Office of the State Superintendent of Education
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MAYOR ADRIAN M. FENTY

June 1, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

It is with great excitement that I submit to you the District of Columbia's application for the U.S. Department of Education Race to the Top (RTTT) grant competition. I believe our proposal meets the challenges you set forth in announcing RTTT. It builds on the reforms that have been in place since Mayoral takeover of the schools in 2007 and incorporates the innovative approaches designed by our vast network of charter schools. While we are pleased with the results we have seen in the past two years, an RTTT grant award will help us take the next steps to cement the progress to date, eliminate the achievement gap, improve the quality of the teacher workforce, and ensure every child graduates from a District of Columbia school ready for postsecondary education or the workforce.

With those goals in mind, our application was developed with broad stakeholder input. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) worked closely with members from District of Columbia Public Schools and charter school local education agencies to determine the proposals laid out in this application. They reflect the work occurring throughout the city and the spirit of collaboration that will be necessary to meet the ambitious goals you have set for this program.

The District's small size, compact geography, support from the majority of its LEAs, and clear commitment to reform in the past two years indicate our strong city-wide commitment to this application and the goals of the RTTT program. I look forward to the Department's consideration of OSSE's RTTT application. I am excited about the potential RTTT presents and appreciate your support for strong education reform.

Sincerely,

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

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