



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

District Of Columbia Application #1920dc-1



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	54	54	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	35	35	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15	15	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

All four areas of educational reform that make up Rtt are addressed in this proposal. An elaborate and highly ambitious set of goals related to working across the district including with the numerous charter schools are articulated. These goals are highly ambitious at every level of schooling related to student performance and graduation with very high expectations in many sectors. Most seem possible though the absence of a data base infrastructure at this time could be problematic. The LEA commitment to the Rtt plan is impressive with most LEAs signing on, representing 85% of all students, 187 schools and 65,000 students. The MOU with the LEAs directly commits them to participating in all aspects of the plan. The signatures of LEA leaders are present, except for the Teacher Union in the DCPS. This is problematic since teacher development is a key element in the overall plan, and the union could be a positive partner.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	23	23	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18	18	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5	5	

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The plan with respect to management and implementation is detailed, and allows a clear understanding of the goals to be achieved and the manner of achievement, with clear roles for all participants. Rtt will reside in the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), a recently created office reporting to the Mayor. Rtt will be overseen by an appointed Project Director and will also include a senior Fiscal Director and a corps of senior leadership staff. Importantly, Effective Managers will be appointed to work with LEAs in field related implementation. This organization seems reasonable for the District. Because OSSE is new, there is little history regarding the successful implementation of a new program of this magnitude at the managerial or fiscal level. The effort will be guided by specially constructed task forces representing P-20 stakeholders though it is not clear what authority they will have. It is possible to determine budget allocations as they are tied to specific goals and objectives. In a positive attempt to enhance sustainability, over 70% of resources will be directed to efforts that build infrastructure, a positive for long lasting impact. Support from a broad array of stakeholders is evident in the appendix, particularly from higher education partners although there is little evidence of collaborative support from private sector entities.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	17	17
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	14	14

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District has a clear record of education policy reform in all areas specifically related to Rtt. It has addressed the establishment of high standards, educator accountability, charter school development and data systems development/implementation, (no longitudinal student data is presently available although one is planned). This is an impressive policy accomplishment and sets the stage for further reform efforts. The District provides evidence of enhancement in student progress on NAEP and ESEA testing for all students and for NCLB related subgroups. However, the specific data presented show mixed results and continuing and sizeable achievement gaps. There is little evidence of significant achievement gap reduction with regard to subgroups. In particular, the graduation rates for the state are ambiguously presented for only a short period of time. Moreover, it is not clear if there are significant gap reductions for subgroups in the area of graduation and college going.

Total	125	94	94
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District is participating in the "Common Core" standards development effort with a large number of states (over 40 states) and has plans to adopt the standards by March, 2010.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10	10
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District is working as a member of consortia including SMARTER to develop high level assessments that can be adapted to particular LEA circumstances to assess student growth and guide instruction. These efforts greatly enhance the district efforts under Rtt to develop and utilize more reliable and valid student assessments in support of reform in DCPS and in Charter LEAs.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20	20
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DCPS and some charters have a solid history in articulating standards and related assessment systems and are in the process of implementing them in schools through targeted professional development. Some of these same efforts will be the base for transitioning LEAs and schools to the use of new standards and assessments. The implementation plan and related professional development support goals are clear, significant to the reform effort, and are achievable.

Total	70	70	70
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6	6	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District now has a data system that includes 3 of the 12 elements of the COMPETES Act. There is a plan to address all elements no later than 2012 with a comprehensive Student Longitudinal Education Data system (SLED). This is a challenging goal, but a critical one for success in achieving the specified Rtt efforts related to educator evaluation.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	4	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District has a plan to develop and deploy a comprehensive system that allows access of data broadly to parents, teachers, principals and the general public. This is a well designed effort to make available education data in the state to all, at least electronically. It is not clear how this data can be accessed by those populations that may not be able or comfortable accessing electronic information or may need access in a different language.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	10	10
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

A specific plan is described that will provide comprehensive educator access to the data. The system plans to provide a variety of ways in which LEAs, schools and teachers can utilize student performance assessments. In addition, there will be specific and designated efforts in the Rtt office to provide support for training on data access and use by educators. It is important to note that developing SLED is a substantive challenge with the timelines provided since the District presently has no such system. Access to the data will be made available to researchers, but no particular efforts to engage researchers proactively are described.

Total	47	20	20
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	18	18	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Alternative pathways for teachers and leaders are authorized by law. Three are presently approved with some 300 teacher candidates in these programs—one principal program is operating with 14 candidates. These alternatives exist and there are plans to augment capacity, but at the moment they are not leading to the production of many of the District's educators. With regard to the assessment of teacher shortages/needs, the proposal asserts that this is not a substantial issue for district schools and those new alternative programs for teacher and leadership preparation will address these shortages. No evidence to support these assertions is provided.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	45	45
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15	15
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	18	18

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The plan for improving teacher and principal effectiveness is well articulated and highly ambitious, with a timetable that identifies the overall implementation schedule. If achieved, these goals will provide solid impacts to the district education reform efforts--specifics with regard to achievement of these ambitious goals are not available Evaluation of educators will significantly depend on the development and implementation of a robust and accessible system that provides data on student growth linked to schools teachers and principals. DCPS will implement the IMPACT system in 2010 that does so and participating charter LEAs will expand and implement a Performance Management Framework that achieves these goals. Yearly evaluations with that tool will be implemented in 2011. This element of the plan allows for local control, but raises issue regarding the overall implementation "state wide." The system does incorporate a 50% weighting for student growth for yearly educator evaluations with other elements of the evaluation well articulated in the plan. The District makes clear in its plan the positive aspect of providing initial and ongoing technical support for the implementation of the yearly evaluations. It also makes clear that these plans will be utilized for various purposes including compensation, promotion, retention, full certification and removal. Overall, this plan may be too ambitious with regard to implementation and impact within the timeframe designated with the application presently lacking descriptions of critical elements that make up the plan.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	16	16
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	11	11
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5	5

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District plan calls for using a "smart targeting" effort to move resources and human capital to where it is needed most. An example of this effort that sends "better" teacher candidates to schools that need such teachers is described, but no overall description of how "smart targeting" would work to reach goals is specified. Targeted grants to participating LEAs will be provided to assist in hard to staff areas and efforts to provide expanded professional development to targeted schools will attempt to address the "high need" issues. However, no details are provided on how this will be done in a sufficiently targeted manner than that described in the overall plan for professional development. Overall, this plan has important components included but lacks specificity.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	10	10
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District Rtt plan calls for making linkages regarding student performance to existent educator preparation programs. This will give the District a new and potentially useful understanding of preparation effectiveness. DC plans to augment the educator preparation program requirements by requiring preparation programs to submit evidence of their candidates' effectiveness in various areas including student performance and to make public the Preparation Program Scorecard. Moreover, teacher

preparation programs face revocation consequences if 25% of candidates are identified as "ineffective" in their second year of service. These high stake consequences require a very solid student data system and linkages to teachers and preparation programs, an ambitious and technically difficult goal to achieve. A new Education Leadership Program leading to a district credential will be created and implemented to address issues of leadership preparation specific to the District. This is an interesting development effort intended to meet the needs of the District, but no evidence is provided that this is an efficient way to address the preparation of leaders for the District. There is no indication in the plan related to assisting programs that may be identified as "ineffective."

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	11	11
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District will utilize IMPACT as a base for the launch of a new Individualized Professional Development Platform for educators. A Human Capital Task Force will oversee the development of this platform and its utilization to support teachers and principals. An RFP will be issued to develop and implement this effort. Rtt resources will be utilized to augment charter LEA funding to implement Professional Development Tied to Evaluation, a system now operative but in need of augmentation to meet higher achievement goals. In addition, the District will launch the Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness, building on present success of present professional learning communities in the District, to direct collaborations aimed at supporting educators. The District plans to utilize data from all these efforts to address continuous improvement however no specifics are provided with regard to these analyses. Therefore, it remains unclear how all this elements of evaluation will be directly linked for purposes of continuous improvement.

Total	138	100	100
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10	10	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District has clear legal authority to intervene to turnaround the lowest performing schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40	40
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District has data plans to identify the lowest performing schools using multiple measure inclusive of student performance but also other measures of school performance that are related to student achievement—this seems a more appropriate, comprehensive and an effective way to identify those schools. It will build on a history of low performing school turnaround utilizing a very comprehensive "turnaround" model with initial enhancements of support to educators coupled with strong measurements of progress, followed by restructuring if progress is not achieved.

Total	50	50	50
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
District budgets for education in 2009 were higher than those for 2008 and allocations of funds to support education take into account higher resource needs for poverty and related student indicators of educational risk.				
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	40	40	
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
There are no limits placed on the number of charter schools in the District--96 charters presently exist. District laws exist articulating clearly the development, implementation and evaluation of charter schools and funding for charters is the same as for non-charters, including the inclusion of a facilities allowance provided for every charter school student. DCPS has a policy mechanism available to develop and implement "innovative and alternative" non-charter schools within its jurisdiction—17 schools are operating under these "autonomous" policies.				
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5	
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
The District has addressed reform actions leading to policies and practices related to education reform, including accountability processes, charter school development and initial efforts to develop and link student growth to educator effectiveness. Efforts to address early education have become part of the education reform agenda as has the partnership with the Gates foundation to improve graduation rates and increase college going. The platform for education reform is quite extensive.				
Total	55	55	55	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0	0	
Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
The District makes a very clear effort to prioritize STEM efforts through the use of Catalyst Schools—an existent effort to maximize student access to STEM futures. These schools partner with key STEM higher education entities and promote professional development of teachers at these schools. These schools could be an important bridge to higher math, engineering and related STEM standards, curriculum assessments and support. However, the potential bridge to that goal is not addressed as it relates to STEM enhancement across all participating LEAs and opportunities for underrepresented groups, particularly in charter LEA schools.				
Total	15	0	0	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

These proposed Rtt efforts build directly on the District's history and present an ambitious plan for reform and for student achievement. The goals, processes and overall implementation strategies are usually well articulated. The success of the plan depends substantively on the development and implementation of key elements of a robust and comprehensive student and educator system. If developed and implemented, the district can add significant value to its education reform efforts.

Total		0	0	
Grand Total	500	389	389	



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #1920 DC 2

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	58	58	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	40	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13	13	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(1)(i) Applicant, the District of Columbia (DC), lists satisfactory goals and performance measures for each of the four ARRA measures: 1- Adopt a Common Core of High-Quality Standards and Assessments: Two goals with four performance measures; 2- Develop Data Systems to Support Instruction: Five goals with five performance measures; 3- Great Teachers & Leaders: Five goals with six performance measures; 4-Turning Around Low-Achieving Schools: One goal with two performance measures; and, submits a table of current practice and RTTT plans by ARRA area (Table A1.1) in narrative. The Applicant states improvement in achievement scores: since 2007, there has been an increase of 9 percentage points in reading and 14 percentage points in math, with a 20 percentage point decrease in the achievement gap. Applicant notes fifty-seven independent charter schools opened in the last decade, which aid the public school reform agenda. Mayoral takeover of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) in 2007 enabled the District of Columbia Mayor to establish a separate, strong state agency. Applicant asserts alignment of the DC RTTT to a Theory of Change that commits to: (1) decrease the number of low-achieving schools, (2) shift mid-achieving schools to higher levels of achievement, and (3) increase the total number of high-achieving schools across the State. (A)(1)(ii) In Appendices A1.4 and A1.5, Applicant includes two MOUs, one for DC Public Schools (DCPS) (with signature line for the Washington Teachers Union and no board signature line) and one for (charter) LEAs (with board signature line). Both MOUs are identical in terms and substance and each includes a table of preliminary scope of work. All required LEA signatures are listed as "Y" in the detailed summary table A1 in the Appendix. **The Washington Teachers Union, representing staff of DCPS, did not sign the MOU, which is a major cause for concern, as DCPS represents 126 schools and 45,772 students in this application. Applicant boasts of reform efforts and improvements, but without teacher support, movement towards increased achievement, particularly in high-poverty, high-minority schools will not be as successful as it could be. (A)(1)(iii) Applicant's RTTT LEA participation has the potential to translate into broad statewide impact. It includes 31 LEAs, 187 schools, 5, 598 teachers, and 64, 766 students; 45, 458 of whom are students in poverty. This equates to over 50% of DC LEAs, 83% of schools, over 90% of teachers, and 85% of students in the state, as well as 85% of the total students in poverty. Many of the District's LEAs helped develop the Applicant's RTTT plan. (A)(1)(iii)(a) Applicant states it's performance target goal is to increase student proficiency rates over the next four years in math and reading by 5 percentage points annually (20 percentage points overall) on the state assessment. Similarly ambitious goals are in place for the National Assessment of Educational Progress, on which DC aims for an increase in NAEP scores by an average of 10 points in both math and reading. In the narrative, Tables A1.2 and A1.3 list annual statewide ESEA goals and NAEP scores, respectively, through 2014. A more detailed breakdown of this analysis, including growth by subgroup, can be found in Appendix A1.6. Also, DC expectations for growth in the absence of RTTT funding can be found in Appendix A1.7. **Applicant

acknowledges the ambition of these goals, and believes with RTTT funding they can be met, based on recent increases in achievement with less funding. (A)(1)(iii)(b) Regarding decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, the Applicant seeks to be the country's first urban education system to fully eliminate the achievement gap. Closing both the race and poverty gaps will be possible through RTTT, as the schools represented in this application reflect a strong base from which to advance the achievement of black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. A more detailed breakdown of this analysis, including achievement gap goals by subgroup, can be found in Appendix A1.6. (A)(1)(iii)(c) The Applicant expects with RTTT reforms in place, an increase in the high school graduation rate by 12 percentage points over baseline measures by 2013 (without RTTT funding, Applicant expects a graduation increase of 5 percentage points). As secondary schools are fully transformed, DC expects this growth to continue at an even higher rate beyond 2013. According to the Applicant, the following RTTT strategies will enable this growth: (1) moving rapidly to turn around struggling secondary schools, which account for a large proportion of the District's lowest-achieving schools; (2) focusing on over-age/under-credited (or "off-track") students through inter-LEA collaboration, and (3) ensuring that teachers and parents have access to quality data about students and schools to help ensure that students are kept on track toward high school graduation. (A)(1)(iii)(d) Increasing college enrollment and college credits earned are overarching goals of DC's reform strategy. With the completion of the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data (SLED) system (described in Section C1), the Applicant will begin to track college enrollment data for DC graduates, with the ultimate goal of monitoring student achievement from elementary school through college completion. Applicant also aims to increase the percentage of college enrollees who earn a year's worth of college credit within 24 months of enrollment by 10 percentage points over four years. (The DCTAG figure for percent of college freshmen returning for a second year, DC's best proxy, is 78%).

