International® Baccalaureate

THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA):

CAPITALIZE ON FEDERAL EDUCATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)

ARRA AND IB: A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTNERSHIP

The ARRA: a historic opportunity for comprehensive reform

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 provides states and school districts with education funds meant to accelerate reform efforts while also saving and creating jobs and stimulating the economy. An unprecedented $100 billion has been allocated to the federal Department of Education; $67 billion has already been distributed through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) in order to meet the immediate goal of delivering emergency education funding to states, and through Title I, IDEA, and other formula grant programs.

Nearly $10 billion has been allocated to education reform initiatives, and will be distributed through various funds and grants in order to meet the overarching goals of dramatically improving student achievement, closing the achievement gap and ensuring that all students graduate from high school prepared for college and a career.

These one-time resources provided through ARRA present a unique opportunity for states and school districts to advance comprehensive reforms with longer-term effects and to overcome longstanding educational challenges by implementing innovative practices and programs.

ARRA at a glance

There are four core priorities for all ARRA funding:

I. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy

II. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction

III. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most

IV. Turning around the lowest-achieving schools

The Race to the Top Fund (RTT) is a $4.35 billion competitive grant program open to states. It will reward those states that have made progress towards implementing ambitious reform plans in the four key areas outlined above, and encourage them to accelerate these reforms. States applying for these grants must also have a comprehensive and coherent approach to education reform, sufficient LEA participation and commitment, the capacity to sustain reform plans, and demonstrated progress towards raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Competitive preference will be given to states that have a high-quality plan to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

A portion of RTT funds ($350 million) have been reserved for supporting states working to create new assessments tied to a common set of standards. The distribution of these funds and the nature of the assessments to be supported are still being discussed in a series of technical meetings.

The Investing in Innovation Fund (i3 Fund) will provide $650 million in grants to local education agencies and nonprofit organizations working in collaboration with LEAs in order to support research-based innovative reform programs. The largest awards, named "scale up" grants, will be given to programs that have already shown strong evidence of success, followed by "validation" grants, for programs with some evidence of success, and finally "development" grants, for promising programs that have yet to prove themselves.

Applicants must have demonstrated success in closing achievement gaps, increasing student achievement for all groups of students, making significant improvement in other areas, and demonstrating a partnership with the private sector. Four of the i3 Fund's proposed absolute priorities are directly aligned with the four general ARRA reform areas, and four "competitive preference" priorities (awarded additional points) are aligned with other DoE reform goals: early learning, college access, students with disabilities and limited English proficient students, and rural LEAs.

International Baccalaureate: a world-class education option for the 21st century

The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers a continuum of three high quality and challenging educational programmes, from pre-kindergarten to pre-university, for a worldwide community of more than 2,758 schools in 138 countries. For over 40 years, the programmes have established a reputation for their high academic standards and for preparing students for life in a globalized 21st century.

The IB curriculum represents best practice from schools around the globe, and quality is ensured through criterion-referenced internal and external assessments of its students and schools. Extensive professional development opportunities are also provided to teachers and administrators, which target different needs.. There are introductory orientations, as well as three categories of training based on level of experience. The IB does not own or manage any schools; rather, it works with both publicly and privately funded schools that share IB's commitment to quality international education and authorizes them to offer one or more IB programme.

IB at a glance

IB offers three programmes:

- **The Primary Years Programme (PYP)** for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

- **The Middle Years Programme (MYP)** for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of academic excellence that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and to become critical and reflective thinkers.

- **The Diploma Programme (Diploma)** is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepares students for success at university and life beyond, normally for students aged 16 to 19.

All three programmes:

- Cover a complete range of subjects drawing on content from educational cultures across the world
- Give special emphasis to language acquisition and development
- Encourage learning across disciplines
- Focus on developing the skills of learning
- Include the study of individual subjects and transdisciplinary areas
- Provide students with opportunities for individual and collaborative planning and research
- Include a community service component requiring action and reflection

The benefits of partnering with IB: broader access to rigorous, widely recognized programs aligned with current education reform priorities

IB, a continuum of world-class education programs, has an established reputation for high academic standards, and also includes a unique combination of features including a global outlook, an interdisciplinary approach, an emphasis on in-depth research and critical thinking, and a community service component. Its programmes are a key way of meeting the overall goals of improving student achievement, closing the achievement gap, and ensuring greater college readiness.

IB has a widespread presence in the United States, characterized by broad public access, and it is well recognized and supported by US educators, policymakers and universities (see Section I).

IB is well aligned with the current reform initiatives of many state and national organizations, and with the ARRA priorities outlined by the federal Department of Education. Thus, IB is a key option available to policymakers as they formulate reform plans, allocate existing ARRA funds and apply for upcoming ARRA grants (see Section II).

IB is a valuable partner for states and school districts seeking resources from ARRA's Race to the Top Fund and Investing in Innovation Fund, given that it helps to meet the specific requirements of each of these, and its programmes advance their absolute and competitive priorities.

IB offers states and school districts the opportunity to meet ARRA priorities through a continuum of programmes from cradle to career that have an aligned and integrated instructional approach which includes professional development, rigorous standards and internationally benchmarked assessments.

THE IB ADVANTAGE FOR US PUBLIC SCHOOLS

IB has a widespread presence in the United States, characterized by broad public access

The IB has been present in the U.S. for over 30 years, and there are currently 1,038 IB World Schools in the country. Given the large number of schools that are currently candidates for IB authorization and that have expressed interest in becoming candidates, the total number of IB programmes in the US may almost double in the near future. IB's presence in the US is both geographically and socio-demographically widespread, ranging from large to small states, from urban centers to small towns, and from low to high income groups. There are IB World Schools in 47 states and the District of Columbia; the largest number is found in California, Florida and Texas.

