



## **Editorial: Taking Data Systems to the Top, and Welcome K-12 Members**

by ***Nicole Adrian***

The theme of this issue is building data systems to track student achievement and teacher effectiveness. This idea is likely front of mind for many primary and secondary education administrators and teachers, as it's been named as one of the four critical areas of Race to the Top—the \$4.35 billion program designed to spur reforms in state and local district education.

According to an official press release, the Race to the Top emphasizes “supporting data systems that inform decisions and improve instruction, by fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system, assessing and using data to drive instruction, and making data more accessible to key stakeholders.”<sup>1</sup>

Round 2 Race to the Top winners have already been selected, and 35 states and Washington, D.C., have adopted rigorous common, college and career-ready standards in reading and math. Additionally, 34 states have changed laws or policies to improve education. This doesn't mean, however, that the work to integrate data systems in other districts and states has stopped.

Tropic Isles Elementary School in North Fort Myers, FL—a Title 1 school with 900 students—contributes some of its success to the data systems it has in place, including data-driven decision making, measures alignment, and student and staff accountability. As part of its in-house data system to track student achievement, the school uses a strategy map to spell out long-term goals and a strategic plan to map out short-term plans. By developing the data system to track student achievement, the school has been able to align the data collection across grade-levels and within the entire school.

Additionally, Empowered High Schools (EHS), an organization made up of two lifelong educators and high school administrators, works with schools and districts to answer this question: How can a school be designed as an understandable system so we know how each process supports every other process toward a unified purpose? The EHS systemic model—which includes professional learning teams and teacher leadership development—meets all the



requirements of response to intervention theory and practice within the unique needs of an American secondary school.

In addition to the articles about data systems, you'll see a new section in the newsletter for ASQ K-12 members. These members will begin receiving *Primary and Secondary Education Brief* in lieu of *Your Education Community*, the quarterly newsletter members had been receiving since the newsletter was created in early 2007. *Education Brief* will provide greater and more frequent access to ASQ education articles and resources and will provide an outlet for K-12 members to share their stories and learn more about their benefits. We'd love to continue sharing K-12 member stories. If you're interested in submitting an article, contact me at [nadrian@asq.org](mailto:nadrian@asq.org).

#### **Reference**

1. "Promoting Innovation, Reform and Excellence in America's Public Schools," The White House, [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheet-race-top](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheet-race-top).