



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Florida Application #2040 FL 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	49	49	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	38	38	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	7	7	

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

Articulating Comprehensive, Coherent Reform Agenda Florida has set forth an impressive reform agenda which is consistent with the intent of the ARRA/RttT assurance areas. Development of human capital is the core of Florida's RttT theory of action. The key features of this reform agenda are: • Increased student achievement • Highly effective teachers and leaders matter • Application of valuable lessons learned from prior reform initiatives. Included in the plan are two overarching goals for improving student achievement: • Double the percentage of incoming high school freshman who ultimately achieve college credit • Eliminate the achievement gap by 2020. The state proposes to allocate the largest portions of the RttT resources to two priority areas: • establishing community compacts to promote partnerships between schools and communities focused on improved student achievement • curricular tools to implement the Common Core Standards. Florida has dramatically improved student achievement over the past decade as measured by NAEP. Most impressive has been the success of minorities. Black student gains in mathematics are closing the achievement gap and lead the nation, Hispanic 4th grade reading scores are above the national average for all students. Using a gap analysis, Florida's reform plan builds on the state's extensive reform history and specific lessons learned from previous reform efforts. Many of these aggressive reforms have received national recognition. The state's reform plan embodies a results oriented approach and presents a comprehensive, innovative and bold set of actions. The state's budget request for RttT financial support is substantial. The overall merits of this proposed investment needs to be more tightly aligned to specific outcomes and improvement targets during the RttT grant period along with aggressive plans for sustainability. By contrast to the requested investment, student achievement targets are modest for the gains projected at the end of the RttT grant period. The plan does not articulate any major barriers or challenges that need to be addressed in undertaking this enormous effort. Securing LEA Commitment. Florida has submitted evidence responsive to all elements of this criterion. LEAs are committed to participating in the states reform agenda as evidenced by the following: • Sixty-four (89%) of the LEAs have signed on with full endorsement to the RttT application. Eighty one percent of the students in Florida are enrolled in the participating LEAs. • Sixty four of the state's LEAs are committed to implementing all 16 portions of the Plan criteria presented in the Scope of Work. Participating LEAs have signed on with detailed knowledge of the expectations for them as partners working to achieve the Florida's RttT goals. • The Florida MOU reflects the basic elements in the RttT model framework and also includes a detailed and specific articulation of what Participating LEAs are expected to include in their plans. • Endorsement signatures were received from the superintendents and local school board chairs from all participating LEAs • Only 8 % of local collective bargaining union leaders have endorsed the application. • Eighty percent of the state's students in poverty are enrolled in the RttT participating LEAs Translating LEA Participation into Statewide Impact. LEAs committed to participating in the state's reform agenda range in size and

demographics. Their collective populations incorporate 82% of the local school buildings throughout the state and 81 % of the state's school children. Eighty per cent of the state's low income students are enrolled in these LEAs. This large constituency along with other stakeholders will ensure that RttT grant funds will leverage broad statewide impact. Florida also has a robust charter school system comprised of over 400 schools educating approximately 137,000 students (5.2% of the state's total number of public school enrollment). The state's RttT application specifically requires participating LEAs to ensure that charter schools have the same opportunity as other schools to participate in the RttT grant and receive a commensurate share of any funds and services provided by the grant. The state has projected a set of achievement goals in accordance with the specified categories requested: By 2012-13, Increase the per cent of all students scoring proficient and above based on administration of NAEP (2009-2010 to 2012-2013): • Grade 4 reading : 35-38% (3% increase) • Grade 8 reading:29-33% (4% increase) • Grade 4 math: 40-46% (6% increase) • Grade 4 math : 29-33% (4% increase) Florida aims to close the achievement gap by 2020. The state projects the following growth targets (Proficient and advanced)for narrowing the achievement gap based on NAEP scores by 2012-2013: • NAEP Grade 4 reading : White vs. black 19%, White vs. Hispanic 9% • NAEP Grade 8 reading : White vs. black 17%, White vs. Hispanic 8% • NAEP Grade 4 math : White vs. black 22%, White vs. Hispanic 14% • NAEP Grade 8 : White vs. black 18%, White vs. Hispanic 11% The state projects the following growth targets (Proficient and above)for narrowing the achievement gap based on state assessment (FCAT and alternative assessments) scores by 2013-2014: • FCAT and Alternate Assessments in reading: White vs. black 16%, White vs. Hispanic 8% • FCAT and Alternate Assessments in math : White vs. black 15%, White vs. Hispanic 7% The state's goals for improving high school graduation rates by 2013-2014 from 2009-2010 are: • Florida expects to graduate 75% of its students from 65.5% • Increase in college enrollment rates as percent of high school graduates : 60.1% to 63.7% • Increasing college credit earning rate as percent of Students entering full time postsecondary education : 63% to 63.7% Florida's growth targets represent steady incremental improvements during the period of the RttT grant with shallower growth targets projected in years 1 and 2 and steeper growth in years 3-10. With such small growth targets projected during the period of the RttT grant, the large amount of resources requested do not adequately match the return on results. The targets for decreasing the achievement gap over the next 4 years are commendable from the perspective of projected gains for subgroups, however, the growth expectations for white students at such a minimal level (only 1-2% on NAEP and the state assessments) are of concern and disproportionate by comparison.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	21	26
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	18
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	8

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

Ensuring the Capacity to Implement. The application addresses the criteria in this section including the formation of implementation teams, constructive and intervention support for LEAs, effective and efficient operations and processes, and use of RttT grant funds. The RttT initiatives will be incorporated into the state department of education's existing project management system. The organizational structure described is based on the concepts of decentralized service support and team formation drawing on existing personnel, 12 RttT new hires and contractual services. The delivery of support services to LEAs will be carried out through Regional Teams. These teams will be the primary vehicle responsible for implementation of the state's reform agenda in the goal areas outlined. The state already has in place systems to address fiscal monitoring as prescribed by OMB guidance. This existing infrastructure and procedures will be used to accomplish data reporting for the RttT grant as well. Existing state and federal resources have been aligned or realigned to support the 4 ARRA assurance areas. The application does not adequately address the area of sustainability. While questions of fiscal sustainability have been recognized throughout the application there are several critical components that will need substantial ongoing sustainability, therefore, requiring advance planning for future investment. The state intends to contract with external consulting firms to conduct formative and summative evaluation across the four years of this program and to establish detailed project management procedures for accountability purposes. While

overall evaluation strategy is considered in the application, the allocated resources for this element do not appear adequate for the timeframe of the grant period or sufficient to support a large scale initiative comparable to the resources requested. Clear performance goals for all implementation activities are needed. A substantial amount of the resources requested are target to external vendors and contracted services as opposed to a systemic integration of the work into key functional units of the state department of education as well as, other state agencies. Using Broad Stakeholder Support. The state has received 75 letters of support for its RtT application. Letters of endorsement were received from a cross section of stakeholders including school administrators, the state's legislative leadership, charter school associations, business and community leaders, representatives of colleges and universities, parents and students. There does not appear to be visible support from teachers or union leadership. The fact that only 8% union leaders (5 LEAs) in the participating LEAs endorsed the state's application raises a concern about barriers that may need to be addressed by the state and at the local level. Florida acknowledges the challenge of not having more substantial union support for its reform priorities. The application indicates that the unique collective bargaining laws and practices at the local level will ensure full plan implementation in accordance with the defined scope of work. The application does not address how the state will move forward assertively to generate union buy in. In order for Florida to ensure effective implementation of all plan criteria teachers along with their associations are deemed essential especially in carrying out the RtT vision for Great Teachers and Great Leaders. The application references stakeholder engagement as part of the plan development process, e.g. the formation of advisory groups in each of the assurance areas, publication of a FAQ document and establishment of an e-mail and phone hotline. The application does not provide details regarding the full scope of the outreach process, e.g. specific components, overall total of participants, numbers of meetings, frequency of interactions, etc. The application does not effectively address how specific use of the various stakeholders will be made throughout plan implementation.

