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Texas Will Not Apply For Race To The Top Phase 2 Funding

Source: [Governor of Texas](#) Posted on: 1st June 2010

Governor Rick Perry today announced that Texas will not apply for the second round of federal Race to the Top (RTTT) education funds.

Despite making tremendous education progress, Texas' application would be penalized by the U.S. Department of Education for refusing to commit to adopting national curriculum standards and tests or incurring related ongoing costs.

"This administration's attempt to bait states into adopting national standards is an effort to undermine states' authority to determine how their students are educated, and is clearly aimed at circumventing laws prohibiting national standards," Gov. Perry said. "Abandoning state standards and adopting new nationalized standards would cost Texas taxpayers \$3 billion, and would likely weaken the rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments already in place in our state."

Since Texas became one of the first states to forgo participating in the first round of RTTT, other states, teachers and education groups nationwide have questioned the U.S. Department of Education's motives and goals. For example, Virginia, originally enthusiastic about the program, recently announced it would not seek RTTT funding because its curriculum standards are far superior to the proposed national standards.

"It would not only cost Texas a great deal of money to abandon our state standards, which are the product of years of hard work by Texas educators and stakeholders, it would be bad policy," Texas Education Commissioner Robert Scott said.

Texas' curriculum standards, which determine what students are taught in Texas classrooms, are authorized by elected state legislators and set by the elected State Board of Education (SBOE). The SBOE recently adopted one of the nation's first college- and career-ready curriculum standards in core subjects after receiving widespread input from Texas education and business leaders.

As was the case with the first round of RTTT funding, the U.S. Department of Education is again trying to coerce states like Texas to abandon their own locally established curriculum standards in favor of adopting national standards spearheaded by organizations in Washington, D.C.

While Texas could be eligible for up to \$700 million in this round of RTTT funding, it would cost Texas taxpayers upwards of \$3 billion to realign our education system to conform to the U.S. Department of Education's uniform vision for public education.

Developing Texas' workforce is imperative to maintaining our position as a national leader in job creation and our future prosperity. Texas was recently praised in Education Week magazine for its adoption of college- and career-ready standards, and for holding schools accountable for ensuring students are college-ready.

Additionally, the governor recently announced a \$160 million initiative to expand the number and scope of Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (T-STEM) academies, an initiative he established in 2005, as well as fund STEM scholarships. Building on successful initiatives like T-STEM academies helps ensure future generations of Texans have the educational foundation necessary to compete and excel in the increasingly competitive global economy.

What Others Are Saying About Round Two Funding...

"Though additional funds for Texas schools would be welcome, the funds available are not worth the policy changes, including more emphasis on high-stakes testing, that a competitive application would require."

-Jeri Stone, Executive Director and General Counsel, Texas Classroom Teachers Association

"Nothing has really changed from Round One to Round Two of Race to the Top. The reporting requirements are still onerous and would dramatically increase the time a teacher spends reporting rather than teaching. Texas children and teachers do not need the increased federal control and the high-stakes national test that will follow Race to the Top. We continue to support Governor Perry in his refusal to sell our schools to Washington bureaucrats for a few one-time dollars."

-Gayle Fallon, President, Houston Federation of Teachers

"Texas has set the standard for the rest of the nation when it comes to education reform. We have spent years developing our own curriculum standards-standards developed by Texans, for Texans. Why would we change our education laws for \$75 per student? Why do bureaucrats in Washington think that they know better than we do on the best way to educate our children? Not applying for Race to the Top was a smart decision in January, and it remains a smart decision today."

-Rob Eissler, Chairman – Committee on Public Education, Texas House of Representatives

"We support Governor Perry's decision to keep Texas out of the federal Race to the Top program. Texas has been a national leader on curriculum standards and educational reform. Decisions about Texas schools should be made by Texans, not by bureaucrats in Washington. We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Perry to develop innovative educational strategies that will ensure Texas' future is bright."

-Bill Hammond, President and CEO, Texas Association of Business

"The governor is right to refuse to participate in the federal government's current push to take over our schools. While some states are chasing federal funds at any cost, Texans are realizing that a federal takeover of education would mean weaker standards; decreased student performance; and higher taxes."

-Michael Quinn Sullivan, President, Texans for Fiscal Responsibility

"As a former White House liaison for the U.S. Department of Education, I have seen firsthand how out-of-touch federal bureaucrats are with our schools. We at Americans for Prosperity support the decision for Texas to reject federal Race to the Top dollars. Texans should not be subject to national education standards or a national curriculum. Furthermore, tax dollars should not be used to bribe states to adopt federal mandates."

-Peggy Venable, Director, Americans for Prosperity-Texas

"Education is an issue that has been traditionally left to states and localities, and is best handled on that level. Race to the Top is just one example how Washington politicians and bureaucrats are taking over too many of the decisions that affect the most important aspects of people's lives. Centralized power in the federal government, especially in education, means less accountability, less innovation and most importantly, less individual liberty."

-Brooke Terry, Senior Education Policy Analyst, Texas Public Policy Foundation

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