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SHausser, LLC

Priority Briefing

**ILLINOIS WINS \$42.8 MILLION
OF RACE TO THE TOP FUNDS**

The U.S. Department of Education announced that, as a Phase Three Finalist in the Race to the Top Competition, Illinois has been awarded a grant of \$42.8 million to assist Illinois in achieving education reform. In accordance with Race to the Top guidelines, Illinois has adopted and begun implementing reform in four areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workforce and to compete in a global economy
- Building data systems that measure student growth and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals
- Turning around the lowest performing schools

In anticipation of a Race to the Top Grant, Illinois has adopted Common Core Language Arts and Mathematics learning standards and is restructuring state assessments. Illinois has enacted the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 (“PERA”), which incorporates student growth into a new teacher and principal evaluation system, and the Education Reform Act of 2011, which significantly changes teacher tenure and reductions in force. Illinois has enacted the Longitudinal Education Data System Act for collection and maintenance of student data. The State has also created an Illinois Partnership Zone for low performing, Priority Schools. The Race to the Top Funds will enable Illinois to move forward with these important reforms.