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	24	24
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	19	19
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5	5

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(2)(i)(a) It appears that since Mayoral control over education was instituted, building capacity has been a priority of the Mayor for the education system in the District. In considering RTTT implementation, it may be important to note the context of the Applicant's new State Educational Agency, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). The OSSE has articulated a 5-year strategic plan that outlines several state-level priorities that align directly with RTTT in areas such as data and accountability and human capital. In addition to the workgroups responsible for the reform plan across assurance areas, the State Superintendent has directed the formation of an implementation working group, staffed by OSSE, LEA representatives, and the Mayor's office, to begin planning and coordination to ensure that DC is ready to hit the ground running if awarded RTTT funds. This two-pronged approach by OSSE – a team responsible for the overall grant (Project Director, Fiscal Director, Reporting & Implementation Manager, Grant & Contract Analyst, and Research & Data Manager), plus a team responsible for the effective execution of initiatives in the field (Effectiveness Managers) – will ensure that RTTT grant funds are deployed effectively and aligned with LEA work across the four RTTT assurances. (A)(2)(i)(b) The Applicant's OSSE will provide flexible levels of support and help streamline reporting requirements in order to enable LEAs to take greatest advantage of their autonomy and nimbleness. Small, single-school charter LEAs often lack the established infrastructure of DCPS or multi-campus charters. In addition, Applicant asserts that participation by LEAs in the monthly Project Management Team meetings and the assurance-related task forces will ensure that concerns about adequate support to LEAs are raised and addressed in a timely manner. (A)(2)(i)(c) Applicant will create a RTTT office, with both budget- and program-focused staff, to provide the OSSE with the operational capacity to meet RTTT performance goals. The OSSE will purchase RTTT-funded grant administration software so that it can streamline its approach to managing federal grants and increase its overall capacity for grant administration and oversight. This office will also pilot new techniques in performance measure tracking and reporting through the work of the Effectiveness Managers. (A)(2)(i)(d) Applicant maintains that 89% of the proposed budget will flow to LEAs to support LEA implementation of

RTTT assurance area plans, with only 11% being retained at the State for capacity-building and state-level projects. Importantly, the District has outlined specific priorities for LEAs to fund with sub-granted dollars. State and local funds will also be reallocated or repurposed, as necessary, so that they align with DC's RTTT goals. The District's education budget is already aligned to support current reforms, including those that meet RTTT goals, such as the development of evaluation and student instructional improvement systems, or targeted funding to support interventions in struggling schools. The overall budget and budget narrative appear in Appendices A2.3 and A2.4. (A)(2)(i)(e) According to the Applicant, RTTT is well aligned with the focus and structure of education reforms currently underway in the District. Many of these reform efforts are focused on the creation of sustainable organizations, the development of infrastructure, the building of capacity, and the alignment of curriculum, assessments and instruction. As a result, the majority of interventions supported by RTTT funding will be sustainable beyond the grant period. Seventy four (74) percent of requested grant funding is slated for projects that are projected to be sustainable beyond the grant's end and without requiring additional funding. (A)(2)(ii)(a) The one LEA that is unionized, District of Columbia Public Schools, worked with the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) to obtain its support for the Race to the Top application, but the WTU opted not to sign on. **As noted earlier, this is a cause for concern, as DCPS represents 126 schools and 45,772 students in this application. The concerns of the Union should have been stated for clarification regarding their lack of support. Even a small majority of DCPS unionized teachers could substantially sabotage the implementation and outcomes of this initiative. Building-by-building, the Applicant may have to attract buy-in through additional means. (A)(2)(ii)(b) Nineteen letters of support are found in Appendix A.2.5. Supporters include: State legislative leadership, Charter school authorizer/Charter school membership associations, State and local leaders, Community organizations, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs).

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	23	25
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18	20

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(3)(i) The applicant has made progress in each of the RTTT/ARRA Reform areas: Standards and Assessments, Data Systems, Great Teachers and Leaders and School Turnaround. (A)(3)(ii)(a) Although their study excluded charter schools, the 2009 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) report (see Appendix A3.1, which analyzes the NAEP scores of 18 urban school districts nationwide) revealed that fourth and eighth grade students in DCPS increased their math proficiency at faster rates than in other large urban districts. Specifically, on the NAEP math assessment, the Applicant has experienced a gain of 14 scale score points since 2003 in 4th grade math and 11 scale score points since 2003 in 8th grade math. Table A3.1 Statewide NAEP Scores, 2003-2009 is included in the narrative. Since the introduction of the DC-CAS in 2006 (ESEA-required statewide summative assessment), District of Columbia student performance has increased by at least 10 percentage points in elementary reading, elementary math, and secondary reading. Table A3.2 Statewide ESEA Summative Assessment Scores, 2003-2009 is included in the narrative. (A)(3)(ii)(b) The Applicant asserts that the District was the only Jurisdiction in the country to see gains for fourth graders in every NAEP subgroup – male, female, white, black, Hispanic, special education, free and reduced priced lunch, and English Language Learners (ELL) – between 2007 and 2009. Moreover, DC low-income and Hispanic fourth grade students lead the nation in gains. In 2009, virtually every subgroup across the state increased DC-CAS proficiency rates. Special Education students, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged students made the most dramatic gains on this statewide assessment. Detailed data on historical proficiency scores, including scores for subgroups, can be found in Appendix A3.2. (A)(3)(ii)(c) While one calculation of the graduation rate (using the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) leaver rate) rose from 70% in 2008 to 74.7% in 2009, however, to the Applicant's credit, it identified two additional, more rigorous calculations from the EPE Research Center and the Bridgespan Group, which calculated the graduation rate at 48.8% and 43% (within five years) respectively. Accurate graduation rate data are recognized as an urgent need within the State, but efforts to improve the graduation rate cannot wait for new data. In DCPS, a Secondary Schools Transformation Strategy is being

defined to revamp the school system's approach to high school. **One significant component of this strategy will be to connect information about ninth grade credit accumulation with graduation projections, and then link these data to early interventions for eighth and ninth graders. If implemented correctly, this specific strategy holds great promise for identifying issues that may impede high school students' ability and desire to complete high school. Some research suggests that the decision to drop out of high school is made during junior/middle school years, even when students move on to high school before dropping out.

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The state panelists' discussion of minority student achievement on NAEP math scores in grades 4 and 8 led the Reviewer to increase this score by two points.

Total	125	105	107
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1)(i)(a) The Applicant signed on to the Common Core Standards initiative, led by the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council for Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in May 2009. (B)(1)(i)(b) The Common Core Initiative involves a consortium of 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. The full list of consortium members is included in Appendix B1.2. To date, the Common Core Consortium has produced draft College and Career Readiness standards in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. A copy of the draft standards can be found in Appendices B1.3 and B1.4. Draft grade-level standards for K-12 will be complete in early 2010, and a finalized draft of the standards is expected in Spring 2010. (B)(1)(ii) The District of Columbia Division of Assessment and Accountability has proposed to create a new State Academic Standards Council (SASC) to directly advise the State Board of Education on academic content standards and advise on the adoption and implementation of common standards. The SASC will be chaired by the State Superintendent and will be comprised of state and local leaders. Proposed members include representatives of OSSE, the State Board of Education, the higher education community, the PCSB, DCPS, charter LEAs, high school principals, parent groups, the business community, and other interest groups. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 24, 2010, at the monthly State Board of Education public meeting, with a vote tentatively scheduled for the March 17, 2010, State Board of Education public meeting. Because the State Board has been involved in Common Core Standards discussions through the entire process, OSSE anticipates a smooth and efficient adoption process.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10	10
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(2) The Applicant has joined four collaborative efforts to develop high-quality assessments aligned with a common set of K-12 standards. Three Memoranda of Agreement were enacted on January 11, 2010 and an additional Memorandum of Agreement was signed on January 15, 2010 (Appendix B2.1). The Applicant is a member of: The Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) MOU (11 states), the Assessment Consortium MOA (12 states), the State Consortium

Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards MOU (36 states), and The Common Assessment Partnership (27 states). (Appendix B2.2 lists the specific participating states).

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	18	18
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(3) The high quality plan developed by the Applicant includes the following, well-organized parts: Goals, performance measures, and four specific strategies with associated activities, timelines and responsible parties: Goals: Goal 1: Successfully transition to and implement common internationally benchmarked K-12 standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics through clear guidance to all relevant stakeholders (e.g., staff, parents, students, business community, higher education, etc.) and high-quality professional development for teachers and school staff Goal 2: Successfully transition to high-quality assessments, both interim and summative, aligned to these standards Performance Measures: Performance Measure 1: by School Year 2011-12, 100% of participating LEAs will implement interim and summative assessments Performance Measure 2: prior to the rollout of the Common Core Standards in School Year 2011-12, every teacher/principal/administrator statewide (in both participating and non-participating LEAs) will be provided with at least one professional development opportunity on implementing the Common Core Standards. These employees will also receive multiple PD opportunities during School Year 2011-12. ** This measure may need to be increased to more than one PD opportunity prior to implementation in the 2011-12 school year. Performance Measure 3: all participating LEAs will participate in the Common Core Standards Working Group Performance Measure 4: by Fall 2012, the Special Education Data System (SEDS) will be aligned with the Common Core Standard. Specific Strategies: (A) Implement a Fast, Aggressive Rollout Plan for Common Core Standards and Assessments -- Standards Materials, Interim Assessment, Interim Assessment Design and Implementation, Summative Assessment, Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties; (B) Create, Organize, and Fund a Common Core Standards Working Group -- Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties; (C) Create Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning -- Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties; and, (D) Align High School Exit Criteria and College Entrance Requirements -- Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties ** The strategies, sub-components and timelines indicate care and thorough planning on the part of the Applicant. However, there is no discussion regarding any LEA or school-level participation in the above noted activities. School leaders will be an important partner in the implementation of many of the plan strategies.

Total	70	68	68
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6	6	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(1) Applicant will have three of the twelve America COMPETES Act measures in place by June 2010: Unique statewide student identifier (USI), Student-level enrollment, demographic and program participation information, and Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop-out or complete P-16 education programs. The remaining nine components are planned for with a timeline for full integration by 2013.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5	5
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(2) Applicant has goals, performance measures, and specific strategies with associated activities, timelines and responsible parties for the Accessing and Using State Data Criterion. Goal 1: Inform and

engage key stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers and policymakers) through an improved, interactive, user-friendly online database Goal 2: Provide data to decision-makers for the continuous improvement of reform efforts related to policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness Performance Measure 1: by Fall 2011, OSSE will have revised its current website to allow users to view data through a choice of graphic displays and to view data at the school, LEA, and state level (in aggregate or by NCLB subgroup). Performance Measure 2: by Fall 2012, OSSE will have created a more user-friendly website from which users will be able to download aggregate-level data spreadsheets with statistics about students, teachers, and schools that are relevant to decision-making. Strategies and Timelines: (A) Expand Capacity and Systems for Data Access: Activities, Timeline and Responsible Parties: 1. Create a new, user-friendly website that allows key stakeholders easy-to-use access to data through interactive web functions: Fall 2011, OSSE 2. Hold community meetings with parents and other community members to discuss how data can be made more useful to them: Fall 2011, OSSE (B) Enhance Availability of Statewide Data to Key Stakeholders: Activities, Timeline and Responsible Parties: 1. Publish additional data to key stakeholders, including parents, decision-makers, and researchers: Fall 2012, OSSE OSSE will also develop a portfolio of research-ready data sets and an online research request tool to allow researchers or outside organizations to easily apply for access to data. **It should be noted that 1) details for these goals are not included in this description, and, 2) the Applicant does not note the fact that some parents and community members may not necessarily have computer access.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	17	17
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3)(i) According to the Applicant, effective instructional improvement systems perform two functions. First, they provide teachers with actionable data to inform real time decisions and secondly, they provide support for teachers to use those data to inform instruction. Although DCPS currently uses a sophisticated series of interconnected data improvement systems, many charter LEAs lack systems that meet baseline criteria. Consequently, the Applicant's strategy is two-pronged. First, it will fund instructional improvement systems that meet baseline criteria in all participating charter LEAs. Second, it will help DCPS expand its IMPACT evaluation systems, ensuring that DCPS teachers can be strategic with their own improvement efforts (described in Section D5). (C)(3)(ii) According to the Applicant, creating a data-driven culture at the school level requires a resident expert who not only understands how to use data to improve instruction, but who also knows students and staff personally. Participating LEAs have committed to providing teachers with regular planning time for data analysis, and each school will also identify a school-based staff member who can ensure that this time is used effectively. RTTT funding will flow directly to LEAs to fund stipends for a Data Lead or to pay for a portion of a fulltime Data Coach in every school within that LEA. LEAs that already have designated school-level Analysts/Coaches may fund professional development related to the use of data to drive instruction. **A data coach/lead is a worthy expenditure in human capital at all school levels, and especially in the lower grades, where many teachers may not be comfortable with data use. Acknowledgement on behalf of the Applicant that the person in this position must not only understand how to use data to improve instruction, but also know the students and staff is notable. It shows understanding of the complex nature of school improvement and reform; particularly the value of relationships in moving a process forward to institutionalization. (C)(3)(iii) Applicant will work with national education researchers and experts to develop a list of research priorities, an online data-request tool, and a portfolio of research-ready data sets. The online data-request tool will allow researchers to request data while providing Applicant with the ability to monitor requests. Applicant will also provide targeted support to researchers, as needed, in order to ensure that data are understood and properly used. Additionally, the data-request tool will allow Applicant to monitor the research interests of outside organizations. To ensure timely responses to research requests, Applicant will provide several research-ready data sets available on request. The datasets will provide data in the following key areas: (1) data on teachers and teacher preparation programs, (2) student achievement of different student populations, (3) financial reporting data, and (4) data on statewide research priorities. Applicant will also provide all state level data stripped of personal identifiers in a simple, downloadable data format. **However, most LEAs indicated "N" in this column (C)(3)(iii) on the summary Table A1 in the Appendix.

