

Chiefs^{FOR} CHANGE

August 25, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

As a coalition of education leaders committed to visionary education reform that will increase student achievement and prepare students for success in colleges and careers, the Chiefs for Change supports the important reforms you have advanced through the Race to the Top initiative. Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to speak with us regarding Race to the Top. We are taking this opportunity to write to you to follow up on our conversation and to summarize the key points we discussed.

You initiated the Race to the Top competition in order to challenge states to set ambitious goals for schools and students, to rethink and revise many outmoded laws and regulations, and to forge new and important partnerships for transforming education. By insisting that states applying for Race to the Top grants set ambitious achievement goals, you ensured the U.S. Department of Education would award funds to support only those states with excellent, comprehensive proposals for implementing rigorous standards, strong accountability systems, and innovative reforms focused on educator excellence and school transformation.

As your Department works with states to implement Race to the Top, we support your commitment to holding Race to the Top winners accountable for implementing their plans as designed and as promised in their grant applications. We understand implementation plans and scopes of work may require adjustments, such as with the timelines; however, in the spirit of the Race to the Top competition, Race to the Top winners must be held accountable for improving the academic achievement of *all* students and for fully implementing their Race to the Top proposals.

Race to the Top is serving as an important catalyst for education reform in many states across the country, and the principles of Race to the Top can help inform the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff in furthering the education reform our country needs and our students deserve.

Sincerely,

Chiefs for Change