THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO:                          P-12 Education Committee

FROM:                    Valerie Grey
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SUBJECT:              Shared Learning Collaborative

DATE:                     December 5, 2011

AUTHORIZATION(S):

## SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

     Does the Board of Regents want to participate in the multi-state Shared Learning Collaborative as a means to increase the benefits and long-term sustainability of its Race to the Top (RTTT) data, curriculum, and instructional improvement initiatives?

Proposed Handling

     This question will come before the P-12 Education Committee for action at the December 2011 meeting.

Background

     The Shared Learning Collaborative (SLC) is a consortium of states organized to help increase the benefits and long-term sustainability of data, curriculum, and instructional improvement initiatives.  The SLC is facilitated by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and has received initial funding from the Carnegie Corporation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.  Participating states include Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Massachusetts.

     A primary purpose of the SLC is to help promote the efficient expenditure of taxpayer funds by coordinating the efforts of multiple states to provide for the common needs of all participating states, including shared infrastructure and services that integrate, deliver, and display educational data and curriculum resources for educators,

students, and families.  Legally binding agreements will ensure that each state's data remain separate and distinct from the data of all other states.

New York's Education Data Portal

Participation in the SLC will not change the objectives of New York's planned data, curriculum, or instructional improvement initiatives.  Similarly, there would be no change to our current data collection and reporting processes for institutional accountability or teacher-leader evaluation.

Participation will allow New York to focus its limited resources on the delivery of innovative data tools and curriculum content, including customizable dashboards for educators, parents, and students; early warning supports to help provide targeted resources to students at risk of not completing high school ready for college and careers; electronic transcript transfer between high schools and New York's public colleges and universities; and curriculum/instructional resources to support our professional development and student learning goals.

New York previously submitted a contract to the State Comptroller's Office for Wireless Generation to build some of these data tools on the SLC infrastructure.  This contract was returned unapproved by the Comptroller's office.  As a result, a revised plan will award competitive contracts to multiple vendors to build similar tools.

This revised approach will delay by approximately one year our implementation of New York's RTTT commitments; however, New York should still be able to leverage the shared resources provided by the SLC at no cost to New York State.   The SLC has engaged the services of numerous vendors, and all products and services will be open, non-proprietary, and available for use and improvement by participating states.  SLC vendor services include Wireless Generation (for the initial non-proprietary infrastructure development); Applied Minds (for Common Core learning maps); Double Line Partners and Intentional Futures (for open software applications): and McKinsey, Alvarez and Marsal, and Connecting Education, Leadership, and Technology (CELT) (for consulting and project management activities).  Additional contracts to be awarded include ongoing hosting and operations; the creation and open release of non-proprietary designs for up to ten additional software applications; and the development of search and tagging tools to help educators access common core-aligned curriculum resources.

The cost of the development of the SLC will be the responsibility of the SLC, not New York State.   Consistent with the Comptroller's concerns regarding Wireless Generation, no New York State funds will be paid directly or indirectly to Wireless Generation or any of its subsidiaries for the development of these SLC services.

Data Privacy and Security

　　As mentioned above, each state and school/district will retain sole ownership of its data.  Only anonymous data will be used for SLC system development.  As in any system development project, a limited number of authorized vendors will need to access actual educational data for system operation and improvements.  Data security will be protected through legally binding agreements that provide the strictest rules for authorized access, require the collection and retention of access audit records, and are aligned with the data security policies of New York, the federal government, and the SLC governance board.  The protection of student privacy is and will remain the priority throughout the development and implementation of the SLC.

Governance

　　The SLC is making plans for its long-term governance, including the protection of data privacy and security; the development of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization structure; and the articulation of a business model for long-term fiscal sustainability. This work will be guided by participating states and informed by input from a panel of expert advisors, including Cheryl Vedoe, President and CEO of Apex Learning; David Riley, President of the Alembic Foundation and an open source technology expert; Dr. Michael Lomax, President and CEO of the United Negro College Fund; Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers; Michael Horn, Co-founder and Executive Director for Education at Innosight Institute; and Andrew Rotherham, Co-founder and Partner of Bellwether Education Partners.

　　Governance initiatives are currently focused in the short-term on developing and executing non-binding memoranda of understanding with participating states.  This will be followed by the development of data sharing agreements and data security and privacy protections.  No New York data will be shared with the SLC unless and until the data security agreements are acceptable, final, and legally binding.

　　Finally, the SLC plans to engage directly with teachers in participating states to ensure that the open tools to be developed are designed to meet the most pressing data and curriculum needs of our teachers and students.

Recommendation

　　It is recommended that the Board of Regents endorse the Department's execution of a non-binding memorandum of understanding to secure New York State's participation in the Shared Learning Collaborative in order to increase the benefits and long-term sustainability of the State's Race to the Top (RTTT) data, curriculum, and instructional improvement initiatives.