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

Florida earns additional points under Criterion A (2) i and ii for the following reasons based on the information provided in the State's presentation:

Criterion A (2) i Capacity to Implement

1. The state education department is structurally organized around the RtT assurance areas.
2. The state already has strong experience in Project Management procedures related to strategy design, implementation and evaluation.
3. The proposed reform plan is heavily focused on bringing in outside expertise in order to build capacity at the state and local levels. The state is also strongly committed to building capacity through collaborations and partnerships both within and outside of FL.
4. This state's focus is aimed at clear measureable results and by producing such results feels confident that public and philanthropic resources can be generated to sustain its reform efforts over time.

Criterion A (2) ii Using Broad Stakeholder Support

1. The state recognizes that teachers and union leaders are critical stakeholder groups that are necessary to achieving the bold reforms outlined in its application.
2. There are existing models of union collaboration which will be used as exemplars with districts where there is still the need to generate union buy in and full support of all MOU components and, in particular, the requirements for Great Teachers and Great Leaders.
3. The state recognizes that in order for teachers and unions to become a committed stakeholder group that an open collaborative and deliberate process of negotiation between local boards of education and their respective union leadership must take place at the local level. This process must be conducted within a culture of trust and fairness. The state acknowledges that time will be needed to engage in such conversations and deliberations.

4. The state has built into its reform plan significant expectations for LEA participation aligned to RttT resource allocation. LEAs, their stakeholder groups and communities are required to commit to all plan elements in order to receive RttT funding.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	27	27
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	22	22

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

Making Progress in Each Reform Area The state's response to this criterion is comprehensive and impressive. The state's reform efforts span all 4 areas of the RttT assurances. Florida has invested significant fiscal resources, both state and federal, in each of the RttT reform area. ARRA and other federal resources have been aligned to support the state's strategic priorities. The state attributes student achievement gains to its historical activity and many pioneering initiatives in the reform arena. These successes have been documented by external studies and further evidenced by Florida's stronger progress compared to the national average based on NAEP scores. Improving Student Outcomes. Florida's application fully meets this criterion. Students in Florida have performed well compared to the national average on the NAEP assessments. At the 4th grade level for the most recent NAEP assessments (2007 in reading and 2009 in mathematics); all Florida student subgroups performed above the national subgroup averages. While 8th grade NAEP results were mixed relative to national averages, Florida outperformed the national achievement levels for both black and Hispanic students. Florida student achievement has improved steadily on both the 4th and 8th grade NAEP assessments since 2003. Florida's 4th grade NAEP performance in reading and in mathematics has improved, moving from below the national average to above the National average. Specific improvement is presented below. Grade 4 NAEP Reading: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 63 percent in 2003 to 70 percent in 2007 • White students improved from 75 percent in 2003 to 81 percent in 2007 • Black students improved from 40 percent in 2003 to 52 percent in 2007 • Hispanic students improved from 55 percent in 2003 to 64 percent in 2007 Grade 4 NAEP Mathematics: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 76 percent in 2003 to 86 percent in 2009 • White students improved from 87 percent in 2003 to 93 percent in 2009 • Black students improved from 52 percent in 2003 to 73 percent in 2009 • Hispanic students improved from 74 percent in 2003 to 84 percent in 2009 Grade 8 NAEP Reading: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 68 percent in 2003 to 71 percent in 2007 • White students improved from 79 percent in 2003 to 80 percent in 2007 • Black students improved from 48 percent in 2003 to 54 percent in 2007 • Hispanic students improved from 62 percent in 2003 to 67 percent in 2007 Grade 8 NAEP Mathematics: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 62 percent in 2003 to 70 percent in 2009 • White students improved from 78 percent in 2003 to 80 percent in 2009 • Black students improved from 36 percent in 2003 to 53 percent in 2009 • Hispanic Students improved from 53 percent in 2003 to 66 percent in 2009. Student achievement in both reading and mathematics has also steadily improved since 2003 as measured by Florida's State Assessment under ESEA (FCAT): • Grades 3-10 FCAT in Reading: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 51 percent in 2003 to 62 percent in 2009 • White students improved from 63 percent in 2003 to 72 percent in 2009 • Black students improved from 31 percent in 2003 to 44 percent in 2009 • Hispanic students improved from 41 percent in 2003 to 57 percent in 2009 • Grades 3-10 FCAT in Mathematics: the percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 54 percent in 2003 to 67 percent in 2009 • White students improved from 67 percent in 2003 to 77 percent in 2009 • Black students improved from 32 percent in 2003 to 49 percent in 2009 • Hispanic students improved from 47 percent in 2003 to 64 percent in 2009 Both 4th and 8th grade NAEP assessments and FCAT in reading and math show that the achievement gap in Florida has decreased steadily since 2003 between white versus black and white versus Hispanic students. On the 4th grade NAEP assessment, the gap between white and black student achievement has decreased by six percentage points in reading and 15 percentage points in math between 2003 and 2007 in reading and 2003 and 2009 in mathematics. The gap has also been reduced for Hispanic students by three percentage points in reading and four percentage points in

mathematics. The trends in narrowing the achievement gap as measured by the 8th grade NAEP assessment are also very similar. As measured by the FCAT, the achievement gap has fallen for black students by four percentage points in reading and seven percentage points in math between 2003 and 2009. The Hispanic student achievement gap has fallen seven percentage points in both reading and mathematics. According to a report recently released by Education Trust, Florida stands near the top of all states -- along with Delaware, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Texas -- in making the most progress in closing the achievement gap among races as measured by the 4th and 8th grade NAEP assessments. According to the report, Florida narrowed the gap among more groups of students than most other states and also has a smaller than average gap than much of the rest of the nation. Since 2002-03, the high school graduation rate (calculated based on the guidelines for the new federal uniform rate) has increased from 56.5 percent to 65.5 percent in 2008-09. • The rate of White students graduating from high school has improved from 64 percent in 2003 to 71.2 percent in 2009 • The rate of Black students graduating from high school has improved from 42.6 percent in 2003 to 53.7 percent in 2009 • The rate of Hispanic students graduating from high school has improved from 51.4 percent in 2003 to 63.4 percent in 2009: Having achieved such commendable accomplishments gives Florida a strong foundation on which to launch an ambitious RtT initiative. Overall Florida's application does not discuss the attribution of cause and effect except in a general way. As the state moves forward with a significantly larger investment, more concrete data and measures should be available to explain the connections between achievements and the actions that have contributed to it.