Total	47	28	28
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	21	21	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District's overarching goal for the Great Teachers and Leaders reform area: by Spring 2014, teacher and principal effectiveness will have improved an average of 15% over baseline measures in participating LEAs. (D)(1)(i) In 2008, in recognition of the need for talent committed to raising student achievement, the Applicant completely overhauled requirements for teacher and principal licensure, and approved new standards for post-baccalaureate, non-degree educator preparation programs. The Applicant has regulatory language recognizing alternative certification. It appears in the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) Title 5, Chapter 16, Professional Education Requirements. Section §1601.11 explicitly stipulates that both participants and graduates of recognized alternative certification (non-IHE) programs as well as traditional higher education programs may be licensed. Section §1667 outlines the licensure requirements for school administrators. Like the teaching regulations, these regulations were overhauled in 2008 and support alternatively prepared principals and assistant principals. The new regulations recognize that well-qualified candidates may have advanced degrees outside the field of education, such as a Masters in Business Administration (MBA). In addition, the new regulations broaden the educational leadership requirement to recognize school-based experience outside the classroom as well as other educational leadership roles. They also expressly recognize non-IHE providers of state-approved administrator certification programs. The specifications are provided in Appendix D1.2. (D)(1)(ii) The Applicant's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) approved three programs as alternate certification providers for teachers in 2009: The New Teacher Project (TNTP), Center for Inspired Teaching (CIT), and Teach For America (TFA). Thus, of the ten teacher credentialing programs in the State, three are alternative providers. Currently, 272 teachers are pursuing alternative certification through one of these programs. Required evidence: Teachers Enrolled in Alternative Preparation Programs by Subject Area, SY 2009-2010 is listed in Appendix D1.3. The District's OSSE approved New Leaders for New Schools (New Leaders) as an alternative provider for principals, becoming one of four approved certification programs in the state for administrators. There are currently 14 New Leaders in residency, preparing for leadership roles in the School Year 2010-11. In School Year 2008-09, the total number of principals "required to be certified" in DC was 231, with only 53% (or 122 principal) in compliance. As with teacher certification, the inclusion of New Leaders as a certification option means that (1) a large proportion of total DC principals will be alternatively certified, and (2) DC will likely see a higher overall proportion of principals in compliance with certification. Narrative information on New Leaders program in Appendix D1.3. (D)(1)(iii) Applicant has a less than 1% vacancy rate for teachers. The alternative certification providers are helpful in creating pipelines for potential shortage areas, providing human capital for areas such as special education, math, science, early childhood, bilingual education and foreign language. The District has a position control system and staffing specialists who work with principals to ensure that all budgeted positions are filled before the start of the school year. DCPS' principal recruitment team works year-round to ensure that there are many qualified candidates for every potential position and has thus far been successful in ensuring a quality leadership pipeline. By May, principal vacancies are known and the Chancellor begins to fill them for the upcoming year. **More details regarding the monitoring and evaluating areas of principal and teacher shortage would have served to clarify this portion of the Applicant's plan.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51	51
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15	15
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21	21

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(2) The Applicant has a high-quality, very ambitious plan to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. All of the criteria in (D)(2) are met in the plan. (D)(2)(i) The Applicant asserts that per the signed MOUs, all participating LEAs have committed to measuring student growth with a common, statewide growth measure to be determined in 2010. This means that 85% of students in DC will be enrolled in schools where teachers are evaluated using a common growth measure. For the LEA DC Public Schools, beginning with the School Year 2009-10, DCPS will use a value-added measure for student growth that shows the amount of "value" a teacher has added to a student or set of students that enabled them to succeed beyond expected growth projections (explained in Appendix D2.1). For the Charter LEAs, The Performance Management Framework (PMF) of the Public Charter School Board was introduced in January 2009 and is currently being rolled out to all charter LEAs as a valuable tool for measuring school effectiveness. The PMF student growth measure, which was designed to give the PCSB information about school-level performance, compares a student's growth relative to what is needed to reach proficiency. According to the applicant, both measures were developed with considerable input from teachers and principals. (D)(2)(ii)/(D)(2)(iii) Applicant has set high goals and performance measures for this criterion. In addition, all participating LEAs have committed to do the following: -- Design and implement evaluation systems that meet OSSE-defined criteria, including 50% tied to student growth; -- Conduct annual evaluations; -- Use evaluations to inform individualized professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, removal and tenure/full certification. In School Year 2009-10, DCPS successfully launched IMPACT, an evaluation system that links teacher evaluation to student growth. IMPACT combines teacher performance based on student growth with performance according to the Teaching and Learning Framework and other indicators to generate an overall score for effectiveness. This score is calculated as follows: (1) individual value-added student growth measure (50%), (2) Performance on Teaching and Learning Framework indicators, such as planning, instructional delivery, and assessment (40%), (3) Commitment to School Community (5%), and (4) School Value Added, a composite of individual value added scores (5%). Teachers receive five formal observations each year to determine proficiency on the Teaching and Learning Framework indicators. IMPACT system is clarified in Appendix D2.1. **The District-launched IMPACT evaluation system is an impressive teacher evaluation system. After reviewing all of the components, it becomes clear as to why the Washington Teachers Union did not sign on to it. Linking annual longitudinal student achievement to teachers is a form of accountability that most teacher unions would take issue with. However, the time has come for teachers and principals/leaders to be held accountable for their "results" as in any other profession. The DCPS should be applauded for their efforts in this area. RTTT funding will signal support for the kind of change in accountability that can result in increased student achievement for those students persistently left behind, and when refined with practice, can be used as a national model. (D)(2)(iv)(a)/(b)/(d) The Applicant's high quality plan to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance includes use of evaluations to inform decisions regarding all criteria except for (D)(2)(iv)(c), granting of tenure or full certification, part of which is not applicable. Table D2.2 Use of Evaluation for Human Capital Decisions in the narrative, lists specific actions to be taken by both DCPS and Charter LEAs (listed separately) in response to this criterion.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	23	23
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	14	14
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	9	9

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(3)(i) According to the Applicant, since minority students make up nearly 94% of DC's public school enrollments, the District is a majority-minority state, with minorities making up the vast majority of enrollments in all District schools. Thus the SEA's Teacher Equity Plan is focused on ensuring specifically that high-poverty children are not taught by unqualified, inexperienced teachers at higher rates than other students. To date, statewide teacher distribution data reveals that impoverished children in DC are more likely to be taught by an experienced teacher (one with more than five years of experience) than more affluent students. Ensuring that students have access to the highest quality teachers as measured by effectiveness – and not length of service or other indicators of the "Highly Qualified Teacher" definition – is an important directional shift for the District of Columbia. Strategies include: 1- Improve Process for Analyzing Equitable Distribution of Effectiveness 2- Engage in Smart Targeting In addition, if ineffective teachers are subject to termination, the District can ensure that students in high-poverty schools are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. (D)(3)(ii) The District will pursue two primary strategies for increasing effectiveness of teachers in hard-to-staff areas. First, the District will build a stronger human capital pipeline through recruitment and selection efforts. Second, DC will provide meaningful professional development to teachers already in classrooms. Strategies include: 1- Plans for the Individualized PD Platform pave the way for subject-specific exemplars to be accessed by teachers to raise the overall bar for quality in hard-to-staff areas. 2- Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness (PLaCEs) will focus on key reform agenda areas, including STEM and Special Education, with the goal of increasing overall school quality and effectiveness of teachers, particularly in hard-to-staff areas. **While the above strategies are worthwhile, and should produce results, more details are required. For example, details on how the "pipeline" strategy will work. **Another example of conscientious thinking: Applicant has actively considered using incentives to entice teachers to work in for hard-to-staff schools and content areas, and – likely in contrast to other states – has rejected this approach. Here's the interesting part – The District believes that teachers should not be rewarded prior to demonstrating effectiveness: doing so defeats the purpose of the effectiveness measure and may even entice the wrong teachers to serve in areas where effectiveness is needed most.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	14	14
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i) The Applicant has set the following goals and performance measures: Goal 1: Improve the quality of information available about teacher and principal preparation Goal 2: Increase the proportion of teachers and principals who are prepared through programs that equip them to be highly effective Performance Measure 1: by Fall of 2012, aggregated information on effectiveness of graduates of teaching programs will be publicly available. Performance Measure 2: by Fall of 2015, any credentialing program with more than 25% of its second-year participants deemed "ineffective" (i.e., the lowest of four tiers) by LEAs may have their program approval subject to revocation by the State. Strategies: -- Evaluate Preparatory Programs (alternative routes and IHE) Based on Teacher/Principal Effectiveness -- Launch an Education Leadership Degree Program -- Build Pipelines of Effective and Highly Effective Teachers Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties for each strategy are also articulated. (D)(4)(ii) One way to expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals is to initiate an Education Leadership Degree Program specifically designed to specifically suit the needs of DC Public Schools. As stated in the application, "A DC-designed graduate degree, possibly a Masters in Business Administration or a Masters in Public Administration, will be designed by DCPS in collaboration with the charter and higher education sectors for potential DCPS and charter school leaders. The program will offer core change management courses for all participants and will also include content-specific courses designed to provide select participants with expertise that will target DC's critical school leadership needs, including turnaround of low-achieving schools. This degree program will also develop modules for entire leadership teams to jointly access important management training. Participants in the degree-granting program will commit to serving in a DC public school (DCPS or charter) for five years upon program completion." Interestingly, the focus of this degree is management; the Applicant asserts that most school administrators come from the teaching ranks, where such skills such as, developing a strategic vision, engage stakeholders, managing resources have not historically been developed. Hence, a more

management focused degree. Applicant believes a combination of rigorous graduate coursework paired with a passion for and background in education can provide the right set of skills to manage a school towards high performance. This is an interesting concept worth exploring. Applicant has developed a Request for Applications: State Approved Educator Preparation Programs, found in Appendix D1.1.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	20	20
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i) Goal: Create customized professional development experiences based on individual needs and leverage pockets of effectiveness within DC to improve overall educator effectiveness Strategies: -- Launch Individualized PD Platform that will be: individualized, robust, teacher-centered and self-service oriented. -- Support Charter Professional Development Solutions Tied to Evaluations: Charter schools will develop evaluation systems based on the specifications already noted in D2 with funding for the development of PD solutions that tie to needs identified in evaluations. -- Launch Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness (PLaCEs) in which schools will join professional collaboratives anchored by high-achieving schools as a means to engage educators in professional development and adult learning experiences that will positively affect their impact on students. Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties for each strategy are also articulated. (D)(5)(ii) The District will develop PD Tracking Capabilities in the Individualized PD Platform to evaluate professional development. The Individualized PD Platform will allow LEAs to match student growth with the teacher professional development that may have contributed to such growth. This will be done by automatically tracking any resources a teacher/administrator uses while logged into the system, and asking teachers and principals to track all offline professional development activities in which they participate. When matched with value-added data, DC will be able to identify PD activities that make differentiated contributions to teacher development. Activities, Timeline And Responsible Parties for this strategy are also articulated.

