



January 7, 2010

Dear Chancellor Tisch and Commissioner Steiner,

Thank you for sharing a summary of your plans for the state's Race to the Top application. The New York State Society of Professional Engineers (NYSSPE) is the premier statewide organization for professional engineers. Our mission is to promote and protect the practice of engineering in New York State, as well as enhance the well-being of our members. It is equally important that we educate future engineers and promote the profession within our schools. We appreciate that New York's Race to the Top plan calls for far-reaching reforms in the areas of standards and assessment, data systems, teacher and principal effectiveness, and low performing schools. In particular, we support New York's efforts to integrate Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education into this initiative.

NYSSPE strongly supports New York's plan for Race to the Top. Once implemented, this plan will enhance our own efforts to educate students about the opportunities that come with an education that is focused on the STEM curriculum. This comes at a critical time, as the need for engineers is ever increasing; however enrollment in traditional engineering programs has decreased over the last decade. To reverse this trend it is necessary to transform the math, science, and technology education content areas to a connected program of learning, which should include engineering in the early grades. There is a critical need to improve the education in the United States in order to maintain our position as the World's innovation leader.

The provisions in the state's application ensure New York is strongly positioned to receive the maximum amount of available funding. We applaud your efforts to improve the education of our children through this grant and we are so pleased that you understand the importance of the STEM curriculum and have included it as a priority. We look forward to partnering with the New York State Education Department in the future to continue this extraordinary effort.

Best regards,



Dr. James J. Yarmus, PhD, PE
President