Total	125	97	102
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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)

Participating in a Consortium Developing High Quality Standards. Florida has been recognized as a leader in developing and adopting rigorous standards which are internationally benchmarked. The national report Quality Counts issued by Education Week, gives Florida an A in Standards with a perfect score of 100%. This prior experience gives the state a strong foundation to launch an ambitious reform agenda utilizing RtT funding. The state's application provides adequate documentation that it meets the specified criterion under this section. • The state has executed a MOU demonstrating its commitment to jointly develop and adopt a common set of core standards. • In addition to Florida, 47 states and 3 territories have joined the Common Core Standards Initiative sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governor's Association. • A copy of the MOU, a list of participating states and territories and a copy of draft standards are included in the application appendices. • The Common Core Standards will be internationally benchmarked. To ensure that the standards prepare students to be globally competitive, the development team used a number of sources. In addition, the development team looked to the standards of a number of individual countries and provinces to inform the content, structure and language of the standards. Adopting Standards. The application fully meets this criterion. Description of a plan for Florida's adoption of Common Core Standards consistent with the RtT required time frame and the state's legal process has been provided in Florida law. As required by statute the State Education Commissioner will submit the draft standards for review by educators, community leaders and higher education representatives. The standards will also be submitted to national experts for review. In the final step of the adoption process, the Commissioner will submit the standards to the President of the Florida Senate, the Governor and the

Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives. In accordance with the legal authority granted, the Commissioner has set a timeline for action on the standards no later than August 2, 2010.

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

Florida's application includes documentation pertaining to the specified criterion under this section. The state has executed 2 separate MOUs demonstrating its commitment to jointly develop a battery of common high quality assessments that align with the Common Core Standards. Florida serves as the lead state for the Assessment Consortium which is comprised of 17 states that have banded together for the purposes of fair and open procurement, cost efficiency and common proficiency standards. Florida has also signed a commitment to work with 26 other states toward a system of common assessments fulfilling a set of principles as articulated by Achieve. MOUs along with lists of participating states are included in the application appendices.

(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)

The application describes a number of major initiatives and activities that will be undertaken both at the state and local levels to move the state's adopted content standards and aligned assessments towards further implementation across the state. A key highlight of Florida's plan is to expand teacher capacity to use standards and assessment related resources and tools to drive continuous improvement of instructional practices. Florida's approach to this criterion represents a collaborative effort involving state development and support activities combined with actions required in the LEA MOU. Specifically LEAs are committed to:

- modify school schedules to allow for common planning time by grade level or subject area for lesson study focused on instructional quality, student work, and outcomes, without reducing time devoted to student instruction.
- ensure that professional development programs at all schools focus on effective instruction consistent with new CCSS, while employing the principles of lesson study and formative assessment.
- implement at least one additional high school career and technical program that provides training for occupations requiring science, technology, engineering, and/or math (STEM).
- increase the number of STEM-related accelerated courses
- ensure that each school possesses the technology, including hardware, connectivity, and other necessary infrastructure, to provide teachers and students sufficient access to strategic tools for improved classroom instruction and computer-based assessment support tools.

Additionally, the state has committed to the following initiative outcomes

- By 2012-2013, all students and teachers will have access to support tools to implement the CCSS.
- By 2013-2014, interim and formative assessment tools will be available to support instruction and measure student progress in all core content areas in all Florida schools. Florida will participate in international assessments during the first two years of this grant period to make international comparisons, analyze progress, and determine prioritized areas of need.
- Beginning in 2010-2011, the percentage of students in Florida enrolled in accelerated STEM coursework, STEM career and technical programs, and middle grades STEM courses with integration of technology will increase annually by 3%.
- By 2013-2014, all participating LEAs will have fully implemented lesson study supported by available resources. Overall the application presents a comprehensive plan complete with performance measures intended to communicate anticipated impact.

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	24	24	

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

Florida has a statewide longitudinal data system in place that fully complies with all 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act. The state has been a pioneer in data collection and has been recognized as having one of the most comprehensive data systems in the country.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data

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

While Florida recognizes the many strengths of its efforts to design and implement a longitudinal data system, it is also cognizant that access to and use of the data and tools has been inefficient and frustrating for many users. Several specific areas have been identified for improvement: • governance around the collection, definition, access, and use of state data and technology resources. • adequate sharing of P-20 and workforce data across the organization. • the requirement for districts to enter the same data multiple times to use different tools or reports. • the requirement for users to find multiple and disparate Web site locations to access all the tools and reports offered by FDOE. • data are not available in the form of reports or analytical tools specifically designed for daily classroom use and LEA administrative support. Utilizing RtT resources, Florida will complete RTTT five priority initiatives around accessing and using state data to resolve these issues and inefficiencies: • By 2012, creation and implementation of state program and technology governance policies and processes that align the collection and definition of data with access and use of state data resources • By 2013, automatically pre-populate state applications and reports with state data to increase accuracy, effectiveness, and process efficiencies for educators. • By mid 2012, create an engaging and informative, customer-friendly, Web-based interface for education stakeholders that is intuitive, easy to navigate, and relevant. • By 2013, provide authorized users with single sign-on access to confidential student and staff information through the customer-friendly, Web-based interface to increase data access and use. • By 2014, publish relevant reports and information from state data resources. FDOE is currently engaged in the first year of a project to design a data governance process through a Federal Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant (SLDS R3). Improved data governance will further protect the integrity of the data that tracks students through Florida's PK-20 education pipeline and into the workforce. Additionally, Florida has submitted a grant application for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant (SLDS R4) on December 4, 2009. Through the SLDS R4 grant, FDOE proposes to upgrade the major source data systems that are incorporated into the Educational Data Warehouse. They include the PK-12, workforce education, and community college databases. The state's effort to address improvement in the access and use of data are commendable. Resources from multiple sources (RtT and SLDS) have been integrated to create a comprehensive plan to address inadequacies and are being leveraged to maximize impact. The state has articulated a clear set of goals, outcomes and performance measures. These performance measures will be tracked and evaluated on a regular basis with appropriate interventions and modifications being implemented as needed. Examples of such performance measures may be: number of state data resources and turnaround time to technically integrate them; amount of activity on the customer-friendly, Web-based interface; and satisfaction with the reports and information published from state data resources.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction

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

As part of the MOU signed onto by the participating LEAs, all have agreed to acquire or enhance a local instructional management system. Seventy one percent of LEAs currently have instructional improvement systems available at the local school level, but only 52% provide student-level data. The state's role in this endeavor will be to support and facilitate LEAs in their efforts. The state department of education will publish a list of recommended minimal features and functionality for use by districts for procurement and enhancements. This will ensure the systems once implemented or updated will be of high quality and used effectively. Additionally, the state and LEAs will work collaboratively to ensure the use of data and to offer effective professional development. LEAs as detailed in the MOU, will be required to provide effective professional development and modify school schedules to allow for common planning time by grade level (elementary) or subject area (secondary) for lesson study focused on instructional quality, student work, and

outcomes, without reducing time devoted to student instruction. The state department of education will augment the local effort by the following:

- Development of multi-media professional development materials that encourage understanding and use of the customer friendly, Web-based interface and state data resources
- Providing lesson study toolkits on the use of data on the CCSS and interim assessments
- Offering leadership training in project management, data analysis, and strategic planning
- Establishment of guidelines for LEA development of beginning teacher support programs in collaboration with participating LEAs and two colleges of education research centers on teacher preparation and induction support.
- Provide professional development specialists to work directly with participating LEAs in a train-the-trainer model to ensure LEA professional development staffs are well equipped to train local users to understand and use state data resources. By 2011, researchers will have access to the state and local instructional improvement systems. Work funded through the SLDS R4 grant will improve researchers' access by automating the approval process and enhancements in other applications and features. The RttT application sets forth the following three areas of work planned:
- Review and approve research requests, as received.
- Partner with LEAs to include data from local instructional improvement systems for research requests, as needed.
- Establish a research agenda consistent with RTTT initiatives and consistent with student achievement

The overall strategy for(D)(3) presents a coherent approach to support local educators across multiple criterion and takes into account ensuring integration across various professional development offerings, between LEAs and the state and within districts and schools. More specific measures of effectiveness are needed, e.g., satisfaction with multimedia materials and the trainer of trainer model Performance measures with progressive benchmarks covering the timeframe of the RttT grant for each of the criterion sub components should be provided which align with continuous improvement monitoring. Information included in the application focused on the criterion subsection having to do with research outlines a general approach that the state plans to undertake in this area. Information about the current organizational structures and operation of the research community in the state is not provided, e. g. the existence of state consortia, college and university research centers, the kinds of research products and the usefulness of research efforts to date. The budget does not appear to allocate RttT resources to this criterion sub-component (C) (3) iii. Florida should articulate a clear operating structure and specific evaluation strategy related to this criterion, namely how it will both respond to requests and stimulate interest from researchers and the specific activities that will be pursued to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies and approaches for educating different types of students. Simply ensuring that researchers have access to data is not judged to adequately meet the intent of this criteria to provide " information with which to evaluate effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, etc."

