

# NEWS

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## Connecticut Department of Education

Dr. Mark K. McQuillan  
Commissioner

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE :**

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### **Statement by State Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan on U.S. Department of Education Announcement of Phase II Race to the Top Finalists**

“We are very disappointed that Connecticut’s application for federal Race to the Top funding was not among the 19 selected as finalists in the Phase II competition for funds. The State Education Department and numerous partners worked tirelessly to develop a reform plan that we believe addressed the priorities of the federal grant program and also made sense for Connecticut’s public schools. A total of 160 local education agencies signed on to work with us to implement these reforms and we are disappointed that we will not have access to these stimulus funds to carry out our plans.

“Thirty five states and the District of Columbia applied for Phase II funding. We do not know how many finalists will receive funds in September, but it is clear that the competition for these funds has been intense and will remain so until the awards are made in September. It is likely that fewer than ten states will receive an award.

“Connecticut’s application represents hundreds of hours of work on the part of state officials, business leaders, representatives from higher education, superintendents, board members, teachers, union and association officials, legislators, school principals and community leaders. The process has brought us together with a clear focus on how to improve our schools. I would like to thank all of those who contributed to this effort, including Governor Rell, legislative leaders, Department staff and our many partners in Connecticut’s public school districts, higher education and the business community.”