In terms of access, 91% of all US schools implementing IB programmes are publicly funded, and they are found not only in affluent suburbs but also in inner-city schools. IB programmes have often been a popular choice for magnets and charters attempting to increase enrollment in lower-income urban districts.

IB students come from a wide variety of backgrounds. In California, for example, most IB students belong to minority groups, reflecting the diversity of the state's public school students. In Texas, the average percentage of African-American (19%) and Asian (9%) students at IB World Schools implementing the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is higher than the state public school average (14% and 3%, respectively). In 2008, 41% of IB Diploma candidates in the US belonged to minority ethnic groups (16% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 12% were Hispanic, 10% were African-American/non-Hispanic, and 3% belonged to other minority groups).

2009 IB Diploma Candidates: Ethnicity by State

State	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black/Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	White/Non-Hispanic	Other	N/A
Alaska	1.69%	6.78%	1.69%	1.69%	86.44%	1.69%	0.00%
Alabama	0.00%	13.25%	17.67%	2.52%	65.30%	1.26%	0.00%
Arkansas	0.45%	2.73%	17.73%	6.36%	37.27%	0.91%	34.55%
Arizona	0.98%	14.93%	3.93%	23.58%	45.78%	5.70%	5.11%
California	0.25%	22.31%	4.29%	29.21%	34.43%	4.56%	4.95%
Colorado	0.40%	9.65%	4.53%	8.92%	74.77%	1.73%	0.00%
Connecticut	1.41%	9.86%	16.90%	21.13%	49.30%	1.41	0.00%
District of Columbia	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	95.00%
Delaware	0.00%	2.88%	10.58%	0.96%	37.50%	1.92%	46.15%
Florida	0.20%	13.81%	9.01%	16.20%	51.52%	4.55%	4.71%
Georgia	0.30%	8.43%	25.99%	6.08%	48.78%	2.36%	8.05%
Hawaii	0.00%	22.58%	1.61%	0.81%	1.61%	0.00%	73.39%
Iowa	0.00	20.00%	0.00%	10.00%	70.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Idaho	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.88%	76.99%	4.42%	17.70%
Illinois	0.00%	9.31%	25.27%	35.11%	18.22%	0.66%	11.44%
Indiana	0.00%	5.31%	5.68%	6.59%	55.49%	3.66%	23.26%
Kansas	0.00%	14.42%	19.12%	10.66%	54.86%	0.94%	0.00%
Kentucky	0.00%	3.26%	6.02%	2.51%	54.39%	0.75%	33.08%
Louisana	0.00%	7.56%	25.21%	5.88%	61.34%	0.00%	0.00%
Massachusetts	0.47%	3.27%	14.02%	11.21%	56.54%	4.21%	10.28%
Maryland	0.00%	11.17%	26.35%	8.01%	35.98%	8.09%	10.40%
Maine	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Michigan	0.00%	13.41%	2.74%	2.13%	71.49%	2.29%	7.93%
Minnesota	0.93%	17.96%	9.01%	4.35%	65.01%	2.73%	0.00%
Missouri	0.88%	3.78%	14.11%	4.03%	76.45%	0.76%	0.00&
Mississippi	0.00%	1.11%	70.0%	2.22%	24.44%	2.22%	0.00%
Montana	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.90%	95.65%	1.45%	0.00%
North Carolina	0.23%	7.84%	22.25%	4.90%	58.22%	4.22%	2.34%
Nebraska	0.00%	19.18%	2.74%	2.74%	75.34%	0.00%	0.00%
New Hampshire	0.00%	0.00%	1.15%	2.30%	93.10%	3.45%	0.00%
New Jersey	0.00%	5.43%	3.71%	9.00%	48.43%	16.29%	17.14%
New Mexico	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Nevada	0.00%	21.60%	9.88%	17.28%	50.00%	1.23%	0.00%
New York	0.32%	5.89%	7.77%	7.42%	62.05%	4.83%	11.72%
Ohio	0.00%	6.45%	9.73%	2.02%	79.58%	2.22%	0.00%
Oklahoma	4.03%	16.11%	11.41%	5.37%	59.73%	3.36%	0.00%
Oregon	0.39%	11.57%	0.71%	11.09%	69.71%	6.53%	0.00%
Pennsylvania	0.14%	7.92%	10.04%	9.90%	33.66%	1.41%	36.92%
Rhode Island	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
South Carolina	0.30%	5.89%	14.53%	4.17%	71.44%	1.93%	1.73%
Tennessee	0.89%	6.85%	15.18%	4.46%	70.24%	2.38%	0.00%
Texas	0.19%	18.50%	8.54%	21.85%	44.97%	1.51%	4.44%
Utah	0.32%	17.04%	1.93%	7.72%	70.10%	2.89%	0.00%
Virginia	0.61%	16.35%	11.85%	11.07%	54.56%	3.72%	1.83%
Washington	0.24%	27.19%	4.33%	6.74%	56.94%	4.33%	0.24%
Wisconsin	0.15	5.29	17.06%	9.26%	43.82%	3.09%	21.32%
West Virginia	2.94%	11.76%	20.59%	2.94%	61.76%	0.00%	0.00%
Wyoming	2.33%	1.16%	1.16%	3.49%	91.86%	0.00%	0.00%

“The IB offers an integrated curriculum that provides students with the skill needed to be world-class scholars and an educational philosophy that prepares them to be first-class citizens. I do not know of a more comprehensive or appropriate learning model.”