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

Information provided in the state's presentation justifies an additional 4 points for this criterion:

1. The state provided information pertaining to its overall evaluation strategy which will be based on its Strategic Plan goals and RttT targets. This overall vision also addresses how the state will evaluate this specific plan component-- using data to improve instruction.
2. Project benchmarks will be established utilizing performance measures and specific timelines for all plan components.
3. Six months and annual evaluative feedback will be provided.
4. A unitary comprehensive data system is being planned drawing on district consortia structures for small rural areas as well as the more sophisticated Learning Management systems that are already in place in several large urban centers.

Total	47	37	41
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

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

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

In addition to Florida's traditional programs, there are four pathways authorized by the Florida Legislature and State Board of Education that teacher candidates can pursue to earn a Professional Certificate. Details pertaining to these programs are outlined in the application narrative and supporting exhibits. All districts by state law are required to have a district alternative certification program. Three additional pathways are currently in use: • American Board for Certification of teaching Excellence • Educator Preparation Institutes • Professional Training Option From 2003-04 to 2006-07, the percentage of Florida's program completers of alternative routes jumped from 10% to 27% (2,222 of 8,228 completers). Level I programs in Educational Leadership are required to prepare individuals to be new school-based administrators through demonstration of The Florida Principal Leadership Standards in field experience-based programs delivered by post-secondary institutions in collaboration with Florida school districts. Level II School Principal certification programs are offered as on-the-job, competency-based programs through Florida school districts, and the rule instituted continuous improvement and reporting requirements for these programs based on completer performance as principals in schools. This new rule allows Florida public school districts to offer a state-approved Level I Educational Leadership program to employees who hold a master's degree. One school district has already received approval for and is implementing an approved Level I program, and in 2008-2009 the district reported 43 program completers. While the law allows for the creation of alternative principal preparation options, there is only one route currently in operation. Overall the programs described meet the requirements of having 4-5 elements listed in the definitions of alternative routes to certification. Clarification is needed on the number of principal program completers as referenced in the narrative sections of (A) (1) i and ii. Florida has a comprehensive and systematic approach for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher shortage and for preparing teachers to fill these areas of shortage. Each year, the Department performs a specific calculation to determine areas of shortage, which includes a review of new hires, number and percent of out-of-field teachers, and production of program completers in each subject area by Florida-approved teacher preparation programs. A report is submitted and approved by the State Board of Education, and the data are used to implement two statewide financial aid programs and as a basis for statewide efforts to assist districts in recruiting teachers in these areas. The application does not indicate a process by which it monitors or evaluates the area of principal shortages. Florida indicates it is addressing the issue of principal shortage from the perspective of quality not only quantity. Acting on data generated through research and examination of its principal pool, Florida embarked on and completed in 2008 a comprehensive revision of its school leadership certification programs to focus on candidate's performance relative to the new leadership standards. The 2009-2010 school year will be the first in which individuals complete new district and university programs. Data will be collected on the number of completers, their performance on the FELE, and their performance in school-based administrative positions, the performance of the students in the school under their leadership, and the satisfaction of their employers with their performance.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	36	36
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	15	15

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

Measuring Student Growth Florida's approach to measuring student growth linked to teacher effectiveness will draw heavily on its experience in implementing a statewide performance based pay program. As reported by the districts themselves, low participation in the state's performance pay programs is due in

large part to the difficulty in determining a fair comparative judgment of student achievement for subjects and grade levels other than reading and mathematics in grades 4 through 10. Florida's approach involves selection of a statewide measure of student growth that takes into account multiple years of performance and that can be used to set performance targets, so that educators are clear on expectations for performance. Additionally, measures of student growth will be considered that are applicable to more subjects and grades outside those included in the state assessment system. The FDOE has already contracted with a national expert to assist in selecting a measure for calculating individual student growth in state-assessed courses. Together with representatives from participating LEAs, teachers, and principals, the state department of education will select from the options presented a statewide measure of student growth for courses related to the state assessment system no later than February of 2010, so that the state stands ready to begin a comprehensive implementation that the additional RttT funding would afford. During the grant, the FDOE will contract with an appropriate entity to calculate student growth based on each student's performance on the state assessment and associated with each course and the responsible teacher and principal. Three years of baseline data will be provided to districts during the summer of 2010. By the last year of the grant, the FDOE will be responsible for this annual calculation as part of its regular work. Overall the state provides a comprehensive thoughtful approach to defining and communicating student growth measures. The state is exploring a variety of methods and assessments that relate to student growth. Clarification is needed on the specific assessments that will be used to measure effectiveness linked to teacher and principal evaluation and the process that will be used to arrive at a consensus for a final definition. Developing Evaluation Systems. Work to develop evaluation systems for teachers and principals is well underway in Florida. In its application, the state has committed to the following benchmarks:

- By July 2010, the FDOE provides districts with three years of student performance data attributable at the teacher level based on the new state-adopted measure for student growth in FCAT-associated courses.
- By the end of 2011-12, each participating LEA will have designed evaluation systems for teachers and principals that weight student growth as the largest combined factor, assess performance of the state's Accomplished Practices, and include a rating system that differentiates performance.
- By the end of the 2013-14 school year, each participating LEA will incorporate comparable student growth results into the evaluations of 80% of teachers and 100% of principals. Consistent with the MOU signed by participating districts the state will assist districts with both assessment development and growth calculation based on assessment results taking into account courses other than reading and mathematics in grades 4 through 10. The state will also enlist participating LEA representatives and representatives of state associations for selected content areas (e.g. physical education, and performing and visual arts) to develop appropriate performance and peer reviewed student assessments and will facilitate the incorporation of these assessments in participating LEA assessment programs (and in involved LEAs who wish to do so).