Total	138	129	129
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10	10	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(1) Applicant has statutory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools. The DC Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 (DC Law §17-9, June 12, 2007) abolished the local Board of Education, which had oversight for the public school system, and placed direct authority for DCPS with the Mayor. DC Official Code §38-172 now states, "the Mayor shall govern the public schools in the District of Columbia. The Mayor shall have authority over all curricula, operations, functions, budget, personnel, labor negotiations and collective bargaining agreements, facilities, and other education-related matters..." When the City Council approved the Mayor's request to take control of the historically low-achieving DCPS system in 2007, it established the legal and governance structure for the State to directly intervene in the state's lowest achieving schools: unique to DC as a city-state, the Mayor is the state's highest-ranking official and equivalent to the Governor. With regard to charter schools/LEAs, Applicant states that charter schools in the District of Columbia are chartered by an independent DC agency, the Public Charter School Board (PCSB), and governed by separate Boards of Trustees at the charter schools, which are independent DC nonprofit corporations. Provisions of the School Reform Act of 1995 (D.C. Official Code §38-1800 et seq.) in DCMR §934.1 give the Public Charter School Board the authority to revoke a charter (i.e., close the school) if the school has "failed to meet the goals and student academic achievement expectations set forth in the charter." The DC Public Charter School Board is the only entity

charged with the authority to close public charter schools and is responsible for monitoring charter school quality.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40	40
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(2) The Applicant has had extensive experience and history with turnaround school projects. Their plan includes goals, performance measures, specific strategies and activities, timelines and responsible parties: Goal: Intervene with DC's persistently lowest-achieving schools through closure or another turnaround model that puts them on a trajectory for dramatically improved student achievement by creating conditions of support and attracting high-quality human capital to turnaround schools Performance Measure 1: by 2014, all schools that have undergone at least two years of a turnaround model will have demonstrated a rate of growth in student academic proficiency that exceeds the average statewide rate of growth by 1.5 to 2 times in Year 2, and by 2-3 times in Years 3 and 4. Performance Measure 2: by 2014, all the DCPS schools that have undergone at least one year of a turnaround model will be showing gains on leading indicators to be identified by the Office of School Innovation, such as attendance and credit recovery in secondary schools In order to achieve these goals, DC will implement the following strategies: (A) Identify and Plan for the Turnaround of Persistently Lowest-achieving Schools; (B) Create Pipelines of Turnaround Leaders; (C) Provide Preparation Support for Potential Turnaround Teams; (D) Align School Modernization Efforts to Support School Turnaround; (E) Provide Differential Funding for Turnaround Schools; and, (F) Ensure Capacity for Strong Management of Turnaround Partner. Of the District's 173 Title I schools, 133 have been identified for improvement. Five percent of this total – the requirement for persistently lowest-achieving schools – represents seven schools. In addition, 38 schools are currently under restructuring status and 21 schools are planning for restructuring this year (44% of all Title I schools identified for improvement). Overall, the Applicant has identified two types of schools for turnaround: (1) schools with graduation rates below 60% over a two year-period, and (2) the lowest-achieving 5% of Title I schools identified for improvement. To determine this group, DC has created a definition of low-achieving that is based on statewide criteria, including: (1) number of years a school has not made AYP, (2) overall growth in achievement in the school, and (3) current overall achievement level of the school, separate and apart from whether the school is improving achievement. In the narrative, Applicant includes Table E2.1 School Intervention History and Lessons Learned, SY2004-05 – present. Intervention models: Turnaround – seven schools; Restart – four schools; Closure – 47 schools; and Transformation – 13 schools. Table E2.2 School Intervention Lessons Learned and RTTT Turnaround Plan Implications lists the lesson learned and the corresponding implications for the current RTTT Turnaround plan. For example, Lesson Learned: The success of turnaround work depends on having strong leadership and a human capital strategy with specific turnaround training is critical. Implications: Leadership Training: As noted in Section D4, DCPS plans to work with a university partner to develop an Education Leadership Degree with a strand in turnaround management to equip potential leaders with necessary skills. In addition, the Applicant has indicated in the Appendix, E2.2, a list of the History of Turnaround Schools, including the year of the turnaround intervention and type of intervention model used.

Total	50	50	50
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(1)(i) Total revenues for education P-20 increased .4% in 2009 over 2008 and the education budget makes up 23.5 % of the total District of Columbia budget in 2009, an increase of 1.3 percentage points over the 2008 budget. (F)(1)(ii) The Applicant uses the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF), as outlined in DC Official Code § 38-2901 to 2912. Each student receives a 'foundation level' of funding, established by law. Additional individual student weightings are applied based on grade level, special education level, and limited/non-English proficiency, as appropriate (a complete description of the UPSFF weightings is provided in Appendix F1.2). Additional Title I funds flow through OSSE to District LEAs serving children living at the greatest poverty levels.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools

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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(2)(i) The Applicant indicates that DC Official Code § 38-1802.03 allows eligible chartering authorities to approve up to twenty annual petitions to establish a public charter school. Twenty charter petitions represents slightly less than 10% of the total number of schools in the District. The Applicant has 57 charter LEAs and 96 charter campuses serving 28,066 students in the District; 38.0% of public school children attend public charter schools and 42.5% of DC schools are charters. (F)(2)(ii) The District's charter law provisions explicitly outline how charter authorizers approve, monitor and oversee, hold accountable, reauthorize, and, as needed, revoke charters [see D.C. Official Code §38-1802.01 -03 (approval), §38-1802.13 §38- 1802.11 (oversight), §38-1802.12 (renewal), §38-1802.13 & 13a (revocation)]. DC Code § 38-1802.06 establishes DC's public charter schools as open-enrollment institutions, open to all DC resident children. This statutory provision explicitly prohibits public charter schools from limiting enrollment on the basis of a student's race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs (although public charter schools may limit enrollment to specific grade levels). Public charter schools, like DCPS, are required to provide a continuum of services and serve all students regardless of special needs. In cases where student applications exceed capacity, local statute requires that public charter schools use a random selection process or lottery to admit students. DC's public charter schools currently serve 88% African-American, 8% Latino (a), and 80% economically disadvantaged students, which reflect higher concentrations of minority and economically disadvantaged than enrollments in DCPS schools. Required evidence is reported in Table F2.2 DC Charter Authorization History, 2004-08. (F)(2)(iii) Applicant has equitable funding for all schools, including charters. (F)(2)(iv) According to the Applicant, in order to make public school facility space more accessible to charter schools, DC Official Code § 38-1802.09 gives the "right of first offer" for any current or former public school property to "an eligible applicant whose petition to establish a public charter school has been conditionally approved." Also, in addition to UPSFF funding, public charter schools also receive a per-student facilities allowance, established by DC Official Code § 38-2908. In FY 2010, this amount is \$2,800 per pupil, which can be used for facilities leasing, purchase, financing, construction, maintenance, and repair. DC Official Code § 38-1804.01 further allows the Mayor and the District of Columbia Council to "adjust the amount of the annual payment ... to increase the amount of such payment for a public charter school to take into account leases or purchases of, or improvements to, real property, if the school... requests such an adjustment." The Applicant also included Figure F2.1 Charter School Facilities Allowance, FY 2001-08 in the narrative. (F)(2)(v) School autonomy is important to charter and non-charter school success and growth, as evidenced by the Applicant's Chancellor-created DCPS' Office of School Innovation (OSI) to increase the level of diversity and innovation in DCPS' school portfolio. The OSI is currently focused on the development and implementation of nine different innovative school models, three of which are autonomous school models: Autonomous Schools, DC Collaborative for Change (DC3), and Partnership Schools. Currently, 17 DCPS schools operate under one of these three autonomous projects.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

5

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5

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(3) The Applicant offers the following initiatives as evidence of 'other significant reform conditions': Universal Pre-Kindergarten: In 2008, the DC Council passed the "Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion

Act" (DC Official Code § 38-273.01), which embodies the strong commitment of DC to school readiness. The act is a multi-pronged initiative that will create high-quality and universally available Pre-Kindergarten (PK) education services in DC, through a mixed delivery system that includes DCPS, public charter schools, community-based organizations, and Head Start by 2014. Special Education Interventions: -- Schoolwide Application Model (SAM) (15 elementary schools and one early childhood center): SAM is a response to intervention (RtI) model, meaning that individual student achievement and behavior data is used to identify required student supports for progression according to grade level. -- Full Service Schools (FSS) (11 middle schools): a school model that brings together best practices in instructional design, behavior management, and mental health support for middle schools in school restructuring status. FSS also uses RtI logic to identify and create systems to address school-wide needs in the areas of academic achievement and student behavior. -- College Graduation Initiative: In 2007, a group of DC stakeholders partnered with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to create the Double the Numbers (DTN) Coalition, a group whose sole purpose is to increase the number of DC students who graduate from college. Since then, the number of partners and coalition members has grown to 40. DTN partners include Mayor Fenty, the DC Council, the DC Board of Education, DCPS, the Washington Teachers' Union, PCSB, OSSE, the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, the DC College Access Program, the DC College Success Foundation, the DC Education Compact, the DC Public Charter School Association, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Beginning with the students who entered ninth grade in September of 2006 and who are high school seniors in School Year 2009- 10, the DTN Coalition seeks to double the number of 9th graders who (a) finish high school within five years, (b) enroll in college, and (c) graduate from college in a timely fashion.

Total	55	54	54
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

With regard to schools with a science, technology, engineering and mathematics focus, in 2004, DCPS re-opened McKinley Tech Senior High School – a previously low-achieving high school – as the District's first ever STEM high school. McKinley represents a success both as a STEM program and a turnaround model. Closed years earlier as a result of underperformance, McKinley reopened in a fully modernized facility with a completely new STEM academic program. High enrollment in – and demand for – McKinley's STEM program, together with measurable academic growth among its students, has influenced DC's plans to increase its emphasis on STEM as an important part of reform efforts. As recently as July 2009, the Mayor and Chancellor named 13 DC Public Schools selected for transformation into theme-based Catalyst Schools, following a competitive application process. Of these 13 winning schools, six submitted proposals to be STEM schools and are spending School Year 2009-10 creating school design plans to ensure a clearly defined school model for successful STEM delivery. All 13 Catalyst Schools are comprehensive models (i.e., open to all students) and do not require a special admissions process, thus providing STEM access to all students – including more females (who may be underrepresented via application-only STEM programs and are underrepresented in STEM professions in general). The STEM plan would be stronger if acknowledgement and significance were placed on emphasizing elements of STEM in the early grades, thereby building in a more natural path for developing student interest in these four subject areas.

Total	15	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District of Columbia's overall application comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria demonstrating that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The application describes how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use RTTT and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. This application is thoughtful, well-prepared, and uses examples of previous experience and practice in the many areas of school and LEA reform already in place in the District.

Total		0	0	
Grand Total	500	449	451	



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

District Of Columbia Application #1920DC-3



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	56	56	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	40	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The DC reform agenda will impact 85% of the District's public schools and is designed to reform education for not only the lowest performing schools, but for the mid achieving and high achieving schools as well. During the four-year span of the proposed reform agenda, DC plans to implement interventions at the LEA level, institute charter school accountability, and turnaround or close persistently low performing schools. The reform agenda is particularly aggressive in its reach as the reform initiatives will go beyond the identified 5% of low performing schools to encompass the lowest performing 20% of the schools in the District. The DC application contains documentation to verify that 31 LEAs have committed to the reform agenda. In agreeing to participate, the LEAs will conduct performance based teacher evaluations, using student achievement for 50% of the evaluation, implement professional development systems, effective teacher pipeline programs, provide teachers and principals with data on student performance, and use instructional improvement systems. The DC application gives a historical perspective on the reforms currently in place and sets the stage for a sense of urgency to implement the proposed initiatives. The data given in the narrative indicates that the grade level proficiency for both elementary and secondary students, along with the high school graduation rate, were significantly below established expectations. The out migration of students, along with a persistently large achievement gap, set the stage for instructional and systemic changes that have already begun to increase the performance of students and schools. The current reform agenda focuses on six objectives that increase performance by 5 percentage points per year, close the minority achievement gap by 5 percentage points per year, close the poverty achievement gap by 3.5 percentage points per year, increase NAEP scores by 10 points, raise high school graduation by 3 percentage points per year, and increase college enrollment by 5 percentage points per year. A comparison of the proposed reforms with those currently underway indicates that the proposed reform agenda is coherent with and is a logical extension of the work being implemented in the District. The concern that arises is, given the level of historically low student achievement, whether the use of the requested funds to serve schools at three performance levels would limit the resources needed to support and reform the lowest tier of schools. In this section of the application, the District described a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four ARRA education areas and for improving student outcomes Districtwide. The agenda establishes a clear path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the reform plans that the District has proposed throughout its application. The number of points awarded is due to the concern as to whether the expansive nature of the intended reforms will limit the District's ability to fully reform the lowest tier of struggling schools. Section ii-The DC reform agenda was prepared with LEA participation and input, with more than half of the RttT workteams comprised of LEA representatives. As a result, the collaborative efforts ensured LEA commitment to the work outlined in the reform plan. The DC MOU was designed to include an extra signature line for the Washington Teacher's

Union. Because of the unique governing structure of the District, the local board of education line was removed. The 31 participating LEAs signed the MOU agreeing to implement at least 4 standards and assessment elements (align curriculum with Common Core Standards and consortium developed assessments, implement interim assessments, provide training and professional development on alignment of common standards, and organize community meetings to explain common standards and assessments); 4 data system elements (implement the longitudinal data system, develop a local instructional improvement system, use data to improve instruction, and provide teachers with regularly scheduled planning time); 4 great teacher and leader elements (improve teacher and principal effectiveness, conduct annual evaluations, analyze and develop a plan to improve equitable distribution of teachers and principals, and report teacher effectiveness); and 1 element related to turning around the lowest achieving schools (implement one of four turnaround models for persistently low performing schools). Additionally, each LEA agreed to prepare and implement an approved scope of work that contains specific goals, activities, timelines, and targets for each element of the plan. Funding will then be allocated to the LEAs based on the approved workplan. As the reform agenda work is implemented, DC will require LEAs to publically post the workplan along with the accomplishments and gains realized. While the District plans to approve the LEA workplan and guide the work of all 31 LEAs, the success of the plan appears to rely more on the level of interest and momentum demonstrated by the LEA as an indicator of its ability to implement the workplan than the actual capacity level of the LEA to conduct its own reforms. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that the participating LEAs are committed to the District's plan and to implement the reforms in the four education areas and the workplan as outlined in the MOU. The District has obtained a commitment and signature from the LEA and requires each participating LEA to implement an approved workplan. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the District's inability to get a signed commitment from the teacher's union and the concern whether the LEAs will have the capacity to implement the workplan requirements. Section iii-The District explained that many of the LEAs electing to not participate in the reform agenda are small single school charters that may not have their needs and capabilities aligned with the scale of the proposed reform agenda. The concern that follows is whether the District has designed a reform agenda that strategically focuses on larger systems and reduces the support given to the smaller schools in the District. The District indicated that while the majority of the initiatives are focused at the LEA and school level, the District also intends to reorganize its functions in order to provide support to LEAs that may need assistance in implementing the school improvement initiatives. The District describes its student achievement target as "ambitious." During the four years of the funded plan, DC intends to increase student proficiency rates in math and reading, and increase NAEP scores at a rate that exceeds the gains achieved by any urban school district. The District also plans to implement Common Core Standards and align and modify the District's summative assessment. Additionally, the District prepared growth expectations and made comparisons in projected student growth with and without funding for the current proposal. In addition to overall achievement gains, the District intends to fully eliminate the achievement gap and during the four years of the current proposal, the District plans to close the black/Hispanic-white achievement gap by 20 percentage points, and close the achievement gap for low income students by at least 3 percentage points per year. Also, the District plans to increase the high school graduation rate by 12 percentage points and, with the help of a Double the Numbers coalition, increase college enrollment and college credits earned. The District's reform agenda, while consistent with the four reform areas, may not be attainable within the designated timeframe. The District proposes to provide support as the workplan is implemented; however, the reform agenda does not include detailed plans on the structural and human capacity building that will be needed for the LEA to formulate strategies and interventions that address high achievement targets and effectively implement a large reform agenda. In addition, the reliance on individual LEA workplan development, while effective in garnering local support for the work, may result in implementation gaps and inconsistent results that could prevent the District from attaining the proposed achievement targets. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that the reform plan should translate into impact on the participating LEAs, increase student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, decrease achievement gaps between subgroups, increase high school graduation rates and increase college enrollment and the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a college degree. The number of points awarded to this section is due to the question as to whether the targeted gains can actually be realized within the four years of this grant, and the concern that reliance on LEA workplan development may result in implementation gaps and inconsistent results.