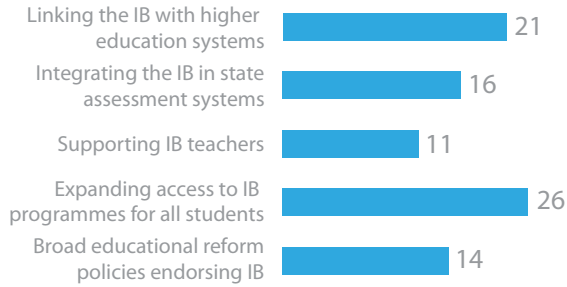
– Jimm Crowder,
Director of Admissions, Macalester College

IB is recognized and supported by US educators, policymakers and universities as a key way to advance education reform

At the federal level, the IB Diploma is recognized as a rigorous secondary school course of study for the American Competitiveness Grant, and IB programmes are included in the reform recommendations of the National Governors Association and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), among others. Governors convened by the NGA have recommended that “Congress should support state efforts that encourage more students to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework,” as part of their commitment to improving high school graduation rates and increasing college readiness. The SREB has included high IB enrollment and passing rates as one of its “Challenge to Lead” goals.

The majority of states (37 in 2008) currently have some form of legislation supporting IB. Policies supporting IB range from broad education reform plans that include IB in international education or 21st century skills priorities, to specific subsidies for low-income IB students and recognition of IB courses and exams as equivalent to core state high school requirements and exit exams.

Number of states with IB-related policies and legislation, by type of support:



The governments of 17 states have established IB recognition policies that apply to the statewide system of public universities, awarding college credits for the full Diploma or certain IB exams. Thirteen states providing government-supported scholarship/tuition waivers for IB students or give IB courses greater GPA weight.

Over 1,000 North American colleges and universities recognize IB courses and exams for advanced credit and/or placement. Nearly 120 postsecondary institutions now grant a full year of credit or its equivalent to students who have earned the IB Diploma.

II. IB ALIGNMENT WITH CURRENT EDUCATION REFORM PRIORITIES AND ARRA REQUIREMENTS

"To help our children compete in the 21st century economy, we need to send them to 21st century schools."

– President Obama

“The nation’s economic competitiveness and the path to the American Dream depend on providing every child with an education that will enable them to succeed in a global economy that is predicated on knowledge and innovation.”

– President Obama

GENERAL REFORM PRIORITY:

ADOPTING COMPREHENSIVE K-12 APPROACHES THAT FOSTER GLOBAL COMPETENCIES & 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

The idea that the US is losing its competitive edge in the world has resurfaced in recent years as a result of globalization trends and the current economic downturn. Strengthening “21st century skills” in the education system is seen as a way to remedy this situation and place the US once more at the forefront of global innovation. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, business leaders don’t perceive “a lack of employees that are technically proficient, but a lack of employees that can adequately communicate and collaborate, innovate and think critically.”

The US National Center on Education and the Economy report *Tough choices or tough times* (2006) identified five skills that will be essential for the future: creativity and innovation; use of ideas and abstractions; self-discipline; ability to organize and manage one’s own work; leadership; and the ability to function well as a team member.

Their blueprint for reforming the education system includes creating world class, syllabus-driven high school exams, curriculum based on mastery of key ideas, concepts, core facts and procedures, and a capacity for creativity and innovation.

Congress has sought to support states by introducing legislation in the US Senate to offer competitive federal grants to states willing to invest in reforms that integrate key 21st century skills into their K-12 curriculum. According to the bill, 21st century skills include critical thinking and problem solving, creativity, innovation, collaboration, contextual learning and media literacy skills. It also suggests expanding the curriculum to improve global awareness and civic literacy, among others.

How does IB advance this reform priority?

The IB continuum is not only a pathway for all students to an academically-rigorous, internationally-recognized education; it also encourages the acquisition of many of the skills mentioned above. International-mindedness is at the core of IB programmes, all of which emphasize global understanding, the study of world history and literature, and mastering a foreign language.

In addition, in accordance with the IB learner profile, IB learners acquire in-depth knowledge across a broad range of disciplines, and can assess their own strengths and limitations. They conduct independent inquiries, recognize and approach complex problems critically, and express themselves through various modes of communication. IB learners enjoy learning, develop their curiosity, and are risk-takers who "explore new roles, ideas and strategies."

IB learners have a commitment to service, act to make a positive difference and understand the importance of leading a balanced life. IB learners have a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect and are "open to the perspectives, values and traditions of others."

> *"The implementation of IB's rigorous curriculum has the potential to raise student achievement and provide high school graduates with greater chances to succeed in college."*
>
> **- Gerald Tirozzi**
> Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals

Alignment of IB with the goals of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills

According to a comparison of IB programmes with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework, both organizations share very similar goals, and advocate for similar learning approaches and curricular content. Both believe that:

- modern education should create citizens capable of succeeding in a global society, and classroom environments should be aligned with real world environments
- learning should be transdisciplinary , weaving 21st century themes into core subjects, which must include world languages, mathematics, science, the range of social sciences and the arts

IB programme requirements foster many 21st century skills mentioned in the framework:

- Global awareness, civic literacy, communication and collaboration, and responsibility are fostered through such aspects as foreign language acquisition, community service and learning about global cultures
- Critical thinking, problem-solving, initiative and self-directed learning are fostered through an overall inquiry-based, transdisciplinary approach, as well as through the final projects students must conduct at the end of each programme, and an emphasis on reflecting upon learning itself (for example, through the Theory of Knowledge component of the Diploma Programme)

“Winners of the Race to the Top grants will work to reverse the pervasive dumbing down of academic standards and assessments that has taken place in many states. [..] we are looking for Race to the Top states to adopt common, internationally-benchmarked K-12 standards that truly prepare students for college and careers.”