Conducting Annual Evaluations. Requirements for annual evaluations of teachers and school based administrators have already been established in Florida state statute. Evaluations will be expanded to include:

- multiple observations for each teacher in the first through third years of teaching that are integrated with the district's beginning teacher support program and include observations on the core effective practices described in (D)(2)(ii)2. and reviews of student performance data.
- "multi-metric" evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii)1-3 for teachers who are in the year prior to a milestone career event, such as being awarded a multi-year contract, a promotion, or a significant increase in salary. Using evaluations to inform key decisions

The Florida plan addresses all criterion components (D)(2)iv-a thru d in the plan narrative and supporting exhibits. Many of the requirements of this criterion are already embedded in state law and State Board of Education Rules (e.g., required and optional bonus programs for teachers that reward performance in a variety of ways, use of evaluation data to plan professional development, etc.) The plan acknowledges where changes will be needed in terms of refinements and program modifications. The following issues are not adequately addressed in the application:

- The final definition of the measure of effectiveness that will be used in principal and teacher evaluation (i.e., the student growth measure to be defined as greater than 50% of the evaluation of all evaluations.)
- The intent of the state to address collective bargaining barriers associated with implementation of this plan criterion and the low endorsement of teachers and union affiliation with the overall RttT reform agenda
- The need for broad stakeholder involvement to ensure effectiveness of this plan component

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

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

Ensuring Equitable Distribution in High-Poverty or High Minority Schools. In identifying the nature of the problem associated with teacher equitable distribution, the state has relied on a combination of legislatively mandated and self reported data in the following areas: • Percent of 1st year teachers, • Percent of Temporary Certificates • Percent of Out of Field Teachers In the future the state department of education will continue to track these input characteristics but the primary data that will be used going forward will be the evaluation of teacher and principal effectiveness discussed under criterion D2. In the last several years, LEAs have used Title II-A funds to improve the percentage of their courses taught by highly qualified teachers. The application indicates that performance data are well defined but did not include specific data indicating how Title II funds have impacted high poverty and minority schools. In devising future RtT strategies, lessons learned from existing programs should be applied. Florida is proposing several key strategies to increase the number of high quality teachers and principals in high need schools and hard to staff subjects. The state department of education has committed to: • Instituting a competitive grant program for eligible teacher preparation programs that implement dual major programs in STEM subjects • Leveraging the Florida Virtual School as a mechanism to access effective teachers in specific hard to staff subjects • A recruitment effort in collaboration with colleges and universities aimed at males and nontraditional students • Enhancement of the state's on line interactive recruitment site Participating LEAs are also committed to: • Develop a plan, with timetables and goals, which uses effectiveness data from annual evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii) to attract and retain highly effective teachers and principals to schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, and persistently lowest-achieving. The plan may also be designed to attract and retain new teachers from high performing teacher preparation programs as defined by FDOE in the grant to these schools. • Implement a compensation system as described in (D)(2)(iv)(b) to provide incentives for encouraging effective teachers and principals to work in these schools. • Present a plan that includes strategies in addition to compensation to staff these schools with a team of highly effective teachers led by a highly effective principal, including how the success of these individuals will be supported by the district. • Report the effectiveness data of all teachers and principals annually during the July Student and Staff Survey. • Implement a compensation system as described in (D)(2)(iv)(b) to provide incentives for the recruitment of effective teachers in critical shortage subjects and areas. • Implement recruitment and professional development strategies to increase the pool of teachers available in the district in these subject areas. Performance goals advanced by the state to be achieved by 2013-2014 are: • An increase in the percentage of reading teachers in high need schools who are highly effective from 15 to 30% • An increase in the percentage of math teachers in high need schools who are highly effective from 22-40% • Reducing the percentage of reading teachers in high need schools who are ineffective from 37-18% • Reducing the percentage of math teachers in high need schools who are ineffective from 35-20 % • An increase in the percentage of principals in high need schools who are effective to 45% Additionally, by the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, all participating LEAs will implement school board policies that result in each high-poverty, high-minority, and persistently low-performing school in the district employing: • percentages of effective teachers at least equal to that of the school with the highest percentage of effective teachers in the district. • percentages of highly effective teachers at least equal to that of the school with the highest percentage of highly effective teachers in the district. • an effective principal. The initiatives, outcomes and performance measures need to be tightly aligned and monitored for continuous improvement e.g. between LEA outcomes and performance measures stated in D(3)(i), between the equitable distribution of teachers performance measures and projected student achievement goals, reviews of prior action plan/results linked to new FL/RtT efforts. Ensuring Equitable Distribution in Hard to Staff Subjects and Specialty Areas. The application includes comprehensive data compiled by the Research Division of the State Department of Education on critical shortages in hard-to –staff subject areas as one of the

Appendices. In Florida's application, the narrative does not reference this data. Among the critical shortage areas noted as having the greatest gap between supply and demand are foreign language, technology education and science. Other shortage areas include: ESOL and high school level mathematics, English Language arts, reading, and exceptional student education programs. The D-2 Appendix describes 2 financial assistance programs that have been designed to increase the number of qualified teachers in designated teacher shortage areas. The application narrative describes in D2 an intent to institute a competitive grant program for eligible teacher preparation programs that implement dual major programs in STEM subjects and leveraging the Florida Virtual School as a mechanism to access effective teachers in specific hard to staff subjects A total of 7.7 million has been requested for the implementation of STEM programs within school districts. Based on available data articulating specific needs, the state should respond more explicitly to criterion (D)(3) ii as stated in the application. The narrative should align with information supplied in the Appendices.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The application does not sufficiently distinguish how the state intends to address criteria (D)(4) i and ii. The specific intention of criterion subsection (D)(4)i is to connect student achievement data based on the FCAT and appropriate other measures of student growth as determined by the state to the student's teachers and principals and then to link this information to their respective teacher preparation programs as well as to report the information publicly for each credentialing program. The application does not adequately address the criterion section (D)(4)i as set forth in the notice--using student growth as the measure of effectiveness. The application speaks to a number of areas that the state plans to implement relative to enhancing teacher preparation programs. The major components addressing this criterion--the narrative, project budget and Appendix D 6 Section D "Initiative Summary Chart"-- are inconsistent. In the application narrative, performance measures have been included indicating that by 2011 there will be a 100% rate of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students. This performance target does not appear on the "Initiative Chart". Further, the federal requirement describing this component and the accompanying program descriptions are not judged to fully cover the intent of this criterion. Both the application and budget narratives reference the state's intent to establish an electronic data and reporting system (eIPEP). Accordingly, the project budget contains 1.6 million over a 2 year period to fund (eIPEP). The application does not address how (eIPEP) will serve as the vehicle for linking student achievement data to educator preparation programs. More specific information is needed including goals and activities, timelines and responsible parties pertaining to this criterion subsection. The second part of this criterion is focused on the expansion of successful educator preparation and credentialing options. The applicant will implement key strategies in this area: • Improve the rigor of certification examinations, both content and cut scores, especially in examinations that include STEM subject content and reading. • Set outcome-based performance standards under current State Board of Education authority for teacher and principal preparation programs and continue to deny approval of programs that do not meet standards. • Institute a competitive grant program for eligible Florida teacher preparation programs that implement a residency program for job-embedded teacher preparation. • Utilize results from a competitive grant program for principal preparation programs to provide models and improve the content of training in school leadership certification programs. • Pursue an electronic data collection, analysis, and reporting tool, the electronic Institution Program Evaluation Plan application (eIPEP), which will enable institutions to track and monitor meaningful candidate and completer performance data, and will enable more meaningful analysis and reporting of program performance by the state for the public and policy makers.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals

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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Professional development will be provided through Florida's RTTT grant in three categories: (1) building teacher and leadership capacity, (2) effective district and school implementation, and (3) sustaining high-

quality performance system-wide. The strategies will utilize a variety of tools, resources and materials designed to improve practice in the classroom and school levels. Accompanying these new resources will be an extensive number of supports and direct services that will be offered at the state department of education along with the commitments LEAs have signed on to as part of the RtT MOU. Leadership training will extend beyond the principals to policy makers and other administrators that are non-school based. The professional development component while addressed specifically here is designed as a cross criterion strategy and integrates work from other reform areas, such as Standards and Assessments and Longitudinal Data. Use of digital resources and on line mediums, summer academies, tool kits in data analysis and lesson study based on the newly developed formative and interim assessments are key features of the professional development system. Significant resources, tools, and training will be provided to participating LEAs that will improve their ability to evaluate the professional development delivered through this grant, as well as build their capacity to evaluate all of the professional development in which their staffs engage. Over all the state has outlined a comprehensive plan for data informed professional development and other educator supports deemed to be crucial to instructional improvements and student achievement. The plan components appear adequate to address the support needs of individuals as well as groups of educators and other leaders. Florida will engage an appropriate entity with expertise in evaluation of professional development to work with districts over the grant period to provide needed follow-up and feedback on implementation. In addition, the experts will train staff at the state level in best methods of monitoring these processes. The proposed plan for evaluation does not appear adequate to effectively measure the results of the large scope of work outlined in this area. An important component of the evaluation process should produce qualitative information on which to judge impact and to use for continuous improvement. The evaluation process should clearly link professional development to the state's targets for student achievement. Key strategies included under this criterion should be aligned to educator evaluation and preparation programs.