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

During the Tier 2 presentation, the state indicated that they analyzed historic achievement trends and made percentage gain projections based on what they believe can be accomplished with the RttT funding. Presenters expressed confidence in being able to attain the proposed achievement targets and reliance on their human capital theory of change to drive the desired continuous improvement.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	22	22
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	7

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The District plans to use an implementation work group to monitor and implement the 5 year strategic plan and to ensure that it is consistent with the 4 year RttT reform agenda. Additionally, since previous DC grant management has not met expectations, the newly formed implementation work group, with its broad representation, will closely monitor grant funds and proposed initiatives. To this end, the District will designate a project director, fiscal director, reporting and implementation manager, grant and contract analyst, research and data manager, and three effectiveness managers. In addition to the SEA management structure, the District will use a RttT project management team that will guide the implementation of the District's reform plan. The District will also create a human capital task force and a student growth measure task force to oversee the work in these areas. The District proposes to use its expanded internal structure to support LEAs that need assistance and plans to work closely with the project management team to address LEA needs. The District also plans to leverage the existing LEA collaborations to build cooperative capacity models. The District's management model is certainly designed to ensure that sufficient budgetary and programmatic oversight is given to the reform plan and the District's thorough analysis of budget utilization provides a clear indication that the District intends to properly manage and sustain the improvement initiatives. However, the previously raised concern that the District's role is primarily designed to be oversight, with the actual reform work to be developed and implemented by the LEA, is reinforced in this portion of the application. The reliance on cooperative capacity through LEA collaborations places additional collegial responsibility on districts that may not have the resources to share across district lines. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it intends to provide leadership and dedicated teams to implement its reform plan and support participating LEAs that need support in implementing the education reform plans. The District plans to establish structures to provide effective operations and processes for implementing grant funds, grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement. Additionally, the District plans to continue the reform initiatives funded under the grant. The reduction in points awarded to this section is due to the absence of detailed plans to identify and evaluate promising practices, evaluate these practices' effectiveness, cease ineffective practices, or widely disseminate and replicate the effective practices Districtwide, along with the concern that the District describes its role to be primarily oversight, with the actual reform work to be developed and implemented by the LEA without clear plans to build the capacity of the LEA to do the proposed work. Section ii-Letters of support for the District's reform agenda were given by the charter school association, state board of education, political leaders, community organizations such as the DC Public Education Fund, and four local universities. The District reported that even though individual teachers and principals who attended the community engagement forum expressed support for the DC application, the Washington Teachers' Union did not give support to the plan. The lack of endorsement from the teachers union generates a concern that the lack of endorsement may create additional challenges for the District's application as the essential instructional changes that will need to be implemented in order to realize higher student achievement will have to be embraced and implemented by classroom teachers. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated support for its reform plan from a variety of stakeholders. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the concern that the lack of support from the teacher's union for the District's application may create barriers and challenges to getting teachers to make the essential instructional changes that will be needed to realize the student achievement goals targeted in the plan.

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

During the Tier 2 presentation, the state indicated that they worked with Parthenon to do a financial analysis of the state's resources. The analysis showed that the majority of the interventions (PD portal, adoption of standards, etc.) are one-time expenditures and that approximately 25% of the work will need resources in order for the interventions to be sustained. The state further explained that they planned to capture some of the current budget funds and redirect the funds toward expenditures that will sustain the proposed practices. The state indicated that one area in which they planned to capture funds is in special education. Specifically, the state indicated that they planned to provide an array of least restrictive placements for special education students and recapture some of the \$150 million currently being spent in out of district placements. Additionally, the state explained that they planned to require that the non-negotiable components of the MOU to be included in the LEA workplan, therefore ensuring consistency in the interventions that will be implemented. Districts and schools will be evaluated according to a point system that will include continued improvement in student achievement.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	20	20
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15	15

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The DC application discussed several initiatives that have already been implemented in the four education reform areas. In standards and assessments, in 2005, the District adopted and received recognition for its new standards, adopted a new assessment that was aligned to the new standards, implemented AP course offerings, and opened a new International Baccalaureate charter school. In data systems, the District used a 2007 SLDS grant to develop a Districtwide longitudinal data system that included unique student identifiers, and is in the process of building a data system to track IDEA services for children ages 3-5. In great teachers and leaders, the DC BOE adopted new regulations and options for teacher credentialing, including approval of alternative preparation providers. The District developed a Teacher Human Capital Team that oversees teacher recruitment, selection, compensation, recognition and retention, and team implemented a new teacher evaluation system that is based on student performance and growth. Additionally, the Chancellor proposed a pay-for-performance plan. In school turnaround, DC closed 30 underperforming schools, turned around or restarted 11 schools, and closed 12 underperforming charter schools. The District now evaluates charter schools using common academic and non-academic measures, and implements a P-8 design for middle schools. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps and in making progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas. Section ii-While the District acknowledged earlier in this application that it has much work to do to increase student achievement and close minority achievement gaps, it also explains that in the past two years, DC has made faster and more significant achievement growth than any other area of the country. The District provided data to demonstrate that on the NAEP assessment, DC gained 14 scale score points in 4th grade math and 11 scale score points in 8th grade math, and was the only district to grow more than 5 scale score points in both elementary and secondary math. The District was recognized for the rigor of the District standards and for its efforts to adopt a District assessment that is similar to the level of rigor in NAEP. Student performance on the new assessment has improved in elementary reading and math, as well as in secondary reading. DC also reports that between 2007 and 2009, it was the only jurisdiction to have gains in every NAEP subgroup and that in 2009, every subgroup made gains in the level of proficiency on the District summative assessment. The District reports gains in closing the achievement gap for both black and Hispanic students and cited data from both NAEP and the District assessment as evidence. The application included data to show that achievement gaps still exist for low income and disadvantaged students and that gaps still exist between the proficiency levels of male and female students. The District indicated that the increases in student achievement are due to instructional changes around use of class time, the implementation of differentiated, engaging instruction, and ensuring that schools have effective leaders. In addition to the District's

calculations for graduation rates, DC uses other measures to examine the rate of student graduation from the District system. The calculations were used to support the move to an adjusted cohort graduation rate and to determine the target graduation rates for the District's reform agenda. Additionally, the District implemented a Secondary Schools Transformation Strategy to revamp its approach to high school. The District's reform efforts have yielded gains and visible results in the areas described; however the concern arises as to whether the quick gains are in large part the result of the newly imposed expectations and movement from an exceptionally low level of performance. If so, the District may need to ensure that LEAs sustain the work already implemented and focus their efforts on techniques and instructional interventions that will sustain a high level of student growth. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated improvement in student outcomes overall and by student subgroup, increases in student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, decreases in achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, and increases in high school graduation rates. The number of points awarded to this section is due to the concern that the quick gains may be the result of the newly imposed expectations rather than proven instructional practices that will need to be sustained over time. The District would need to analyze the achievement data and explore the connections between the data and the sustainable actions that have contributed to sudden academic gains to determine if the projected goals are fully attainable.

Total	125	98	98
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-DC is scheduled to adopt the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics in March 2010, and plans to implement the standards in the 2011-2012 school year. The application states that there are 48 states involved in the Common Core Standards initiative and a copy of the MOU that DC signed to show its commitment to the adoption of the standards was included in the supporting materials. In addition to the Common Core Standards consortium, the District currently participates in a 21 state consortium to develop and adopt English Language Proficiency Standards. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards through its participation in a consortium that is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards that are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation. The consortium includes a significant number of states. Section ii-The application indicates that the DC governance structure allows standards to be adopted more quickly than in other states. Like other states, new standards have to be recommended by the state superintendent and approved by the state board of education; however, the application states that this process can be conducted with minimal committee work. DC began the adoption process in 2009 when the District invited public comment on the standards and conducted two public surveys. The standards are scheduled to be adopted in March 2010 and the District has prepared a transition plan to implement the standards. The District plans to continue its work on standards adoption by forming a new State Academic Standards Council and two panels that will analyze and align the Common Core Standards with the current DC standards. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards by March 2010 and to implementing the standards after adoption.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10	10
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

In 2005-06, DC adopted a new District assessment that was aligned to the NAEP and the District's new, more rigorous standards. Both public and charter schools throughout the District have aligned their curricular materials, data systems and school improvement initiatives to the District assessment. In addition to the summative assessment, LEAs use interim assessments to monitor student progress and to inform instruction. Once the new Common Core Standards are adopted, the District plans to develop a new common assessment and accompanying interim and formative assessment materials. To this end, DC entered into MOU agreements and agreed to work on developing and implementing a new common assessment. The MOU agreements were with the Summative Multi-State Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers, the Assessment Consortia, and the State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by the District's participation in at least three state consortia that are working towards jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments that are aligned with the Common Core Standards. At least one of the consortium groups includes a significant number of states.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	17	17
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC proposes a four-part plan for implementing the new standards and assessments. Each portion of the proposed plan is accompanied by a detailed description of the activities, timelines, and designated persons who will implement the specified activities. In the first part of the plan, the District proposes a compressed timeline for implementing the new standards and assessments and views the time from the adoption of standards in March 2010 to the implementation of accompanying assessments in 2011-2012 as an "aggressive" rollout plan. In the plan, the District proposes to print and distribute booklets that outline the new standards, operate a Common Core Standards website that contains information and materials about the standards, adopt a consortium-developed assessment, align curriculum and related resources, and adopt a formative interim assessment that can be used until the final assessment is prepared. The second part of the plan establishes a Common Core Standards Working Group to plan professional development around the new standards and work with LEA leadership teams to create and review implementation plans on standards and curriculum alignment. Project funds will be used to pay stipends for curriculum specialists and trainers to work with teachers and staff. In the third part of the plan, the District proposes to collaborate with other states to develop a manual that describes a continuum of skills and knowledge, along with a progression of activities that lead to the mastery of each standard. The manual, entitled Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning, will be used to train teachers on the new standards, provide a framework for standards implementation, and guide teachers in using the new standards in IEP development and implementation. The fourth and final part of the plan will focus on aligning graduation and college entrance requirements with the Common Core Standards and assessments, and establishing a P-20 Consortium to work on the alignment. The proposed four-part plan addresses the external steps that will be followed to put aligned standards and assessments in place. The District plans to use LEA leadership teams to create and review implementation plans; however, the plan does not describe how the District will cultivate the instructional leadership that will be required to effectively monitor the level of rigor and curriculum pacing that LEAs and schools will need to implement in order for the transition to the new standards to actually occur. Additionally, the plan does not describe how the District will develop authentic engagement and teacher commitment to the new standards, especially since the teacher union does not support the proposed reform agenda. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it has a detailed plan for supporting a Districtwide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments that are tied to these standards. The transition plan includes the components recommended in this section: developing a rollout plan for the standards, aligning high school exit criteria

and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments, developing and using aligned instructional materials and assessments, and implementing professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the concern that the District may not be able to attain the targeted goals specified in the plan as the plan does not describe how the District will cultivate the instructional leadership that will be required to effectively monitor the level of rigor and curriculum pacing that LEAs and schools will need to implement in order for the transition to the new standards to actually occur. Additionally, the plan does not describe how the District will develop authentic engagement and teacher commitment to the new standards, especially since the teacher union does not support the proposed reform agenda.