– US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

ARRA REFORM PRIORITY I:

ADOPT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE AND THE WORKPLACE AND TO COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

President Obama has emphasized the ambitious goal of attaining the highest college graduation rate in the world by 2020. In order to achieve this goal, a far greater number of students must graduate from high school having obtained the required skills and competencies for success in college. In addition to incorporating 21st century skills into the K-12 curricula, there have been calls to develop better definitions of the level of learning that students should attain, and raising that bar to a globally competitive level.

The current ARRA priorities explicitly favor states that are participating in the Common Core endeavor, a commitment on the part of the governors of 46 states and the District of Columbia to develop a set of common, internationally competitive standards. Groups of experts have been convened to develop “readiness” standards or goals for high school graduates, and a draft version has already been released for English and math.

After establishing more rigorous standards, assessments should be aligned with these standards, and consist of deeper measures than mere standardized tests of basic skills. President Obama has stated that the federal emphasis on assessments is not about implementing more tests, or fostering teaching to the test: “it is about finally getting testing right, about developing thoughtful assessments that lead to better results; assessments that don’t simply measure whether students can use a pencil to fill in a bubble, but whether they possess basic knowledge and essential skills like problem-solving and creative thinking, creativity and entrepreneurship.”

How does IB advance this reform priority?

IB programmes have curricular coherence and high standards that foster intellectual engagement. The IB offers an integrated programme that challenges students to develop knowledge and skills that go well beyond the typical expectations for high school graduation. At each grade level, and in each content area, IB provides an extremely detailed and carefully sequences set of standards and objectives, which have been tested and refined over four decades. The IB also provides teachers with a wealth of high-quality materials while still allowing them considerable flexibility to adapt the curriculum to the local context.

Students cannot succeed in an IB programme just by memorizing facts and formulas. Rather, they must demonstrate a deeper level of learning. IB requires young people to become truly engaged in the study of compelling topics, real-world problems, and high-level texts in all subject areas. Thus, assessments are also designed to measure the extent to which students have mastered advanced academic skills, including analyzing and presenting information; evaluating and presenting arguments; and solving problems creatively.

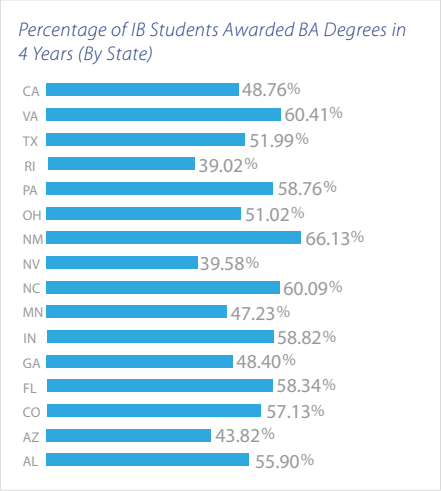
Student progress is measured in a range of ways, and each IB programme includes rigorous student assessments that are appropriate to the age range. The Primary Years Programme (PYP) makes use of a range of assessment tools through which teachers can take into account the diverse ways that students develop and demonstrate their understanding. In the Middle Years Programme (MYP), teachers organize continuous assessments according to specified assessment criteria that correspond to the objectives of each subject group. The Diploma Programme assesses students through oral and written exams and essays in each course, as well as the completion of an Extended Essay, and final examinations that are externally graded.

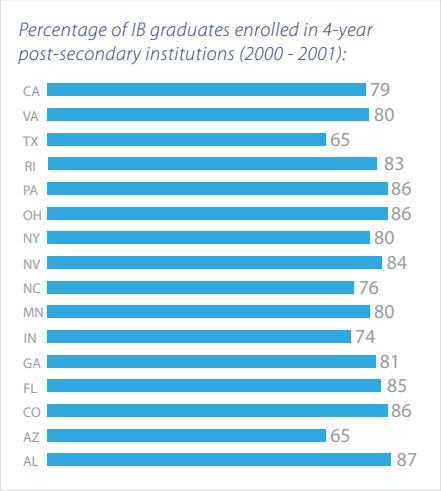
IB maintains the highest international standards through a comprehensive series of internal and external assessments. Assessment is criterion referenced, so students around the world are measured against pre-specified criteria for each subject group. External moderators check internal assessments to ensure worldwide consistency of standards, and IB diploma exams are scored by IB examiners around the world.

IB focuses on college and career readiness by providing a holistic, interdisciplinary and rigorous preparation for life. It emphasizes a positive attitude towards learning in all programmes, with a particular focus on preparing for higher education in the Diploma.

IB: A strong indicator of college success for all students

According to data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), 80% of students receiving an IB Diploma obtained a bachelor's degree, compared to the national average of 58%. In addition, 76% of IB Diploma candidates from low-income schools went on to earn a bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university, and IB students in public schools get the same great college results as students from private schools.





**** 4-year graduation rate is computed as (# of IB students awarded BA degree in 4 years / # of IB students graduated with BA).*

The US Department of Education recommends IB as a way to promote rigorous standards and assessments under ARRA

"While many states are actively revising their standards and assessments to increase rigor and improve alignment, districts and schools can concurrently take steps to promote rigorous standards, effective assessment systems, and strong curriculum. Some examples would be to:

- Increase student participation in rigorous advanced courses such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment in postsecondary credit-bearing courses and provide professional development for teachers and counselors to make the expansion possible."

