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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: January 25, 2011
SUBJECT: Race to the Top Evaluation Plan

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to share information regarding how the Race to the Top program will be evaluated. There will be an external evaluation conducted by the United States Department of Education, but Maryland promised in its application that it would conduct an independent, internal evaluation as well.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Maryland's Race to the Top Application was delivered to the United States Department of Education on June 1, 2010. The application was the result of eight months of preparation. It was guided by a broad stakeholder group, the Executive Steering Committee. The application, budgets, and appendices are now posted on the MSDE website. There has been a great deal of activity since the announcement of the award. As we wait for further guidance on a variety of matters, we plan to engage the services of the University System of Maryland (USM) to begin planning for and conducting both a formative and summative evaluation of the grant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

MSDE will collaborate with the University System of Maryland (USM) in evaluating the Race to the Top grant. USM will evaluate Maryland's implementation of the grant, including the 54 projects in terms of Maryland's fidelity to those projects, the expenditure of funds, and the degree to which Maryland has reached its 15 more granular goals associated with those projects as well as its statewide ambitious goals.

USM is made up of 14 institutions, all of which will cooperate with this evaluation. The coordinating body will be the Center for Applications and Innovative Research in Education (CAIRE) at Towson University. CAIRE will provide Maryland with an overall program evaluation promised in our Race to



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the Top application. It will also deliver an embedded evaluation system with sustainable evaluation capacity that will be ready and able to continue tracking desired educational outcomes beyond Race to the Top. Collaborative Teams will be established to complete the evaluation.

CAIRE will review processes and products – the development and implementation of the systems, professional development efforts, and new products developed and delivered to educators. It will look at utilization – the use of materials by various stakeholders. Finally, it will examine impact – the relationship between Race to the Top strategies that are implemented and key educational outcomes including student achievement and measures of college readiness.

ACTION:

No action required; information only

NSG/jvf