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Christie Education Reform Agenda in Step with Obama Administration on Student Performance and Teacher Evaluation

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Obama Administration RTTT Reform Agenda Emphasizes Link Between Teachers and Students

The winners of the Race would be those states that submitted the best blueprints for fulfilling the reform agenda, which includes...a commitment to eliminate what teachers' union leaders consider the most important protections enjoyed by their members: seniority-based compensation and permanent job security. To win the contest, **the states had to present new laws, contracts and data systems making teachers individually responsible for what their students achieve, and demonstrating, for example, that budget-forced teacher layoffs will be based on the quality of the teacher, not simply on seniority**...Indeed, the core of the reformers' argument, and the essence of the Obama approach to the Race to the Top, is that **a slew of research over the last decade has discovered that what makes the most difference is the quality of the teachers and the principals who supervise them.** (Steven Brill, "The Teachers' Unions' Last Stand," *New York Times Magazine*, 5/17/2010)

President Obama supports merit pay and has called for the elimination of laws that forbid the use of student achievement data to evaluate teachers and principals. (Scot Lehigh, "The candidates and the unions," *The Boston Globe*, 11/25/2009)

President Barack Obama's signature education initiative has encouraged the overhaul of state laws governing charter schools, teacher evaluations and student-testing systems...The \$4.5 billion federal program aims to spur innovation by rewarding states that promote charter schools, adopt rigorous learning standards, **tie teacher pay to student achievement and intervene in chronically low-performing schools.** (Stephanie Banchero, "Race to Top Leaves Some School Reformers Weary," *Wall Street Journal*, 6/1/2010)

Tying teacher evaluations to student performance...has gained new urgency under the Obama administration, which has made teacher accountability a centerpiece of the reforms it is trying to encourage through the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top competition. This year, the department is slated to award hundreds of millions of additional federal dollars to **states willing to take strong action to raise student achievement levels in measurable ways that show whether teachers and principals are making a difference.** ("Putting students first - Our view: What's wrong with judging teachers by how well their pupils perform?" *The Baltimore Sun*, 4/30/2010)

The Obama administration has said states that prohibit linking teacher evaluations to student performance will not be eligible for the "Race to the Top" stimulus funds. (Torey Van Oot, "Schwarzenegger wants teacher evaluations tied to student performance," *The Sacramento Bee*, 8/21/2009)

Christie Education Reforms In Step with National Education Reform Movement

Oklahoma and New York also **approved bills modifying their tenure and evaluation rules** in the last week, just in time to meet Tuesday's application deadline for Round 2 of the competition, known as Race to the Top. (Sam Dillon, "States Create Flood of Education Bills," *New York Times*, 5/31/2010)

Louisiana lawmakers handed Gov. Bobby Jindal his first significant victory of the legislative session Thursday, giving final approval to a revamp of the state's teacher evaluation process that the governor pushed against the wishes of teacher unions. **Public school teachers will be graded partially based on student test scores, tying at least half of a teacher's review to student performance data** - not the flat standardized test scores, but the **growth in student achievement on those tests.** (Melinda Deslatte, "Teacher evaluation revamp signed into law," *Associated Press*, 5/28/2010)

Colorado's law, passed last month, **requires that school principals evaluate teachers' classroom effectiveness each year, and that at least half of their rating be tied to student achievement.** The law withholds tenure until rookie teachers have taught effectively for three years, and says tenured teachers performing poorly for two years in a row can lose job security and be fired. (Sam Dillon, "States Create Flood of Education Bills," *New York Times*, 5/31/2010)

In Tennessee, Gov. Phil Bredesen, also a Democrat, pushed the Legislature to pass laws allowing more charter schools and **making student test scores 50 percent of annual teacher evaluations.** The statewide teachers' union ended up supporting both bills. (Steven Brill, "The Teachers' Unions' Last Stand," *New York Times Magazine*, 5/17/2010)

Maryland hopes to become competitive through **a plan to link student achievement growth to teacher evaluations.** The Maryland plan...indicates that the State Board of Education is expected next month **to approve a rubric that would link teacher evaluations to gains in test scores.** (Nick Anderson, "Washington area vies for Round 2 of Race to the Top funds," *The Washington Post*, 4/19/2010)

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Florida will try again for a coveted Race to the Top federal education grant Tuesday - this time with the blessing of its teachers' unions... The second-round proposal still **pushes merit pay for teachers** but doesn't rely as heavily on student test scores. And it gives local educators more say in how new pay and evaluation plans would work. (Leslie Postal, "Race to the Top, Part 2: Florida now has strong teacher-union backing," Orlando Sentinel, 5/30/2010)

Kentucky's **public teachers and principals would see their yearly evaluations tied partly to their students' performance**, under a proposal that state education officials hope will boost the state's chances of receiving up to \$175million in federal education funding, according to a draft obtained by The Courier-Journal. (Antoinette Konz, "Kentucky teacher evaluations may be tied to student performance," The Courier-Journal, 5/27/2010)

In Delaware, **no teacher now will be rated "effective" who does not meet targets connected to student test-score improvement** (as well as other subjective measures, like evaluations of lesson plans and classroom management) over the school year, and teachers could be removed if they are rated "ineffective" or "needs improvement" two years in a row. (Steven Brill, "The Teachers' Unions' Last Stand," New York Times Magazine, 5/17/2010)

South Carolina - Would **revamp teacher-evaluation system to include performance-pay component**, and evaluate online educators. (Michele McNeil and Lesli A. Maxwell, "Race to Top Enters Home Stretch With 16 Finalists," Education Week, 5/18/2010)

Illinois - **Half of teachers' evaluations will be based on student growth under new law**. (Michele McNeil and Lesli A. Maxwell, "Race to Top Enters Home Stretch With 16 Finalists," Education Week, 5/18/2010)

District Of Columbia - **Teacher-evaluation system based on student achievement**. (Michele McNeil and Lesli A. Maxwell, "Race to Top Enters Home Stretch With 16 Finalists," Education Week, 5/18/2010)

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