US Department of Education, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Using ARRA Funds to Drive School Reform and Improvement, April 24, 2009.

"Proposals may include practices, strategies or programs that:

a) Increase the success of under-represented student populations in academically rigorous courses and programs (such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses […])"

US Department of Education, Investing in Innovation: Notice of proposed priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, Federal Register, October 9, 2009.

How does IB meet the specific Race to the Top and Innovation Fund priorities in this area?

Funding Priority	IB Contribution
The Race to the Top Fund expects states to demonstrate a commitment to adopting a common set of high quality standards and assessments with other states. It also expects states and participating LEAs to have a plan to support the transition towards high quality standards and assessments by, for example: **"developing or acquiring, disseminating and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments** (including, for example, formative and interim assessments); […] high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students" (Reform Plan Criteria B3, Nov. 2009). **The Investing in Innovation Fund** will also provide funding to LEAs for practices that support states' efforts to make this transition, including "curricular and instructional practices, strategies or programs in core academic subjects that are aligned with high academic content and achievement standards and with high-quality assessments based on those standards." (Statement of Proposed Absolute Priority 3, Oct. 2009). **A competitive preference priority of the Investing in Innovation Fund is to support "practices, strategies and programs that prepare K-12 students for success in college."** These proposals must include practices that "address students' preparedness and expectations related to college; help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application process; and provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults." (Proposed Competitive Preference Priority 6)	**IB offers high-quality instructional materials and assessments designed by international experts,** which undergo regular review and development. A rigorous authorization process ensures that all schools are well prepared to implement the programmes successfully. **IB offers an aligned and integrated instructional approach** that includes professional development to help teachers adequately implement curricula and assessments. IB trains teachers in how to create internal assessments that work towards student learning. **Assessment is criterion-referenced** so students around the world are measured against pre-specified criteria for each subject group. Internal assessments are checked by external moderators to ensure worldwide consistency of standards. A portion of the Diploma assessment is conducted directly by external examiners. **IB trains specifically in differentiated learning strategies**, to meet the needs of diverse learners. It also trains teachers working with special needs students, and draws on a range of international expertise with regard to English Language Learners. **The IB Diploma amply prepares students for college through its rigorous courses.** In addition, the Theory of Knowledge component and the final Extended Essay prepare students for college-level critical thinking, research and writing. **IB programmes foster a college-going culture** and make students aware of the advantageous admissions and credit university policies available for IB graduates, as well as better scholarship opportunities from universities or through state policies that give IB courses extra weight.

How is the value of IB in this area recognized and supported?

States widely recognize the value of IB programmes in raising standards and providing high-quality, rigorous assessments. Sixteen states recognize IB Diploma courses as fulfilling core high school curriculum requirements, five states waive statewide high school exit exams for IB Diploma graduates, and thirteen give additional weight to IB credits for the purpose of obtaining scholarships for higher education, or provide other scholarship support.

The Education Sector report Measuring Skills for the 21st Century (2008) considers the IB Diploma Programme a particularly successful assessment model, providing "evidence that the assessment of core content and advanced skills, aligned with a program of standards and curriculum, can happen at a large, even international, scale." When discussing cost and quality-assurance mechanisms, the report also mentions the ways in which the IB "ensures a high level of consistency among its examiners" through detailed instructions and monitoring by senior examiners.

Paul R. Gross, emeritus professor of life sciences, former vice president and provost of the University of Virginia, and lead author of the Thomas Fordham Foundation's 2005 report on state science standards, has called upon states that are looking for a "truly world-class model" to turn to the IB, given that "nobody has offered a good reason why our state standards should not move in the direction of excellence and detailed guidance exemplified by IB's best features." Taking the IB subsidiary biology curriculum as an example, Gross praises the fact that "no ambiguity is allowed on what is to be learned and understood." Gross also stresses the fact that although the exam questions require plenty of "essay or analytical-thought answers," they also require a thorough understanding of the subject matter and the use of concrete facts.

A report issued by a National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) commission led by William R. Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions and financial aid at Harvard, urges colleges and student aid organizations to stop using minimum standardized test scores (SAT and ACT, for example) to determine eligibility for merit aid. It also states that "there are tests that…are more predictive of first-year and overall grades in college and more closely linked to the high school curriculum, including the College Board's AP exams and Subject Tests as well as the International Baccalaureate examinations."

A recent study from the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) found IB standards to be highly aligned with their Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS) college-ready standards in all areas. In particular, the key cognitive strategies emphasized in the Diploma—critical thinking skills, intellectual inquisitiveness and interpretation—were found to be fully aligned with the expectations of university faculty.

Expert meetings on the Race to the Top Assessment Fund discuss the IB model

A series of technical input meetings have taken place to discuss how to best develop assessments tied to the common set of standards being defined by the Common Core consortium of states. At the session focusing on high school assessments, the IB assessment model was included in the discussion of successful models.

One of the invited experts, Linda Darling-Hammond, Professor of Education at Stanford University, focused her presentation on the practices of some of the highest-performing countries in the world, where assessments "are part of a tightly-integrated system of standards, curriculum, assessment and teacher development." Darling-Hammond included the IB model as a successful example of "school-based, curriculum-embedded assessments," and of the use of interdisciplinary project work to assess students in broader ways than only through course assessments. She also highlighted the need to incorporate "performance components" that assess deeper and broader 21st century skills into end-of-course exams, a practice already followed by the IB and some US states.