Total	70	67	67
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6	6	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC reports that it has three of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements currently in place: a unique Districtwide student identifier, student enrollment, demographic and program participation information, and student information on exit, transfer, drop out status, and program completion. In the application, the District proposes to fully implement the data elements by June 2013. The number of points awarded for this section is based on a multiplier of 2 for every element currently integrated into the District's data system.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	4	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC proposes to implement a two-part plan for data access and use. The plan is based on two specific performance measures and companion strategies. The first strategy is to expand the District's data access system by developing a website that will house multiple measures of internal and external school performance data as well as aggregated LEA and District level data. The website will display data spreadsheets and non-personally identifiable statistical information on students, teachers and schools that can be used to make informed decisions. The same web portal and data will be made available to researchers from organizations and universities wishing to conduct research studies. The second strategy is to ensure that data from the Districtwide assessment, along with the range of data posted on the website, can be accessed through an on-line request tool. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it has a plan to ensure that data from the Districtwide data system are accessible to, and used to inform key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, researchers, and policymakers. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the fact that the District does not describe how it proposes to access and use the data for continuous improvement in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	14	14
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC proposes to use data to improve instruction by implementing a three-part plan that has complementary goals, performance measures, and strategies for each part of the plan. In the plan, the District proposes to develop instructional systems that are aligned to data systems, provide teachers with data to inform real time decisions and support for teachers to use the data to inform instruction. In this section of the plan, the District will fund LEA instructional systems that meet baseline criteria established for charter schools. This proposed strategy gives rise to the concern as to whether the baseline criteria is sufficient for designing an instructional management system, especially since the District indicates that many charter LEAs lack

systems that meet the baseline data. Additionally, a concern arises around the District's intention to let the LEA design its instructional improvement system. The resulting question is whether the District needs to determine and implement the instructional system that would best improve achievement and school performance in the reform areas targeted for its Districtwide plan. In this section of the plan, the District also proposes to expand its IMPACT evaluation system to ensure that teachers can be strategic about their own improvement, and to use project funds to extend its current STARS student data system and its Blackman/Jones database on special education to include interim assessment data. Project funds will also be used to provide charter schools with an instructional management system and to integrate the data between systems. The District plans to use data to improve instruction by training teachers in data use and provide funds for LEAs to pay stipends for a Data Lead or a Data Coach in every school in the LEA. The proposed Data Lead or Data Coach will work with the principal to develop and implement a strategy to analyze data, purchase interim assessments, hold regular professional development sessions, hold teacher meetings to analyze data, and update school leaders on data analysis. While the use of a data lead or coach is an excellent strategy for helping teacher analyze data, a robust instructional management system would need to help teachers use the data analysis to design effective units and lessons, implement and formatively assess instruction, and make effective on-going decisions on instructional modification. In addition to using data for an instructional management system, the District also plans to work with education researchers and experts to develop research priorities, use an online data requests tool, and access portfolios of research ready data sets. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it has a plan to increase the use of local instructional improvement systems that provide information and resources to improve their instructional practices and make effective decisions. The District also plans to use instructional improvement systems to provide professional development to teachers. Additionally, the District demonstrated that it intends to make the data from instructional improvement systems as well as the data system data, available and accessible to researchers. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the concern that the proposed instructional systems may need to be designed by the District according to criteria that will addresses the reform agenda targets, and the additional concern that the application does not describe how teachers will be supported in using data analysis to design effective units and lessons, implement and formatively assess instruction, and make effective on-going decisions on instructional modification, particularly for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional approaches for different types of students.

Total	47	24	24
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	15	15	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

In its opening statement to this section, the District indicated that there has been political resistance to DC's human capital reforms, and that the District needs the RttT endorsement to show that the District's approach is the right model for the future, so DC can pull ahead of all other states and garner support for its belief that with the right approach to managing adults in school systems, absolute student achievement is possible. The opening statement provided by the District raises several concerns about the use of RttT to thwart political resistance to the District's human resources management style, and generates the question as to why the opening statements for this section did not focus on establishing a foundation for the proposed initiatives around the development of great teachers and leaders. In the plan, the District plans to identify teacher preparation programs that are not providing effective teachers and hold them accountable for their quality and revoke program approval if necessary; conduct rigorous teacher evaluations, and by 2011, make student growth account for at least 50% of the evaluations; use the evaluations to retain, promote and dismiss staff; create professional development systems to evaluate data, provide aggressive support of LEA sponsored teacher pipelines for effective and highly effective teachers; support an

Education Leadership degree to provide principals with urban school management skills; and create a consortia of schools to disseminate best practices. The District permits alternative routes to certification and has a process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage. The District indicates that it has the nimble structure and aligned leadership that can achieve meaningful results much faster than other states. The District wrote that RtT would position DC "to ensure that its cutting edge human capital work can be accelerated and become a national model for innovative human capital." While the work outlined in this section of the application addresses the expected statutory authority, a range of alternate certification routes and a process to monitor and address shortages, the District's rationale to seek endorsement for its human management style, to showcase the District's speed in achieving results and to become a national model shifts the focus of the work on the desired status of the District rather than the detail and attention needed to build the capacity of staff to become great teachers and leaders. As a result, the number of points awarded for this section is because of the stated rationale for the proposed work and the uncertain results that may occur if RtT funds are used to seek ends not contemplated by the grant program.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	48	48
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15	15
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	20	20

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The District indicates that in 2009-10, DC launched a new assessment system based on student growth. In addition to the new evaluation system for the public schools, the Public Charter School Board is developing a parallel evaluation system that has at least 50% weighting based on student achievement. To move this work forward, the District proposes to implement five specific activities, the first of which is to use a common, value-added Districtwide student growth measure and ensure that all LEAs have access to student growth data for tested grades. The District then plans to expand a value-added growth measure beyond the ESEA required tests to additional grades/subjects. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it intends to establish clear approaches to measuring student growth. Section ii-The District integrated input from teachers and principals to design and conduct annual evaluations that have a 50% weighting based on student growth and to use the evaluations to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, removal and tenure/full certification. The District indicated that "DC is positioned to likely have one of the highest proportions of students in any state who will be affected by teacher effectiveness strategies. The District uses an evaluation system, IMPACT, that links teacher evaluation to student growth and calculates the overall evaluation score using 50% for individual value-added student growth, 40% on teaching and learning framework indicators such as planning, instructional delivery, and assessment, 5% on commitment to school and community, and 5% on school value added. The District also plans to train Master Educators to help minimally effective teachers. The District has not yet implemented a similar principal evaluation system, but plans to implement one that includes student outcome measures, school goals, and multiple qualitative measures. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its intent to design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth and are designed and developed with teacher and principal input. Section iii -The District conducts teacher evaluations based on the IMPACT system and plans to involve teachers and principals in refining the IMPACT system during summer 2010. While the teacher evaluation system has been implemented in the public schools, the charter LEAs have not determined how to use evaluation data along with multiple data points such as student growth data to make personnel decisions regarding retention, dismissal and compensation. Under this proposal, the District plans to support the charter LEAs in using evaluation data to make human capital decisions. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it conducts evaluations of teachers that provide teachers and principals with data on

student growth. The number of points awarded for this section is due to the fact that while a new evaluation system based on student growth has not yet been implemented, it is unclear as to whether the principals currently receive an annual evaluation under the DCPS system. Additionally, the application is not clear on whether the evaluation feedback is timely and constructive. Section iv-The District plans to use personnel evaluation results to make human capital decisions, including decisions regarding differential compensation. Under the proposed plan, highly effective teachers would be able to receive up to \$130,000, " a groundbreaking figure in a field that has historically been undervalued." The District plans to use Master Educators to work with mid range teachers and assemble a Human Capital Task Force to direct the District's human capital initiatives. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its intent to use evaluations to inform decisions regarding professional development and support, compensation, promotion, and retention of teachers and principals, compensation for highly effective teachers and principals, granting of tenure and/or full certification, and removal of ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals. While teachers will have multiple evaluation data points, the application does not provide detailed information on the District's plan to give teachers and principals ample opportunities to improve and ensure that decisions to dismiss or deny tenure are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures. In the opening statements to section D, the authors of the application state that "This plan is so bold and ambitious that, as Chancellor Rhee explains, it will 'have ramifications far outside of Washington, D.C...[W]hat happens here is going to crack things open across the country." Again, the concern is raised that the work proposed under the reform agenda should be focused on developing human potential and less on creating public notoriety for a particular state's position. The number of points awarded for this section of the application is due to the concern raised for the District's interest in attracting national attention and recognition for its approach to differential pay and the need to have detailed information on the District's plan to give teachers and principals ample opportunities to improve and ensure that decisions to dismiss or deny tenure are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	25	25
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	15	15
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10	10

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The District's Teacher Equity Plan is designed to ensure that high poverty students are not taught by unqualified, inexperienced teachers at a higher rate than other students. The District's teacher distribution data shows inequities in the distribution of experienced teachers and the District plans to increase the percentage of teacher and leader effectiveness in participating LEAs an average of 15% over baseline measures. Additionally, the District plans to analyze the equitable distribution of effectiveness and engage in smart targeting. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it intends to ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals. The District developed a plan to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. Section ii-The District plans to improve the process for analyzing the effectiveness of teachers in hard-to-staff areas, support teacher pipelines, and target professional development for teachers in hard-to-staff areas. To implement the targeted activities, the District plans to build capacity into the evaluation systems to determine teacher effectiveness, require LEAs to annually submit data on the percentage of effective and highly effective teachers and administrators by school, develop Districtwide profiles on teacher distribution and effectiveness, and require LEAs to submit an annual teacher effectiveness plan. DC plans to build a strong human pipeline through recruitment and selection efforts and implement professional development, including professional learning communities to increase the quality and effectiveness of teacher in STEM and Special Education and offering end-of-year bonuses for highly effective teachers in high needs schools. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it plans to increase the number and

percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. The District plans to implement compensation for highly effective teachers in high needs schools.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	14	14
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District reports that it has approved new, non-IHE routes to certification and plans to systematically assess the effectiveness of traditional and non-traditional programs to produce highly effective teachers and principals. In the current proposal, the District plans to design and implement an Education Leadership Degree program to train leaders in the skills needed for urban principalship and school turnaround. Additionally, the District plans to build pipelines for effective teachers, hold a competitive grant process for alternative certification programs, and create preparation scorecards that will publicize the data on teacher effectiveness by training program. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it intends to improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs by linking student achievement and student growth to the students' teachers and principals. The District plans to link this information to the programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the District, and expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	18	18
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District proposes to provide support to teachers by implementing several activities that will support teacher effectiveness. The District plans to support on-going and job embedded professional development around the common core standards and equip schools to provide teachers with the time to align the curriculum with the Common Core Standards. The District plans to purchase interim assessments and accompanying professional development and coaching. Additionally, the District plans to develop a manual on standards entry points for differentiated learning, make data available to researchers and publish a list of research priorities, support data driven culture in schools, and provide funding for Data Leads or Data Coaches, and support LEAs in developing instructional improvement systems. The District also plans to develop requirements for alternative certification programs, designate Master Educators to provide coaching using IMPACT data, use evaluation data to inform professional development for hard-to-staff areas, and develop an Education Leadership degree. The activities will be complemented by an individualized online professional development platform that will track professional development activities, provide support to charter LEAs to tie professional development to evaluation data, and conduct professional learning communities based on small scale dissemination grants. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated its intent to provide support to teachers and principals through a plan that includes the provision of job-embedded professional development and common planning and collaboration time for teachers. The plan, however, does not give a description of the recommended focus areas for professional development as the training, with the exception of training on the new standards and curriculum alignment sessions, will be determined at the LEA and school level. The number of points awarded in this section is due to the concern with the variance between the District's aggressive achievement targets and the flexibility afforded LEAs and schools to develop and conduct the professional development activities. In order to meet the District's designated improvement targets and effectively implement the reform agenda, the District may need to guide LEAs in the topics and skills to be addressed in the professional development areas, and even with the topical designations, the District may need to develop or recommend procedures to ensure that the knowledge and skills are integrated into the instructional program.

Total	138	120	120
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10	10	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

In this section of the application, the District demonstrates that it has the legal and regulatory authority to intervene directly in the persistently lowest-achieving schools. The District reports that in the past 5 years, it has closed 47 schools, worked with 13 schools using a transformational model, worked with 7 schools using a turnaround approach, and restarted 4 schools. DC indicates that it is uniquely positioned for turnaround as it has the governance structure that allows swift intervention.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40	40	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Section i-The District indicates that its uniquely compact geographic size, coupled with its unique governance structure and robust pool of human capital, allows it to be effective in implementing turnaround strategies. The District plans to implement the following series of activities around the identification of persistently lowest achieving schools: use federal and district criteria to identify the lowest performing schools, develop a plan for the turnaround of the persistently low performing schools, create a pipeline of turnaround leaders, provide support for potential turnaround teams, align school modernization efforts, provide differential funding for turnaround schools, and ensure management capacity for turning around the identified schools. In this section of the application, the District demonstrates a plan to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools and to prepare management teams and turnaround leaders who will work with the identified schools. Section ii-The District plans to use its extensive experience working with the four turnaround models to document its school intervention history and develop a set of lessons learned. Additionally, the District plans to enable the Office of School Innovation to expand its operations, modernize the school facilities, and give the Chancellor the authority to charter schools. The District plans to fund a planning year, allocate resources to turnaround schools and work with a university partner to equip leaders with the skills to do the turnaround work. Additionally, the District plans to use all four turnaround strategies and be directive in the approaches used with the bottom 5% of schools. In the application, the District described its experiences with the four turnaround strategies, citing the work conducted in schools throughout the District. The state also described its plan to implement human capital strategies including replacing the principal, granting operational flexibility, measuring the effectiveness of staff, implementing a new governance structure and high quality instructional program. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it has the experience to implement its turnaround plan and to support its LEAs in implementing one of the four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model.

