 27, 2012

District Named Finalist for “Race to the Top” Grant

New Haven Unified is one of 61 finalists announced Monday by the U.S. Department of Education in the Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D) competition. The finalists -- including only four from California -- were selected from 372 applications submitted by districts across the country vying for nearly \$400 million. RTTT-D grants are intended to support locally developed plans to personalize and deepen student learning, directly improve student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps and prepare every student for success in college and careers.

“These finalists are setting the curve for the rest of the country with innovative plans to drive education reform in the classroom,” U.S. Secretary of Education **Arne Duncan** said in a news release. “This competition was designed to support local efforts to close the achievement gap and transform the learning environment in a diverse set of districts, but no matter who wins, children across the country will benefit from the clear vision and track records of success demonstrated by these finalists.”

The Department expects to select 15 to 25 winning applications for four-year awards that will range from \$5 million to \$40 million, depending on the population of students served through the plan. New Haven’s application is for \$28 million. Awards will be announced no later than Dec. 31.