Gene Bottoms, another invited expert and Senior Vice-President of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), also emphasized that in the search for overall evaluations, "we should not forget International Baccalaureate, NAEP exams, or else we run the risk of creating a minimum college-readiness exam that's going to pull everything down to the minim um." These are ways to elevate standards and "lift more folks up."

US Department of Education, Race to the Top Assessment Competition. Public and Expert Input Meetings: High School, November 13, 2009.

“Success should be judged by results, and data is a powerful tool to determine results.”

– President Obama

ARRA REFORM PRIORITY II:

BUILDING DATA SYSTEMS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH AND SUCCESS, AND INFORM TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS ABOUT HOW THEY CAN IMPROVE INSTRUCTION

In the recent past, the US Department of Education has emphasized the need for states to develop strong systems for gathering and analyzing data on student, teacher and school performance, as part of a general push towards greater accountability in education. Indeed, many states have refined their data-gathering systems in recent years, by including more detailed indicators of achievement and progress and requiring that all schools report this information. According to a recent Data Quality Campaign report, 44 states now collect the data needed to identify the schools that produce the most academic growth, and 47 now have the necessary components in place to calculate a longitudinal graduation rate using a common method agreed upon through an NGA compact.

The current administration strongly supports this goal, and has incorporated it into the main ARRA priorities. For the Race to the Top Fund, states are expected to have a longitudinal data system in place that includes unique student identifiers so that individual-level data is available, while ensuring that students cannot be individually identified by those accessing the system. States must be able to access precise data on enrollment, student demographics, and program participation, among other factors. They must also make this data readily available to key stakeholders, and use this data as a tool for improving “instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness.”

"In Race to the Top we are also focused on what we're calling instructional improvement systems – solutions that help teachers, instructional leaders, principals, and administrators, know what's working, what's not, and for whom. When coupled with strong professional development and a school-wide culture of continuous improvement, data is a powerful lever for change."

- Joanne Weiss,
Department of Education

How does IB advance this reform priority?

The Department of Education has emphasized data referring to college readiness as an important part of any effective data system, and as a way to identify the ways in which high school programs should be strengthened. An important indicator of college readiness is the number of students who participate in advanced courses, and some states already require that schools track the number of students that enroll in IB courses.

Data on IB enrollment and achievement, as well as on the post-secondary persistance of IB graduates, can help states and school districts to identify the extent to which their students are challenged by rigorous courses, and the likelihood that these students will enter higher education and graduate from college.

The IB currently uses its own Diploma Programme exam data, data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and university transcript requests to track the enrollment, achievement and college attendence of IB students. Ways of gathering this data can be increasingly developed with states and school districts and incorporated into their data systems in order to provide a clearer picture of student achievement.

Given that data on the achievement of IB students in the US is directly comparable to data on IB student achievement worldwide, this information also provides a potential avenue for strengthening school districts' and states' future ability to make international comparisons.

How does IB meet the specific Race to the Top and Innovation Fund priorities in this area?

Funding Priority	IB Contribution
In a general DoE recommendation for uses of ARRA funds, examples of effective data use include efforts to "track the number and percentage of students by school who graduate high school and go on to complete at least one year's worth of college credit. Use the information to strengthen high school programs and increase the percentage of students going to college." (DoE, April 2009)	**Data on IB enrollment and completion is a key indicator school districts can use to indicate college readiness,** and some states already require that schools track the number of students that enroll in IB courses. Information on IB enrollment indicates which schools have strong advanced programs and more rigorous expectations. In the case of Florida, this information is used to grade schools and foster improvement.
The Race to the Top Fund will judge "the extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements." These elements include "student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; student-level college readiness test-scores; information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education […]" (Reform Plan Criteria C1, Nov. 2009)	Data on IB graduates currently tracked by the National Student Clearinghouse can be disaggregated by subgroup and indicates success in college across all income levels, ethnicity and other subgroups. This data tracking could be refined and incorporated into school districts' data gathering systems.
The Investing in Innovation Fund will support "strategies, practices or programs that encourage and facilitate the evaluation, analysis, and use of student acheivement or student growth data by educators, families and other stakeholders […]; or enable data aggregation, analysis, and research. Where applicable, this data would be disaggregated using the student subgroups described in …ESEA" (economically disadvantaged, ELL, minorty, etc.) (Proposed Absolute Priority 2, Oct. 2009)	

How is the value of IB in this area recognized and supported?

Some states already require school districts to report on the implementation of IB programmes, the number of teachers trained for IB, or IB student enrollment, either for specific accountability purposes such as tracking grant funds or in order to enrich their state-wide data systems. In the case of Florida (see box) student enrollment in IB is directly linked to grading schools' performance and thus fostering improvement.

Florida's new high school grading formula will include IB participation and performance

Florida's State Board of Education has approved changes which will substantially broaden the way in which high schools are graded. Starting with this school year (2009-10), only 50% of the high school grading formula will be based on students' performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), and the other half will include the school's graduation rates; student reading and math performance on the SAT, ACT or College Placement Test; student performance and participation in IB, AP, and other academic acceleration or industry certification programs; and the growth or decline of these factors from one year to the next.

Schools will be awarded up to 200 points for student participation rates in IB, AP or other accelerated courses, and they will also be awarded up to 100 points for student performance on these programs' exams. Although the state Department of Education predicts a drop in some high school's grades due to this change, it also expects these grades to improve over the next few years as schools shift their focus. According to the State Education Commissioner, the new grading formula will provide "a better representation of the accomplishments of our high schools," as well as increasing educational opportunities.