Total	50	50	50	
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District indicates that education funding is a priority in DC and that the charter laws are the strongest in the nation. DC's budget has seven funding clusters with education as the second highest funded cluster. The percentage of the DC budget devoted to education increased from 22.3% in 2008 to 23.5% in 2009. DC distributes the budget according to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula contained in DC Code. In 2006, DC ranked 13th in the nation in the ranking of per pupil expenditures across the nation. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that education funding is a priority in DC. The percentage of revenue available to the District increased from 2008 to 2009 and the District has a statute that governs the equitable distribution of funds to all schools.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	40	40
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District indicated that the DC School Reform Act of 1995 is the strongest charter school law in the nation and received an "A" for its laws governing charter schools by the Center for Educational Reform. The District has witnessed growth in its network of charter schools with 57 charter LEAs and 96 charter campuses serving over 28,000 students. According to Code, chartering authorities may approve up to twenty annual petitions to establish a public charter school, and between 2004 and 2008, an average of five charter schools were approved each year. DC law does not impose a cap on the number of expansion campuses, nor does the law limit the number of students who can be served by charter schools. As open-enrollment institutions, the DC charter schools are open to all resident children and the District's law prohibits charter schools from limiting enrollment to any child who holds membership in a protected class. Charter school accountability is strong in the District as the schools are subject to annual monitoring and a comprehensive monitoring every five years. A charter may be revoked if the school violates the charter agreement, has violations related to students with disabilities, or has fiscal mismanagement. In the five year period during 2004 and 2009, 27 new charter schools were approved, 51 were denied, and 4 were revoked. DC law ensures equal funding for every public school student regardless of the type of LEA, and in addition to per pupil allocations, the DC law governs the funding of facilities for non residential charter schools, gives the charter schools the right of first offer for any unused public school property, and supports the ability of charter schools to operate autonomously. DC charter schools include nine different innovative school models. Four schools operate as autonomous schools, 10 schools operate as collaboratives, and 3 schools are Partnership Schools. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it has the successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools. The District has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools or restrict student enrollment in charter schools. The District also has laws regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. The District's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues and the District provides charter schools with funding for facilities and the right of first offer for unused public school facilities. Additionally, the District enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC's application discussed other significant reforms that have been implemented across the District in recent years. The other reform efforts were around universal pre-kindergarten, special education interventions, a college graduation initiative, the Double the Numbers program to establish a P-12 college-going culture, implementation of the Schoolwide Application Model (SAM) in 16 schools and the Full Service Schools (FSS) model in 11 middle schools. Additionally, the District is working with LEAs to provide a continuum of special education services.

Total	55	55	55
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

In 2004, DC reopened McKinley High School as the District's first STEM high school. Based on the academic success of the STEM high school, the District plans to open six new STEM schools, improve the teacher pipeline and professional development in STEM areas, and increase STEM emphasis in the comprehensive high schools. In 2009, 13 DC public schools were named as Catalyst Schools, six of which are preparing to convert to STEM schools. In addition, the District's Woodson Senior High School is being rebuilt and will become a comprehensive STEM high school. The State Advisory Math Panel has identified math standards that are correlated with the skills and knowledge needed for college and STEM careers. In this section of the application, the District demonstrated that it offers STEM studies in comprehensive and designated STEM high school settings.

Total	15	15	15	
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The District's application comprehensively addresses all four education reform areas specified in ARRA, the State Success Factors Criteria, and demonstrates a commitment to implement and achieve the goals in its plan.

Total		0	0	
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Grand Total	500	429	429	
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #1920DC-4

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	45	45	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30	30	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10	10	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

In its application, DC detailed a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda addressing all four key areas of the Race to the Top program. DC provided goals and objectives and performance measures. DC secured participation from 31 LEAs, 187 schools, and 64,766 students. This is 53% of LEAs, 83% of schools, and 85% of students. This a strong level of participation. There was 100% buy-in for all the Race to the Top components except for three. Only two participating LEAs agreed to the provisions concerning availability and accessibility of data to researchers, quality professional development, and measuring effectiveness of professional development. The lack of buy-in for the professional development aspects for teachers and principals was not explained, is perplexing given the general emphasis in the grant, and is disturbing because of its strategic significance for accomplishing the overall goals of Race to the Top. Adding to this concern, no signature of a union or bargaining representative was obtained suggesting issues with buy-in on the part of the teachers union.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	23	23	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	15	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	8	8	

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC, with its documented history of implementing a large number and types of charter schools as a turnaround strategy, is well positioned to take on the tasks that are a part of the Race to the Top grant. DC plans to have 89% of the budget flow to the LEAs. About 74% of the grant funds are focused on capacity-building with benefits that go beyond the life of the grant and enhance sustainability. DC's budgeted projects cover a broad array of initiatives that strategically support the four reform areas that are a part of the grant. DC described making departmental and organizational structural changes that should support implementation of the projects. DC provided evidence of broad stakeholder involvement and support. This is diminished somewhat by the absence of the teacher union and the low level of LEA buy-in for professional development.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	23	23	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	

(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18	18
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC's application provided details showing substantial progress in each of the four key reform areas. DC provided evidence showing substantial improvement in student performance on the NAEP assessments as well as the DC-CAS tests. Improvement was evident in reading and mathematics for all subgroups but achievement gaps persist. Improvements were evident at both the elementary and secondary level areas. Three years of high school graduation rate data show progress overall but data points statewide and for the charter schools are missing for 2007 and it appears that charter school graduation rates declined by 4.6% from 2008 to 2009. DC reported having closed 30 schools based on student performance.

Total	125	91	91
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided an MOU showing that it has become a part of the National Governors Association Consortium for the Development of Common Core Standards. The Consortium includes 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories. The consortium will produce a set of curriculum standards for English Language Arts and mathematics for K-12 as well as college and career readiness standards. DC also showed evidence that it is on track to adopt the standards by August 2, 2010. DC detailed processes by which it has been reviewing the common core standards and has adoption by the state Board of Education set for March 17, 2010.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	9	9
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided MOUs showing that it has become a part of three consortia including the Summative Multi-Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER), the Assessment Consortium MOA, and the State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards. These consortia include 23, 36, and 12 states respectively. Full points were not awarded because DC could have been a part of creating an even larger consortium.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20	20
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided a high-quality plan including goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible for transitioning to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. DC's plan addressed work with the standards, interim assessments, and summative assessments as an integrated mutually supportive package and included attention to activities designed to promote buy-in.

Total	70	69	69
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6	6	
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
At the present time, DC has incorporated just three of the twelve required elements into its longitudinal data system. These include student identifiers, student level enrollment, and demographic information as well as exit transferring dropout information.				
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5	5	
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
DC provided plans which incorporate goals, activities, timelines, and responsible persons for "Accessing and Using State Data" which meets the minimal standards for a high-quality plan. DC also provided performance measures.				
(C)(3) Using data to Improve Instruction	18	16	16	
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
DC provided plans which incorporate goals, activities, timelines, and responsible persons for "Using Data to Improve Instruction" which meets the minimal standards for a high-quality plan. DC also provided performance measures and plans to have a data coach in every school building. The plans address acquisition of instructional improvement systems, support for use of the instructional systems, and making data available. DC's decentralized approach to creating data systems is likely to be problematic and much more challenging than using a consistent and coherent systemwide approach.				
Total	47	27	27	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	19	19	
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
DC provided evidence regarding statutory provisions for alternate certification routes that provide all of the required elements. Currently of the ten teacher preparation programs in the state three are alternate certification providers. Of the four administrative preparation programs, one is an alternative certification provider. These programs are in place and substantial numbers of staff are participating. DC described a position control system used for monitoring and making adjustments to staffing needs. DC also reported using an alternative certification provider to boost special-education staff by 20% in the school years of 2008-09 and 2009-10. DC reported that only 53% of its principals are in compliance with the certification requirements for the role. This issue was not discussed in DC's application but suggests a level of need for recruitment of qualified principals that goes beyond what DC presented and it should have been addressed in the application.				
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51	51	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	12
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24	24

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided high-quality plans to implement a system for measuring student growth and linking it to teacher and principal evaluation during the 2009-2010 school year. DC has prior experience working in this area to build upon, but it was previously limited to just 20% of staff. DC has created a teacher and principal evaluation system called IMPACT which is based 50% on an individual student value-added growth measure. Teachers receive five formal observations and complete an annual evaluation cycle. DC public schools will have the fullest and most consistent implementation of the system. DC charter schools will implement evaluation systems with similar elements and school to school differentiation that is not clear from the application. The implementation for the DC public schools appears to be richer, more cohesive, and more robust. According to the application, the implementation of differential compensation for highly effective teachers in the DC public schools is subject to pending union contracts.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	22	22
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	12	12
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10	10

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided a high-quality plan for addressing equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. DC made a strong case for maintaining a focus on the high poverty rather than the high minority aspect of these considerations, but did not provide a definition of high poverty. DC did not report data regarding the percentage of teachers and principals in high poverty and high minority schools who are effective or ineffective but did include annual targets beginning at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. The targets call for modest improvements that should be highly achievable. DC also included plans for monitoring and intervening with hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	14	14
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided a high-quality plan for improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs by linking student achievement and student growth to traditional and alternative preparation programs and making results public using Prep Program Scorecards. DC plans to implement an innovative educational leadership degree program involving a Masters in Business Administration or Public Administration in conjunction with charter school and higher education stakeholders. DC also plans to issue a request for proposals for a competitive grant-letting process for the support of LEA sponsored teacher pipeline models. The program would train teachers with the strong likelihood of effectiveness in hard-to-staff areas, especially STEM and special education.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	20	20
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC provided a high-quality plan for supporting teachers and principals using data from the IMPACT evaluation system to provide individually customized staff development based on teacher need. DC will also

use professional learning communities in which less effective schools are grouped with highly effective schools in a professional collaborative. DC also plans to track professional development utilization by staff and relate participation to improved effectiveness.

Total	138	126	126	
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10	10	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC has the statutory authority whereby the mayor may intervene with both public schools and LEAs and has a track record of doing so. Charter schools operate under the authority of an independent board which does have the authority to revoke charters.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40	40	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC described procedures which are consistent with federal requirements by which it will identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools. DC also indicated the intent to exceed the minimum 5% identification and to identify up to the bottom 20% of schools to target for turnaround efforts. DC provided a high-quality plan for turning around its persistently low-achieving schools using all of the turnaround models. DC provided details concerning its extensive experiences with using all of the Race to the Top identified turnaround models in recent years.

Total	50	50	50	
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The portion of DC's budget devoted to education increased slightly (1.2%) from fiscal year 08 to fiscal year 09. DC provided evidence that it has a uniform per student funding formula which generates funds on a per pupil basis for all LEAs and schools including charter schools on an equal basis.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	40	40	
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC has a charter school law which does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools. Between 2004 and 2008, DC approved an average of five charter schools per year while the charter code allows for approval of up to 20 annual petitions. Some 42.5% of DC schools are charters and 38% of public school students attend charter schools in DC, far exceeding the 10% cap for

assignment of "high points." DC provided evidence that it has a uniform per student funding formula which generates funds on a per pupil basis for all LEAs and schools including charter schools on an equal basis. DC's charter law addresses all of the elements required for the Race to the Top competition. DC has one of the strongest charter school laws in the nation and one of the most extensive charter school implementations in the nation. DC has a complex, multifaceted, array of facility funding sources for its charter schools. Charter schools receive annual funding of \$2800 per student to be used for facilities, leasing purchase, financing construction, maintenance, and repair. Besides that, the federal government makes provisions for low-cost backing of loans and grants including the school incubator initiative. DC also makes available an industrial revenue bond program providing access to low-cost tax-exempt bond financing. DC also has a regulation providing right of first offer for any public school property to applicants whose intent is to establish a public charter school. DC does enable the operation of innovative or autonomous public schools and currently has seventeen such schools in operation.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC has several other substantial reform initiatives including universal pre-kindergarten, special-education intervention reforms, and the college graduation initiative.

Total	55	55	55
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0	0	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Surprisingly there were only three brief references to STEM in other sections of this application. Routinely, in other sections of this application, DC provided detailed, high quality plans, but this was not the case with the STEM section. DC did describe STEM activities, but they are generally in the form of a thematic focus for schools rather than being systemic initiatives across grades and disciplines. The information submitted did not show a plan for addressing STEM that is sufficiently systematic, comprehensive, and coherent to be considered of high quality.

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

During the presentation, DC never referenced STEM and it was not referenced in the presentation handouts. Based on a reading of the application, our review team was under the impression that STEM was mostly to be implemented in theme-oriented high schools. During the Q&A session, DC provided clarification that STEM will be implemented in some schools at all grade levels. There was no project level budgeting for STEM and it was not clearly addressed in other project budgets. STEM was not part of the DC vision/theory of change articulated by staff. While DC clearly will be implementing some STEM activities, there is not sufficient evidence that they are part of a high quality plan for STEM implementation.

Total	15	0	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

DC's application presents a comprehensive approach to supporting the four key education reform areas integrating a wide range of resources to support reform efforts of local schools. DC is a clear leader in supporting charter schools and in taking aggressive action with persistently low-performing schools.

