



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

November 23, 2009

The Honorable Robert Scott
Commissioner
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Commissioner Scott:

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education made available the application that each state must submit in order to compete against other states for a portion of \$4.3 billion in Race to the Top funding made available in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

As the Texas Education Agency works to complete Texas' Race to the Top application, I want all involved in preparation of the application to be mindful that Texas, not the federal government, is best suited to determine the curriculum standards for Texas students.

In the Race to the Top application guidelines, the U.S. Department of Education determined that a significant number of Race to the Top points will be awarded to states that agree to adopt national standards and assessments.

In preparing the application, Texas should not commit to the adoption of national standards and assessments and should consider the following before making any commitments in the application:

- 1) Texans must determine what is taught in Texas classrooms and tested in Texas' examinations.
- 2) The elected State Board of Education (SBOE) has the legal responsibility to determine Texas' curriculum standards.
- 3) As a result of 2006 legislation, the SBOE has recently adopted new college- and career-ready curriculum standards in core subjects including math, science and

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English. State education and business leaders helped determine these standards to ensure they reflect Texas values.

- 4) A rewrite of the curriculum standards adopted by the SBOE in order to adopt the national standards proposed by Race to the Top would cost the state up to \$3 billion.
- 5) The national curriculum standards and exams contemplated by the Race to the Top application are not yet developed. It would be irresponsible to make such important commitments sight unseen when something as important as our children's education is at stake.
- 6) It is important to realize that the maximum amount of Race to the Top funds Texas appears to be eligible for is \$750 million. This is less than 2 percent of annual education funding in our state.

Texas is a leader in public education, especially in high standards, transparency and strong accountability. State and local educators, lawmakers, parents and employers deserve our every effort to protect the gains we've made in public education funding and achievement.

My office stands ready to assist you in any way possible as you complete your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RICK PERRY". The letters are bold and slightly slanted, with a cursive-like flow.

Rick Perry
Governor

RP:mtp