Sources: Florida Department of Education, "State Board of Education Approves New High School Grading Formula," press release, 15 September 2009. http://www.fldoe.org/news/2009/2009_09_15.asp Laura Green, "Florida's new high school grading system," The Palm Beach Post, 19 September 2009. http://www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/local_news/epaper/2009/09/19/a1a_grading_0920.html

ARRA REFORM PRIORITY III:

RECRUIT, DEVELOP, REWARD AND RETAIN EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS, ESPECIALLY WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED MOST

Recent reform efforts have focused on teacher effectiveness as a major influence on students' academic success, and the Obama administration has emphasized the need to renew the teaching profession by improving training, recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators. The federal government has pledged to work with unions in order to establish better teacher evaluations and reward structures.

ARRA legislation provides funding to improve teacher evaluation systems, to attract effective teachers into high-poverty schools, to support new teachers, to redesign compensation systems, and to provide broader and better professional development.

“From the moment a student enters a school, the single most important factor in their success is the person in front of the classroom [. . .] Great teachers are the bulwark of America.”

– President Obama

How does IB advance this reform priority?

Professional development is a fundamental component of IB. Each year, IB conducts close to a thousand workshop sessions in the United States and Canada, serving nearly 18,299 educators. From the moment a school applies for IB authorization, teachers and administrators receive comprehensive and in-depth professional development and expert guidance, in order to help them implement the IB curriculum and measure student progress.

Professional development is ongoing and comprehensive. Challenging and engaging seminars and workshops are offered regularly, and IB schools can choose from a wide range of monthly onsite, offsite and online options. Teachers can choose from three categories of IB workshops, which address increasing depth of knowledge about IB programmes. Principals, heads of schools and administrators can also participate in professional development workshops.

IB teachers and administrators comprise a thriving professional community that shares ideas and practices. They meet biweekly or monthly with other teachers in their grade and/or subject area, and also with their peers in other grades and subjects. These vertical teams allow teachers to better communicate and learn from each other.

Teachers and administrators also gain access to the IB Online Curriculum Center, a Web-based resource that fosters collaborative learning and exchange, and includes specific content organized by curriculum area.

IB teachers are challenged to constantly reflect upon and improve their practice. With IB professional development, teachers and administrators become analytical, curious and collaborative. They continually create and change classroom teaching activities to reflect the IB learner profile, and they foster an open, interactive, student-centered community.

IB trains specifically in differentiated learning methods to meet the needs of diverse learners, and it also offers professional development that addresses special education.

IB teachers have opportunities for growth and recognition. They can become examiners, programme evaluators, curriculum developers, and teacher trainers, as they work with their IB colleagues around the globe, deepening their understanding and expertise. IB is also working with a number of universities to establish postgraduate courses on IB, as well as an awards framework to acknowledge the commitment teachers make to their professional learning.

How does IB meet the specific Race to the Top and Innovation Fund priorities in this area?

Funding Priority	IB Contribution
In a general DoE recommendation for uses of ARRA funds, examples of strategies to improve teacher effectiveness include ones that "redesign teacher professional development and school schedules to ensure that teacher learning opportunities are sustained, job-embedded, collaborative, data-driven, and focused on student instructional needs" (DoE, April 2009)	**IB professional development is highly collaborative,** given that teachers meet in vertical teams to share ideas on a regular basis, as well as sharing learning experiences online.
The Race to the Top Fund expects states, in collaboration with participating LEAs, to formulate plans to "provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded.	**IB professional development and common collaboration time is ongoing and job-embedded.** Teachers have access to regular workshops and online resources for continuous professional development.
Such support might focus on, for example […] designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; […] designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high-need students." (Reform Plan Criteria D5, Nov. 2009)	IB professional development is primarily focused on student instructional needs, and training is specifically given in differentiated learning.
The Investing in Innovation Fund will also provide funding to support "practices, strategies or programs that increase the number and percentage of effective teachers and school leaders." (Proposed Absolute Priority 1, Oct. 2009)	IB provides guides, resources and professional development for teachers working with special needs students.
	IB teachers are effective teachers who contribute to improving student performance and overall school climate, and many states recognize this by financing IB teacher training.

How is the value of IB in this area recognized and supported?

Ten states provide financial assistance for IB teacher training, and three provide other professional development support to IB teachers.

In 2006, the IB surveyed more than 500 educators involved with IB programmes in North America. The average respondent had 7.4 years of experience working with the IB, with 63 percent of those surveyed spending more than half their time supporting or teaching IB programmes. The overwhelming majority (99%) believe the IB allows students to develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines, that it encourages students to become lifelong learners, and that it is consistently academically challenging. 91% also believe that IB professional development workshops are of high quality.

A number of chronically underperforming schools will require an extra effort to get back on their feet. There is no silver bullet when it comes to turning these schools around. [. . .] Change will come from the bottom up. But what we can do [in the federal government] is reward states that are pursuing forceful and effective and consistent approaches with Race to the Top grants.

– President Obama

ARRA REFORM PRIORITY IV:

TURN AROUND THE LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS

A key concern for US school reform over the past years has been raising the quality of those schools that are lagging farthest behind. According to recent calculations, approximately 5,000 schools across the country have been chronically under-performing and have been termed "drop-out factories" by policymakers.

According to Joanne Weiss of the US Department of Education, "no system is stronger than its weakest link, and we have to focus special and particular attention on the neediest of the children we serve." Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has been emphatic about the need to look for innovative solutions to raise standards and achievement at these schools, which will require bold measures: "to turn around the lowest performing schools, states and districts must be ready to institute far-reaching reforms, replace school staff, and change the school culture."