Total			0	0
Grand Total	500	418	418	



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

District Of Columbia Application #1920DC-5



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	40
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	27
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: DCPS has set goals which are highly ambitious, including increasing NAEP scores by 10 points over four years – more than ever attained by an urban district. DCPS is improving based on recent reform efforts, but the plan to connect the current effort to the highly ambitious goals is not as clearly articulated as the current reform effort. The terms and conditions are similar to the sample MOU and thus strong. LEAs were required to commit to 20 of the 24 plan criteria. The scope of work descriptions required of LEAs are a significant part of the DC plan. The Washington Teachers' Union did not sign the MOU, and that represents the vast majority of schools and students and students in poverty addressed in the application. There is no letter of support from the Washington Teachers' Union either. Even though the proposal was developed with significant input from various experts and stakeholders in the schools ("LEA representatives compris(ed) more than half the individuals engaged in this work"), the lack of formal, acknowledged union involvement brings the level of commitment of all stakeholders into question as well as the overall success of the proposal. One additional concern in the area of commitment is the fact that only 2 LEAs agreed to providing effective support to teachers and principals. A supposition could be that the charter schools will be focused on their own support efforts and mechanisms, but this is not addressed in the narrative. The goals delineated are, as noted above, highly ambitious. The growth rate at 5 percent per year also may not be realistic as initial implementation of innovations often causes a lowering of scores until all are comfortable and then they often accelerate. With union commitment and involvement, the statewide impact envisioned is possible.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	20
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The D.C. proposal outlines a new structure centered in the new Office of State Superintendent to lead the RttT. Having separate teams focus on grant management and execution of initiatives in the field makes solid sense. Support for LEAs is identified and replicates the overall split structure. The proposal wisely acknowledges the differing needs of small charters and seems poised to ensure the charters will not be held up by a slow-moving central structure. The approach to operations capacity makes sense, but lack of prior success in grants management by the district begs for special care in this area. If successful, it could pay off well in the future for all aspects of administration for the district. The proposal has a significant portion of funding - 89% - going to LEAs. Fifty-seven percent of the</p>		

money to LEAs will be sub-granted; which is supposed to ensure that LEAs have sufficient money to do the work. If it is indeed competitive however, it also could cause uneven distribution and impact. Balancing the independent nature of charter schools with grant oversight and ensuring impact is spread throughout the district will be a challenge. The district has a very impressive listing of ways that funds from other sources can and will be leveraged. Participation of various stakeholders in developing the application is a good faith indication of commitment. As noted above, the union's refusal to sign the MOU is a major concern. The proposal states, "...while the union would not openly support the proposal, the District strongly believes that a broad base of reform-oriented teachers and school leaders support the DC RTTT plan." However, there is no evidence of this belief. There is good support from "additional stakeholders," including legislative leaders, charter school associations, and institutions of higher education.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	23
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The District schools have been involved on a path to school reform as anticipated by RttT for the past few years. Each of the four areas has had effort and ARRA and other funding has been used to support those efforts. DC has made gains in NAEP and ESEA tests in reading and math, more than almost any other urban district according to the narrative. However, a close look at the data in the appendix shows that the achievement gap has not diminished very much, and the overall levels of proficiency are very low. Although the data from graduations rates are sketchy, the District schools have increased graduation rates. They are to be commended for developing and using a more rigorous calculation to determine graduation rates. A more detailed explanation of what actions the State feels had an impact on the test scores is needed.</p>		
Total	125	83

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: The District has participated in the Common Core Consortium process and is committed to adopting the standards at its March 17, 2010 State Board of Education meeting. Forty-eight states are involved in the consortium, and the consortium is developing high quality standards.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The District has signed MOAs to join four collaborative efforts to develop high quality assessments: the Balanced Assessment Consortium (36 states), SMARTER (23), the Assessment Consortium (13 states).</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	15
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The district will provide meetings and a web site to assist in the roll out of new standards and assessments. LEAs are required to do the same and to provide in-school training for teachers. The district will modify its current summative assessment to align with the Common core standards (not with RttT funding) and will develop interim assessments. LEAs will also develop interim assessments. While this seems to hold potential for duplication of effort, the District will encourage LEAs to cooperate. The District will provide broad support, but LEAs are expected to use formula money to develop materials and job-embedded professional development. This will take significant coordination from OSSE, and it is not well-defined at all. The District also plans to collaborate with other states on a Standards Entry Points Manual to facilitate differentiated learning. The manual and the approach of collaborating with other states are both commendable actions. Building on the existing Double the Numbers effort, the District will create a group, a P-20 consortium, to help align the standards and graduation requirements. The P-20 consortium will also work to create "a P-12 college-going culture," a somewhat nebulous goal. A concern is that fact that instructional leadership is not directly addressed in this section and without instructional leadership, a smooth transition that gets into the classroom rapidly is less likely.

Total	70	65
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The District has implemented three of the twelve elements from the America COMPETES Act. They have plans to have the other nine elements completed by 2013.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The District is hampered by having access to only three of the data elements, although they do plan to expand the system, including incorporating a system for Special Education. The District plans to provide data through web sites and make those web sites as easy to use as possible. They do not address what will be done for people without easy access to technology or those who may speak a language other than English. Holding community meetings will help, but ongoing access to data will be difficult for everyone. The detail in this section is very minimal, so it is impossible to determine if the plan is high quality.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	9
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: Within the District, DCPS has a powerful data system and human capital evaluation system which is supposed to meet all the needs outlined in the application, but all the charters do not. Some have many systems that are unconnected, and others have very little in the way of data systems. It is highly fragmented. The District plans to fund local instructional improvement systems for LEAs that apply for it and it will expand the current evaluation system in DCPS. The plan for the charters calls for a data integration tool to provide connections among data sources and move data between systems. These will connect to PCSB and OSSE databases using an Extract, Transfer and Load tool. They also will create an analysis tool. All charters that submit a plan will receive RttT funding for their system. If they want to save money and partner, they will be encouraged to do so. It is unclear how the resultant systems will be anything but very fragmented and idiosyncratic to various LEAs. As a result, training and support requirements will increase significantly and limit the power of scaling across the district. It is unclear why the District would not purchase one system for all charters; the unique characteristics of the various charters can be accommodated by numerous commercial systems with customization. To support the LEAs with data, the District will fund data coaches or data leads in the LEA. This is a solid,		

effective and commendable approach to support. The LEAs are also committed to planning time for data analysis. The data coaches will provide professional development and otherwise facilitate the use of data on the campus. The District plans to provide an online data request tool and create ready-made data sets for researchers to use. The District will also create appropriate priorities for research that match its needs. However, only two LEAs signed on to the "Availability and accessibility of data to researchers" section of the MOU, calling into question the extent to which researchers will be able to use the data.

Total	47	18
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The District has legal or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals, including routes in addition to institutions of higher education. These programs address at least four of the five elements in the alternative certification definition in the notice. There are alternative certification programs for both teachers and principals operating in the district that are have a meaningful number of teachers and principals to be in the pipeline. The District has a process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage in the DCPS that, in conjunction with its traditionally low vacancy rate, seems to function well. The situation for the charter schools, however, seems very idiosyncratic and haphazard, relying on partnerships, strong reputations, or personal networks. Apparently the need for teachers and principals in charter schools is not very great, so "OSSE's role is to remove 'market inefficiencies' by supporting alternative certification programs." Having no system in place for monitoring, evaluating and identifying possible shortages for charters may result in less than the best teachers and principals in those schools, and may negatively affect planning for future years.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	37
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	16
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The District currently has different student growth measures for DCPS and charters. Part of the plan is to create one growth measure and to expand growth measures to teachers not currently covered by standardized tests. The plan is really a plan to plan, which probably is appropriate for where the District is with a student growth measure, but the approach is not very clear. DCPS has IMPACT, an evaluation system that meets the requirements as outlined in this notice, and looks to be robust, fair and uses student achievement for 50 percent of its score. Teachers receive five formal evaluations for one aspect of IMPACT as well as an in-person conference and a written report. Teachers receive growth information specific to their students and classes. It is unclear the level of involvement that DCPS teachers and principals had in its development. A number of question and answer sessions were held throughout the District which generated input, but who actually came up with IMPACT and how the input from DCPS educators affected IMPACT is not clear. The charter schools "are at a variety of different points in their evolution on human capital systems." The District plans to support the charters in building systems, including possible collaboration. A stronger push toward collaboration and thus easier sharing of data and best practices would seem to be more helpful for the charters, as well as more efficient workforce management. Principals do not yet have an evaluation system either</p>		

for DCPS or for charters, but the District has a plan to plan such a system. The use of the evaluation system to inform various decisions is fraught with difficulty in DCPS due to the lack of union support for the proposal. The proposal states that both DCPS and charter schools are able to make ineffective teachers subject to termination. However, the proposal states, "DCPS is also currently working hard to negotiate a contract with WTU that will allow highly effective teachers to be compensated differentially..." The plan for charters uses terminology like "Charters are equipped with specific strategies.." but it is unclear how these strategies will be implemented or if they will be across all charters or some. The proposal does state that evaluations will be used in all these situations.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	14
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	10
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	4

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The District does not yet have definitions of effectiveness nor does it have evaluations to determine effectiveness. They plan to be able to do this by Fall 2012, then they will require LEAs to submit a plan to increase teacher effectiveness in the 25% of schools for which high-poverty and low-effectiveness are most highly correlated. To help get highly effective teachers distributed, one tactic is to allow principals with the greatest recruiting needs to meet the most promising candidates first. First access to good teachers can be a very promising recruitment tool. Another promising effort is the Collaboration for Change, a collaboration among ten schools of mixed performance levels. Pairing peers can offer a high level of support and help not only teachers in low-achieving schools, but also invigorate the mentor as well. The approach for charters is very unclear. One retention strategy – offer end of year bonus for highly effective teachers in high needs schools – is dependent upon successful negotiation with WTU. The lack of detail throughout this section does not show a high quality plan for equitable distribution of principals. Transferring effective principals is mentioned and was deemed to be successful in one example, but there are no other strategies mentioned or any additional detail. The District struggles with the same data problem regarding teachers in hard to staff areas. The District "has created funds for LEAs to build or partner with teacher pipelines especially in STEM and special education" and they will use professional development and professional learning communities to focus on these areas. The professional learning communities are still being thought out, but they will be based on current efforts under way. The connection between hard to staff subjects and the collaboratives is not clear and thus it is hard to determine if they will be effective for staffing hard to staff subjects.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	9
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal says that the District will develop a Prep Program scorecard based on information on teacher effectiveness and the design of the scorecard will be with input from multiple stakeholders including deans of IHEs and directors of alternative certification programs. They will match teachers to their certification programs and publicly report the information. Nowhere in the plan does it say how this will take place, such as through a link with data systems, or any other way. Other than input from deans in developing the program, it is unclear how IHEs and alternative certification programs will be involved or if they will just acquiesce to this being done. Revoking a program approval is a drastic, albeit sometimes necessary step. Because it is so drastic, the timeline for implementation of this component seems very fast. Although sketchy in detail, the plan for developing an education leadership degree program is admirable in its goals, and in the commitment for graduates to spend five years in DCPS or a District charter after completion. The grant program for LEAs to increase the effectiveness of teachers is barebones at best. The preferred types of programs – meet alternative certification program requirements, trained in a way that will lead to measurable effectiveness, and preference for hard-to-staff areas – is all that is in the plan. More detail is needed to have this be considered a high-quality plan.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	9
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: The District envisions an Individualized Professional Development Platform that will link to IMPACT and provide a self-service platform for access to a variety of professional development from online streaming to scheduling a mentor. This is a very positive vision, but will entail enormous work to correlate the PD to all the standards, levels of effectiveness and other requirements. The PD platform will be developed by DCPS and aligned to their evaluation system, but the charter teachers will be able to use it as well, even though their evaluation systems do not sync either by technology or by definitions. This is an unfortunate weakness. There is no mention of principals for this system, but the Education Leadership Degree addresses this area slightly. Another admirable vision is Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness. These collaboratives, anchored by high achieving schools, can lead to transfer of best practices, collaboration across sectors, and provide consulting/mentoring opportunities to highly effective teachers. Principals are not mentioned in this effort either, although there is no reason why principals could not participate in the collaboratives. The PD platform data system will be able to match all this and interface with IMPACT to provide data on the effectiveness of the professional development. This is a huge leap of faith for both the data system and for those who will monitor the data.</p>		
Total	138	84

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Both the Mayor and the Public School Charter Board have the authority to intervene directly in schools and LEAs.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The District has identification rubrics and has identified schools for turnaround. Three of these are for graduation rate underperformance and seven in the bottom 5%. Addressing both high schools with graduation rate problems and underperforming schools is commendable. The District has strong and detailed plans for each of the schools targeted for intervention and in some cases the work is under way. There is strong support and smart coordination with other efforts (e.g. modernization of buildings) which should help make the interventions successful.</p>		
Total	50	50

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The percentage of total revenue for elementary, secondary and public higher education as a whole increased from 2008 to 2009 by two different measures. The District's policies lead to equitable funding throughout the District.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	40
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The District has a very supportive charter school law. There are 57 charter LEAs and 96 charter campuses serving 38% of public school students. Forty-two and a half percent of DC public schools are charters. The District has rules and guidelines regarding all aspects of charters mentioned in the application, and the PCSB has closed charters and had charters relinquished. The District's funding formula ensures equal funding for every student, regardless of the type of LEA. Charters also are equally eligible for Federal funding. The District has gone far beyond the minimum in ensuring there is funding and funding mechanisms for facilities. The District operates innovative, autonomous schools now and has a mechanism to increase this number.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The Proposal outlines three major initiatives in support of school reform that the District has created – universal pre-kindergarten, special education interventions, and a college graduation initiative. All three look to be strong programs with diverse and significant support.</p>		
Total	55	55

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments: The District has a number of STEM activities underway. However, STEM does not seem to have been an overall strategy for the district, but it has evolved as a part of other initiatives. For example, McKinley Tech Senior High School was a turnaround school that reopened as a STEM school. In July, 2009 the District announced 13 Catalyst Schools, six of which happened to be STEM schools. The fact that these are comprehensive schools (open to all students) is positive. Another turnaround school will become a STEM school. A major concern is that virtually all the effort for STEM is at the secondary level, yet capturing the imagination and enthusiasm of students for STEM in the elementary grades can go a long way to provide greater interest in STEM subjects and careers later in life. Finally, there is an absence of any plan; the summary is just a listing of activities, most of which are underway already.</p>		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments: The District has made significant strides in the past few years. The proposal reflects those strides, and it addresses all four education reform areas. Charter schools and turnaround experience and efforts are particularly strong. Areas of concern include the lack of support from the WTU; the infancy of some</p>		

of the data systems, and especially the linkages between the charter schools and DCPS; and the lack of detail and clarity in the plans in the Great Teachers and Leaders section.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	355
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