

Governor's Weekly Message Transcript: Celebrating Success in Education Through Race To The Top

Last fall, here at Mount Pleasant High School, I joined the President of the College Board to announce a first-in-the-nation effort to address a national problem. Many students who have shown they can succeed in college don't even apply. We sent students helpful resources, including fee waivers if they qualified. And we followed up by helping them fill out applications in school and navigate the financial aid process. This past week, I returned to Mount Pleasant to celebrate that, this year, every college-ready student in Delaware applied.

Our success was made possible by Race to the Top. Winning that federal funding competition helped us pay for every Delaware junior to take the SAT during the school day, and it helped us identify every student who is ready for college. It's an example of how, four years after launching our Race to the Top plan, we have worked with our teachers and administrators to build a foundation for improving student opportunities. We've invested in better data to track students' progress. Teachers receive more support and feedback. We've renovated science labs. And we're providing targeted counseling and programs for freshman to adjust to high school. The list goes on and we're seeing improvement: Our dropout rate hit a 30-year low. More students are reaching their growth targets in schools that were struggling. More top teachers are staying in Delaware. And more students are passing AP tests.

Our progress is why, this past week, U.S. Secretary of

Education Arne Duncan visited to celebrate our efforts. Our work isn't finished, but Race to the Top has laid the groundwork for our schools to keep improving. And that will keep Delaware moving forward.