The Obama administration has been particularly supportive of charter schools as a transformative tool in many cases, and it also supports a broader range of public school models in low-income neighborhoods. There are a wide variety of "turnaround" strategies that have been successful at the local level, however, and ARRA legislation recognizes that there is no single model of success. It recommends that states and school districts implement plans to restructure schools by rehiring staff and changing the leadership; transforming the school culture by implementing new programs or becoming charters; or closing them down entirely.

Closely related to its' focus on under-performing schools, ARRA overall emphasizes improving the quality of schooling for traditionally underserved populations and for at-risk groups of students. This is reflected in the Investing in Innovation Fund's overall emphasis on reform projects that provide services to high-need students, and in its'"competitive preference" priorities, which include programs that target special needs students, ELLs, and rural LEAs.

How does IB advance this reform priority?

IB is committed to expanding access to IB programmes, and has worked successfully with school districts to implement them in low-income areas and inner-city neighborhoods. The integrated approach of IB programmes, which includes high-quality professional development and rigorous standards, generally transforms the entire school culture, and many of these schools have been effectively transformed from failing schools to models of success.

A large number of charter schools have chosen to implement IB programmes as a way of offering a rigorous, engaging curriculum, thereby attracting families and increasing enrollment.

Case studies of high schools that have been particularly successful in recruiting low-income and minority students to the IB Diploma Programme indicate that district-level support is essential, as well as developing recruitment strategies that particularly target under-represented groups and aligning 9th and 10th grade curriculum with the IB to provide early preparation for the Diploma.

IB has been awarded a $2.4 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to prepare low-income and minority students for future participation and success in the IB Diploma Programme, highlighting the IB commitment to providing equal academic opportunities for all. For this project, IB is partnering with several school districts to develop innovative tools and resources for student assessment in grades 9 and 10 that align with expectations for the Diploma Programme in grades 11 and 12.

This project builds on an earlier study conducted by McKinsey & Company and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which found that the Diploma Programme is notable among other high school programs because it is "appropriate and valuable for students of average skill proficiency, and is transformative for minority and low-income students."

I think we have to do more to empower families, particularly poor families, who have historically had very few options, if any. Create a menu of options, whether it's math and science academies, or schools that focus on the International Baccalaureate, or the fine arts [. . .] If every parent can have four, five, six, seven great options, and let them figure out what's the best learning environment for their kids—I think that's unbelievably empowering.

– Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

IB has turned around low-performing schools in a wide variety of communities

Atlanta's International Community School (ICS) is a public charter school that was founded eleven years ago to serve a large number of refugee students arriving in the locality. It was initially modeled on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a "beloved community," where "people of all faiths, origins and social situations learn from one another." Today, the school is an IB PYP World School serving 400 students, half of whom are refugees, and the other half of whom come from a variety of local ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Last year, the school received a national award for closing the achievement gap between minority and wealthier students, despite struggling financially and lacking an adequate building. This school has been profiled in *The New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor.*

At Henrico High School in Richmond, Virginia, 60% of the 1,800 students are from low-income families. The IB programme has brought about improvements that benefit the whole school, such as a wider offering of advanced courses in general, in order to support IB courses, and highly trained teachers who use their IB practices in other classes. According to IB coordinator Nancy LaVier, the IB has restored the school's reputation after a decade of what she terms "derision."

In May 2009, the Georgia Public Policy Foundation recognized Fair Street International Baccalaureate World School, in Gainesville, as a leader among "No Excuses" schools, defined as those that have an above-average proportion of low-income students achieving at significantly higher levels than those projected. Fair Street, which serves 635 students in pre-K through 5th grade, is 68% Latino and 25% African-American, and 95% of its students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Principal William Campbell attributes the school's success to "dedicated and professional teaching and support staff, in conjunction with the International Baccalaureate framework." Previously, Fair Street had also received the Title I Distinguished Schools Award for making federal AYP for 5 years in a row.

How does IB meet the specific Race to the Top and Innovation Fund priorities in this area?

Funding Priority	IB Contribution
In a general DoE recommendation for uses of ARRA funds, examples of strategies that can contribute to school improvement include creating "9th grade academies staffed with highly effective teachers to help students transition successfully to high school, and create summer programs that prepare struggling students to be successful in […] college-preparatory Advanced Placement classes."	**The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) will receive greater support through the Gates Foundation grant,** and student assessments in 9th and 10th grade will be aligned with Diploma Programme expectations, to prepare more low-income and minorty students for success in high school
The Race to the Top Fund expects states to have a high-quality plan to "support its LEAs in turning around [lowest-achieving] schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model." (Reform Plan Criteria E2)	**IB transforms school culture and boosts performance among all students** by providing an integrated approach which includes high-quality professional development and rigorous standards
The Investing in Innovation Fund will also provide funding to "support strategies, practices or programs that turn around persistently low-performing schools through either whole-school reform or targeted approaches to reform."	Many charters and reform-oriented schools have chosen IB programmes because of their ability to create positive school climates through a focus on student engagement, interdisciplinary learning, community involvement and high expectations for achievement

How is the value of IB in this area recognized and supported?

In order to expand access to rigorous courses, the federal government provides state grants through its AP Incentive Grant Program, which reimburses both the AP and IB exam fees of eligible low-income students.

Eleven states provide financial incentives for schools or teachers to implement IB programmes, twelve states provide AP/IB incentives for low-income students, and ten provide subsidies for all IB exam fees.

If you have questions on how the IB can help your state capitalize on ARRA funding opportunities, please contact Paul Campbell, Head of Outreach at paul.campbell@ibo.org or 646-315-9712.

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