

Iredell-Statesville Schools was recently named one of only 16 recipients nationwide of a federal Race to the Top-District grant, worth nearly \$20 million. The federal government issued approximately \$400 million in grants to fund innovative school reform initiatives.

## *How much did Iredell-Statesville Schools actually win?*

Almost \$20 million. The total amount will be \$19,999,703 provided over a four-year period.

## *Can the grant help address some of the district's budget concerns?*

The federal government has issued very specific requirements for the funds. The grant is a school reform grant and the funds will be used according to the scope of the grant.

## *What is the I-SS Race to the Top grant proposal all about?*

The grant was written to get the resources necessary to implement a personalized, blended learning environment for middle and high school students. The plan, also known as Innovative Methods for Personalizing Academics, Complemented by Technology (or IMPACT), calls for a unique blend of face-to-face instruction, digital instruction, and online instruction. The program will be enhanced with a technology component.

## *Will there be a one-to-one component?*

Yes. Each middle and high school student will receive some sort of technology device, though the district has not yet decided whether it will be a tablet or laptop.

## *Is it true that not all middle and high schools will be included?*

Yes. Sort of. It is true that Lake Norman High School cannot be funded from the Rtt-D grant funds. The grant stipulations required a very specific free/reduced lunch percentage, and including Lake Norman High School would have pushed Iredell-Statesville Schools below the limit needed to qualify for the grant. However, the district is currently working on a plan to identify funding that would enable Lake Norman to also participate in the IMPACT plan. There is absolutely no plan to exclude Lake Norman High School from this program, but rather, only to exclude them from this particular funding stream.

## *Are elementary schools included in the school district's plan?*

The requirements from the federal government stipulated that all grant proposals focus on helping secondary students become career and college ready. Iredell-Statesville Schools felt this goal was best addressed at the middle and high school levels.

## *Does implementing the plan mean a new curriculum must be learned?*

Absolutely not. The IMPACT plan simply changes the way the current curriculum is delivered. We will still implement the Common Core and Essential Standards just like every other school system in North Carolina, and like the majority of school systems across the nation. However, this grant will enable us to deliver the content in a more innovative, engaging way for students. IMPACT also dovetails beautifully with what the district is already doing with COMPASS (the \$6 million federal i3 grant the district received in 2010) and the Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) program.

## *What will the grant actually pay for?*

Funds will be used to pay for personnel to implement the plan, professional development, and the software and hardware to support the plan.

## *What goals does the district hope to accomplish with the grant funds?*

Three major things. First and foremost, the district wants to close achievement gaps that exist between various subgroups of students. As a bi-product of that, the district also hopes to continue improving the graduation rate, and increase the number of students who enroll in college following high school.

## *Where can I get more information about RTT-D grants?*

You can get more information on federal Race to the Top-District grants by visiting [www.ed.gov/programs/Racetothetop-district](http://www.ed.gov/programs/Racetothetop-district). There you can view the reviewers' comments and scores for all organizations receiving RTT-D funds.

*Making an...*

# I. M. P. A. C. T.

Innovative Methods for Personalizing Academics, Complemented by Technology