
Race to the Top Coalition

INVESTING IN OUR STATE'S CHILDREN



Statement on Final Passage of Education Reform

The Race to the Top Coalition applauds the diligence and hard work of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate in passing [groundbreaking education reform legislation](#) today. We especially appreciate the leadership of Senate President Therese Murray, Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo, Senate Ways & Means Chairman Steven Panagiotakos, House Ways & Means Chairman Charles Murphy, House Assistant Majority Leader Ronald Mariano, Education Committee Co-Chairs Senator Robert O'Leary and Representative Marty Walz, Senate Assistant Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, and House Second Assistant Minority Leader Bradford Hill.

This legislation will double the number of charter school seats and provide superintendents with new intervention powers in the Commonwealth's most underperforming districts, establish new Innovation Schools as proposed by Governor Deval Patrick and create new Horace Mann charter schools that districts may elect to establish with only school committee, superintendent, and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approval, as recommended by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino. These and other reforms will significantly strengthen the Commonwealth's schools, help to close the state's persistent achievement gap, and better enable Massachusetts to qualify for federal Race to the Top stimulus funds. The application for federal Race to the Top funds is due in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, January 19.

"We applaud conferees for refining key elements of House and Senate bills that provide superintendents with more tools with which to intervene in underperforming schools; that is the unfinished business of education reform in our state," said Paul S. Grogan, president of the Boston Foundation, the convener of the Race to the Top Coalition. "We also cheer the creation of more charter schools which are proven turnaround models and a streamlined approval process for expanded Horace Mann charters as an in-district alternative. In sum, these steps are revolutionary in nature and enable Massachusetts to write a whole new chapter of education reform. With these reforms in place, we feel that the Commonwealth will finally be able to close the persistent achievement gap that has left many of our disadvantaged urban youth unable to secure a place in our state's Knowledge Economy."

The Race the Top Coalition is a diverse statewide consortium of 15 business, civic, and community organizations from across the state who share the common goal of closing the state's persistent achievement gap through passage of education reform and helping the successfully compete for federal Race to the Top stimulus funds.