



UTLA will not sign 2nd Race to the Top MOU

Lack of information, unrealistic timeline, and cost implications lead UTLA, along with other California teachers unions to nix approval of plan

United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) will not sign the California Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), being submitted by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for L.A. area schools, for the following reasons:

- **Lack of collaboration**

The state failed to involve teacher or parent groups in the development of the MOU and state plan. Indeed, the state is asking districts and teachers to sign the MOU without even seeing the final state plan and application. LAUSD adopted the MOU without a public hearing and without making the final State plan available for public review and comment. *No one considers it good business practice to sign or agree to something you have not read or seen!*

- **The timelines are rushed and unrealistic / Implementation is impractical**

The state MOU was not available until late on May 17, 2010, yet districts and stakeholders were required to sign by Friday, May 21, 2010 (only four days later)! Stakeholders had no time to read it or discuss it, and the state appears not to be taking any changes. California will learn at the end of July whether it will receive Race to the Top funding. Yet, according to the MOU, some programs must be in place by September, giving the state and the School District only the month of August to get ready.

- **There could be enormous ongoing cost implications for the District**

If the one-time funding grant is selected, California could receive \$700 million in RTTT funding. The state can keep half of that, leaving \$350 million in one-time money for local districts to deal with the ongoing costs they'll continue to incur after the RTT funding is gone. In this time of severe underfunding and funding cuts at public schools, mandating additional ongoing programs and costs is irresponsible.

- **The RTTT MOU takes away local control**

The MOU mandates many programs and procedures – taking away the authority of local schools to do what best meets the needs of their students. RTTT requires that states evaluate teachers by their students' test scores. This will intensify testing and further narrow the curriculum as teachers will be under increased pressure to raise test scores.

Most local teachers unions, including San Francisco and Long Beach will also not sign the MOU, for similar reasons. UTLA and our state affiliates continue to have concerns about the competitive funding nature of RTTT as it creates winners and losers. California should be working to achieve adequate funding for all public schools, so every student has an equal opportunity to succeed. School reform works best when parents, teachers and administrators work together to meet the needs of students in their neighborhood schools.

“It is unfortunate that policy makers have failed to learn from mistakes made during RTTT Round One and again have chosen not to collaborate,” said A.J. Duffy, UTLA president. “This race is one where, in the end, students will lose.”