Total	138	91	91
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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 passage of House Bill 991 in 2009, which implemented the Differentiated Accountability program, gave Florida's State Board of Education both specific statutory and administrative rule authority to intervene directly in Florida's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	34	37	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	4	4	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	33	

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

Identifying the Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools. Florida's Differentiated Accountability (DA) program makes all Florida schools eligible to be placed in one of six categories based on their school grade, most recent AYP status, and historic AYP performance: i. Not in DA ii. Prevent I iii. Prevent II iv. Correct I v. Correct II vi. Intervene. DA's lowest-performing schools are Intervene and Correct II schools. Through DA's process of identification, a total of 70 schools have been identified as persistently lowest achieving schools; Fifty-one Title I "Schools in Need of Improvement" schools that are Intervene, Correct II "F," Correct II "D

former F," and Correct II "D" for two consecutive years, as well as, 19 Title I eligible secondary schools that were Correct II "F" and "D" for two consecutive years. Additional information should be provided to clarify the subcategory designations assigned to "Correct and Intervene" at the referenced alphabet level, e.g. Correct II F, Correct II D and Former F. Turning around the Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools. Florida's application presents an ambitious approach to improving achievement for all of the state's students and includes a range of interventions and activities to address its persistently lowest achieving schools. As evidenced in this section, Florida has had a long standing tradition of working in school improvement at the local level. Over the years the state has employed a variety of strategies to turn around low performing schools. The four intervention models will be implemented through various state and LEA initiatives. The application does not indicate the process or criteria that will be used to determine which intervention models will be assigned to the 70 identified schools. As evidence in the MOU with LEAs, the plan also requires that LEAs commit to assigning RtT, School Improvement Funds to one or more of the following initiatives in each of their persistently lowest achieving schools:

- Extended learning time in Intervene schools
- Expanded full day kindergarten
- Evidence-based and proven program to support at-risk students.

The application describes 13 state led initiatives to support turnaround through the development of human capital for turnaround proven programs and community and business support. This listing includes important lessons learned as a result of these interventions. Florida's initiatives aim to:

- Provide a pipeline of administrators and teachers to turn around Florida's persistently lowest-achieving 5% of schools and strengthen their feeder patterns.
- Build the capacity of current district and school based administrators and teachers to turn around Florida's persistently lowest-achieving 5% of schools and their feeder patterns.
- Ensure that students in the persistently lowest-achieving 5% of schools and their feeder patterns have effective charter options as an alternative to traditional schools.
- Rally communities and businesses to assist in the turnaround effort.

This is the most significant component of the overall RtT application. Over \$155 million has been requested to support this bold set of activities. For the most part the state's application lays out a thoughtful and detailed action plan both in the narrative and appendices. The strategies have been documented drawing on lessons learned from ongoing school intervention and research based interventions that have evidenced success, e.g. Epstein, 1995,1997and Ferguson 2007. The application does not adequately address expenditures or evaluation for this component. Large expense amounts are included in the category of contractual services. Given the magnitude of the effort and investment, there should be a comprehensive evaluation appropriately budgeted. The application indicates that services for evaluation design and project management expertise would be contracted at a cost of approximately \$1 million for the overall RtT plan. The project budget narratives describe other aspects of evaluation that will be undertaken related to select plan components. Based on the large size of this turnaround initiative talented program and management personnel, as well as contractual expertise will be required. The Community Compact component is budgeted at \$68 million overall. CBOs will be offered an opportunity to compete for available funds (total of \$5 million per year) to supplement their existing operating functions. The applicant must provide a clearer action plan detailing goals, objectives, activities, timeline and performance measures for each of the turnaround components. The application should address in a more thorough manner sustainability after the RtT grant is over.

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

Additional points are awarded for E (2) II:

1. Information provided by the state further clarified the implementation strategy and competition process related to initiating the Community Compact component.
2. The state's overall response to evaluation addresses the Tier 1 expressed concern about how this plan component would be assessed.
3. The state also provided information to address the long term financial sustainability and its scale up plan for the Community Compact.

Total	50	44	47
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9	9	

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

The percentage of total revenues available to support elementary, secondary and public higher education in Florida for FY 2009 was 0.22% higher than the total revenues available in FY 2008. Fiscal equity is addressed in Florida through the administration of the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) which was adopted by the state legislature in 1973. The FEFP has been subjected to review by the state courts and has been determined to be an equitable method for allocating state and local operating funds to local school districts. Fiscal equity is addressed largely through the FEFP formula accommodation of local variable tax bases through equalization. Through the equalization of property tax revenue, high poverty school districts are advantaged because they do not have wealth as measured by the local property tax base to finance their schools. Other components of the FEFP address equity based on the priority of need assigned to certain students (a weighting factor for special education students, Exceptional Student Education, Guaranteed Allocation and English Language Learners) and program specific grant funds (Supplemental Academic Instruction, Safe Schools, and Class Size Reduction). The state has implemented a cost accounting system that documents by LEA and individual schools how federal, state and local revenues are distributed. The application does not address how the FEFP need based funding streams are allocated to LEAs and subsequently within LEAs to achieve equity. There is no information provided on how the cost accounting system documentation will be publicly reported nor actual examples of how as a tool it is being applied to reallocate resources among schools within LEAs.

(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 applicant fully meets this criterion over all and by subsections. Clarification is needed on the number of charter school closures (Appendix F and Table F-1). Evidence to meet this criterion is highlighted below. External independent reviews have consistently ranked Florida's charter school law as one of the strongest in the nation. Does Not Prohibit or Inhibit Increasing the Number of High Performing Charter Schools. Legislation authorizing the creation of charter schools as a part of Florida's public education system was enacted in May 1996. Florida law does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools as it does not impose caps or restrictions on the number of charter schools permitted to operate or the number of students eligible to attend charter schools. In fact, it expressly permits a variety of charter school types, including start-ups, conversions, university-sponsored charter lab schools, charter schools in the workplace, and charter schools in a municipality, while also allowing for any elementary and/or secondary grade configuration. Florida currently has over 400 charter schools educating approximately 137,000 students (5.2% of the state's total number of public school enrollment). Florida's charter schools now include 148 elementary, 68 middle, 107 high, and 87 combination schools, most of which offer a myriad of different programs. Approval Process. Florida statutes and State Board of Education rules provide explicit instructions for approving, monitoring, renewing, and closing charter schools. Each of these processes is required to include an assessment of student achievement as the primary determining factor. As provided by law, Florida's approach to charter school accountability and authorization is directed by high standards of student achievement, enhanced academic success, financial efficiency, and the alignment of responsibility with accountability. Florida law requires that charter contracts include specific information about the educational design of the program and projected student achievement, including school mission, focus of the curriculum, instructional methods to be used, current incoming baseline standard of student academic achievement, outcomes to be achieved, and the methods of measurement that will be used. Charter renewal decisions are driven primarily by the school's record of student achievement. Florida law directs authorizers to consider the school's success or failure to meet the requirements for student performance found in the charter when considering charter renewals. Over the past five years, authorizers have overseen the closure of 129 charter schools. Of the 101 closures that were

