



*Office of U.S. Senator Mark Begich*

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*Official website :: <http://begich.senate.gov>*

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# Investing in Innovation for Education Act

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## **Purpose of the Investing in Innovation Act**

The Investing in Innovation (i3) fund is a U.S. Department of Education initiative to support school districts, groups of schools and community organizations in their efforts to improve student achievement, increase high school graduation rates and improve college enrollment and completion.

Innovative practices are constantly emerging to help more students, especially our highest-need students. Under the i3 bill, competitive grants will support promising new ideas to improve student outcomes. Applicants are required to secure a private-sector match, currently set at 20 percent.

The program was created as part of the 2009 economic recovery package. This legislation will move i3 into permanent law. The President's Budget for FY2011 includes \$500 million for i3.

## **The i3 bill promotes flexibility and 'out-of-the-box' ideas**

- ❖ Priority for grant awards will go to applicants proposing to:
- ❖ Improve early learning outcomes
- ❖ Support college access and success
- ❖ Support family and community engagement
- ❖ Address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities or English learners
- ❖ Serve schools in rural communities

## **Focus includes teacher and principal effectiveness, improved schools**

- ❖ The program focuses on these topic areas:
- ❖ Increasing teacher and principal effectiveness
- ❖ Turning around low-performing schools
- ❖ Making standards and assessments more practical, and improving data systems

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*To learn more, visit my website: <http://begich.senate.gov/education>*

## Alaska interest in i3 so far

To date, school districts and organizations from Metlakatla to Anchorage to Kotzebue have applied for i3 funding (details at <http://data.ed.gov/grants/investing-in-innovation>). In all, there were 1,700 applications from around the country. While first-round awards did not go to Alaska, this legislation will make future i3 grants possible.

## The i3 program funds three levels of innovation

- ❖ *Recognizing innovation* – Development grants require a reasonable hypothesis and will support fresh, new ideas with funding up to \$5 million.
- ❖ *Validating promising programs* – Emerging ideas need support in order to grow. Validation grants of up to \$30 million bring evidence-based reforms to states or regions.
- ❖ *Scaling up best practices and evidence-based reforms* – Scale Up grants of up to \$50 million require strong evidence and will bring proven programs to a national scale.