non-voluntary, 61 were related to either academic performance or financial management. Florida law requires that charter schools demonstrate how they will serve student populations similar to other schools in the district, as well as, increase learning opportunities for all students, and specifically encourages charter schools to enroll high-need students by allowing them to limit their enrollment to target students at risk of dropping out or academic failure. Florida law also requires charter schools to be one of the options available to school districts to turn around schools categorized as "Intervene" under the state's Differentiated Accountability program. Funding. Charter schools in Florida have access to state taxes, appropriate federal funds (including ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Funds), local property taxes, and lottery proceeds in the same manner as traditional public schools for current operating costs. Charter schools receive a per student share of these operating funds through the authorizing school district services. Florida law affirms the right of charter schools to receive federal funds for which they are eligible, including Title I funds. Accordingly, federal entitlement programs such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are to be allocated proportionally by districts to charter schools that provide the services or programs. Additionally, Florida law was recently amended to require the state department of education and school districts to include charter schools in requests for federal stimulus funds. Accordingly, the MOU specifically requires participating LEAs to ensure that charter schools have the same opportunity as other public schools to participate in the RTTT grant. Florida will set aside RTTT funds for a competitive grant that would allow potential vendors to submit bids that meet the unique needs of charter school students in ways that align with one or more of the assurances. Facilities. All aspects of the criterion are addressed satisfactorily. Key features of the state's policies, resources and options include: • SS. 1002.33 (9) and 1013.62, F.S. provides the legislative authority for charter school facility funding, • The amount of charter school capital outlay has increased significantly from \$7.8 million in 2000 to approximately \$57 million in 2009. The per-student amount of this facilities funding for eligible charter schools is comparable to the average per-student amount available to district schools across the state after districts' debt service is removed. Some school districts have chosen to provide charter schools with additional facilities funding from local property tax revenues as well. Charter schools are also eligible to receive funds from impact fees assessed when residential developments cause increased enrollment. • The state provides charter school capital outlay funds only to those schools that demonstrate satisfactory student achievement, financial stability, and sound governance. • Charter school capital outlay funds may be used to purchase real property, construct school facilities, purchase or lease relocatable facilities, renovate and repair existing facilities, purchase equipment, or pay premiums for property and casualty insurance necessary to insure the school facility. • Charter schools are not required to utilize facilities that meet the rigorous State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) with which district-owned school buildings must comply. The law further states that charter schools may utilize a variety of facilities, including libraries, museums, and churches, under the facilities' preexisting zoning and land use designations. • Charter school facilities are exempt from assessments of building permit fees (with exceptions), building and occupational license fees, impact fees, service availability fees, and assessments for special benefits. Charter schools may also have access to district-owned facilities. If a district has a facility or property that is available because it is surplus, marked for disposal, or otherwise unused, it must be provided for a charter school's use. Innovative, Autonomous Schools. Florida enables LEAs to operate innovative public schools as evidenced by its Florida Virtual School, the School District Virtual Instructional Program and developmental research (laboratory) schools.

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

Florida presents several initiatives that fall outside of the RtT Reform Criteria Agenda and includes specific impact data. There are several initiatives that focus on innovation and that when combined with the RtT proposed reform agenda, demonstrates both a historical commitment and a forward looking vision aimed at improving student achievement. • Voluntary Kindergarten Program (VPK) initiated in 2005 Impact data: Data show that higher percentage of children who completed VPK scored ready for kindergarten when compared to children who did not complete or participate in VPK across all three measures of the FLKRS in 2007-08. • Teach for America (TFA): Programs in Duval and Miami-Dade Counties have contributed nearly 200 effective and qualified teachers in 2009 and have plans to double the size of the incoming TFA corps in Miami-Dade County for the 2010 school year • Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP): KIPP, a national

network of free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public schools, is expanding to Florida this year. • College Reach-Out Program (CROP): Florida promotes academic achievement in historically underrepresented student populations through CROP, a unique program that provides special support to low-income, educationally disadvantaged students in order to prepare them to complete their postsecondary education (s. 1007.34, F.S.). Over 7,000 students per year participate in CROP, and as a cohort these students outperform their peers across a variety of metrics, such as graduation rate (83% for CROP participants compared to 60% for non-CROP participants) and grade point average (2.48 for CROP participants compared to 2.12 for non CROP participants).

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)

Emphasis on STEM is included in significant ways throughout the state's proposal; • identification of teaching shortages in critical subject areas • emphasis on math and science in the common core standards and aligned assessments • cooperation with industry experts, museums and universities, research centers and other community partners • preparation of more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences technology, engineering and mathematics including the under-representation of women and girls. STEM instruction, student performance, and student access to quality programs are supported in all RttT assurance areas and by prior STEM program initiatives that are firmly established through existing partnerships and the use of funding from state, federal and private sources.

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 Florida application has addressed all four ARRA areas and the required Success Factor Criteria. Close to 90% of the state's LEAs have committed to the RttT reform agenda. The 64 participating LEAs have signed on with explicit and detailed knowledge of local expectations of their roles as collaborative partners in the plan. The Florida RttT application embodies a results oriented approach and presents a comprehensive, innovative and bold set of actions. Florida has dramatically improved student achievement over the past decade as measured by NAEP. Florida stands at the top of all states in making the most progress in closing the achievement gap among races based on NAEP. Florida has been a national leader in many reform innovations and has received national recognition. The state is in a strong position to launch an ambitious agenda consistent with RttT goals building on its accomplishments as well as applying lessons learned from previous reform investments.

Total		0	0	
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Grand Total	500	408	420	
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Florida Application #2040fl-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	54	54	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	40	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	9	9	

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

(A)(1)(i) The Florida application provides a very comprehensive explanation of its reform plans. The State indicates that its Race to the Top (RT3) Plan will bolster its existing "Next Generation PreK-20 Strategic Plan." Specifically, the application indicates that Florida's RT3 Plan will help them "accelerate and deepen the State's existing strategies and meet the nation's education goals." The goals of its Strategic Plan are to "double the percentage of incoming high school freshman who ultimately achieve college credit" after high school, and to "eliminate the achievement gap by 2020". Florida's goals are clear, ambitious, and comprehensive. Florida's application charts a very clear path to achieving its goals, with detailed explanations of its plans and evidence to back up its claims. They also provide a very solid and convincing history of their reform efforts as well and the presentation of the Gap Analysis demonstrates that they are very clear about what is needed to move education forward in Florida. No points were withheld. (A)(1)(ii)(a) (b) Florida provides a copy of its LEA Memorandum of Understanding in the Appendix. The MOU binds LEAs to executing the very detailed Scope of Work Florida also presents in its Appendix. The Scope of Work is outstanding, comprehensive, and effectively addresses all four areas of RT3. No points were withheld. (A)(1)(ii)(c) Eighty-nine percent (n=64) of Florida's LEAs representing 89% of the students (n=2,144,131) in State signed the MOU. All LEA superintendents and school board presidents signed the MOU but only 5 local teachers' union leaders signed. The lack of teacher union support could present significant obstacles to Florida, but the significant support it has received from LEA leaders is a positive sign regarding the potential of Florida's State Board of Education to win widespread support for its plans. Additionally, 2 of the 5 districts whose union leaders signed the MOU educate more than 120,000 K-12 students and a student body that is approximately 50% of students in poverty. Some points have been withheld due to the limited number of teachers' unions supporting the Plan. (A)(1)(iii)As stated in (A)(1)(ii) (c), 89% of LEAs in Florida are participating in the State's RT3 application. These districts serve a total of 2,144,131 students with more than 50% of students in these districts living in poverty. The numbers alone represent a significant impact on student achievement if Florida is able to execute its plans and strategies effectively. (A)(1)(iii)(a) Florida presents very clear student achievement growth charts that report subgroup data. Florida's growth goals on the NAEP are not aggressive enough when focusing on proficiency levels. Florida has plans to move a greater percentage of its students into basic levels of performance but its targets for moving students towards proficiency in math and reading are miniscule. While the percentage goals of students scoring proficient and advanced on the State's ESEA assessment are higher than the NAEP, the growth plans of 1-3% per year for black, white, and Hispanic students is too small. At that rate, Florida is stating it will take until 2019-20 for 75% of students to move into proficient and advanced levels of achievement. By the 4th year of the RT3 grant, Florida is only projecting to increase the achievement of black students by 8 percentage points over 4 years. Less growth is projected for Hispanic students.

Additionally, Florida is not projecting the achievement of white students to increase at all. Presently, they predict that 73% will achieve at proficient and advanced levels on the State's assessment in the last year of the RT3 grant (2013-14), but 73% of white students are scoring at proficient now. There doesn't seem to be a focus on raising the bar for all students and moving all students forward academically. There is no expression of achievement goals for Asian or American Indian students. This is problematic. For these reasons, points have been withheld. (A)(1)(iii)(b) Florida says it plans to reduce the achievement gap between white and black students, and white and Hispanic students by specific percentages each year. However, it is planning to reduce the gap by setting marginal annual growth goals for black and Hispanic students while holding the achievement of white students constant over the life of the grant. Florida clearly has no plans to raise the bar for all students and focus on increasing the achievement of white students while setting more aggressive, yet achievable goals for eliminating the achievement gap. For these reasons, points have been withheld. (A)(1)(iii)(c) Florida presents reasonable graduation rate targets for student subgroups between 2009-10 and 2012-14 when the RT3 grant expires. Again, the graduation rate goals for white students barely move during this time period and a graduation rate goal for Asian and American Indian students are not presented. For this reason, points have been withheld. (A)(1)(iii)(d) Florida's goals for increasing College Enrollment Rates and College Credit Earning Rates for students by subgroup are realistic over the life of the RT3 grant. These are goals that will take longer to grow as it will take time to establish a college going culture among students, teachers, parents and other adults in schools. As schools begin to build their college going culture, more aggressive growth goals in these two areas will be practical. However, Asian and American students are left off of the chart again. Points have been withheld as a result.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	26	26
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18	18
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	8	8

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

(A)(2)(i)(a) Florida's RT3 team includes high level leadership, including the Commissioner of Education and leadership of core functional areas/departments (aka "assurance areas") at the State Board of Education. The application calls for employing six project managers with RT3 funds, with one manager serving as the "lead project manager." Five of these managers are responsible for the four core areas of RT3, each assuming the leadership of one of these areas: standards, assessments, data, great teachers and leaders, and struggling schools. There is also a complex but clear and feasible use of staff from various offices at the State Board, its regional offices, and LEAs to manage and coordinate implementation and oversight of RT3 initiatives. No points have been withheld for this sub-criterion. (A)(2)(i)(b) Appendix A7 provides a comprehensive explanation of how the SEA will support participating LEAs in all four areas of RTTT. The planned strategies are well thought through, clearly articulated, and appropriately align with the proposed staff levels of the SEA. There are some unique and promising features to Florida's plans, including the Differentiated Accountability Summer Academy, a focus on building the capacity of principals in rural districts to turn around low performing schools, partnering with outside firms to recruit teachers and train leaders for turning around struggling schools. Considering the diversity of Florida public schools' student body, the SEA also plans to address "cultural competency" among high school leadership teams. However, the focus on cultural competency is limited to schools performing in the lowest 5% of schools statewide. Insufficient reasoning is given for why 5% when the percentage of student diversity overall in Florida is much higher than 5%. (A)(2)(i)(c) Florida provides in the body of the application and in the budget narrative, additional detail about the various positions that will lead and support their RT3 initiatives. However, throughout the document Florida focuses a lot of attention on professional development and activities that will build the capacity of LEAs to successfully engage in RT3 work, but there is no mention of how the State will address the professional development needs of State Board of Education leadership and personnel. RT3 would support a sea-change in educational practice and policy in Florida, and require that the State Board and related agencies have the capacity to help LEAs help themselves and their schools through implementation, program execution, monitoring, and evaluation. Also, their use of consultants will help schools (with such things as transitioning to the new teacher evaluation system), but Florida hasn't

explained if or how consultants will help their State Board develop the capacity (knowledge, expertise, and know-how) to be a valuable asset to its LEAs and regional teams. In summary, Florida presents a solid plan for supporting and building the capacity of its LEAs but eliminating leadership, staff talent, knowledge/experience, and program management and oversight gaps at the State Board is missing in the application. Points have been withheld as a result. (A)(2)(i)(d) Florida's budget narrative is exceptional. It provides very clear, concise, and comprehensive explanations of the State's RT3 initiatives and how Florida will use RT3 and other funding sources to accomplish the State's plans and goals. However, the budget narrative does not address the coordination, reallocation or repurposing of federal, state, local funds during RT3 grant period to support RT3 objectives. However, in the body of its application, Florida writes that its State Board of Education will encourage LEAs to use their federal formula program funds and pass-through ARRA funds to "assist in ensuring the successful reforms can be sustained after the grant period." Florida plans to provide consulting support to LEAs to assist them with realigning their existing budgets to new reform strategies (among other things) at some point during the grant period. No points were withheld. (A)(2)(i)(e) Florida points to its track record of success and "legacy of leadership" in securing legislative support for pioneering education reform strategies in the State; however, no clear plan for how they will use their fiscal, political, and human capital resources to win legislative and public support to sustain and/or expand their initiatives after the RT3 grant period expires is presented in the application. Florida says it will use its assets to win support, but they do not discuss how they will do this. A marginal number of points have been withheld as a result, but credit has been given for Florida's statements of commitment to using its resources to sustain reform in the State. (A)(2)(ii)(a) The Florida School Boards Association, Florida Association of School Administrators (principal), and the Florida Association of School District Superintendents all support the State's RT3 application. There is no mention of support from the State's teachers' union or teacher association(s). Points have been withheld as a result. (A)(2)(ii)(b) Florida has secured the support of a wide spectrum and compelling array of critical stakeholders: policy makers and policy making bodies, business and industry associations, and leadership, civic, civil rights, and community-based associations and organization from across the State. Florida states that it received over 75 letters of support from stakeholders representing a wide spectrum of stakeholders across the state, including association and organizations representing principals, school boards, parents, and charter schools. They also indicate support of leaders of both houses of the Florida legislature, the state's congressional delegation, Florida's Chamber of Commerce, Florida's Philanthropic Network, and Civil Rights organizations. Brief summaries of the 75+ organizations that are supporting the State's RT3 application is in Appendix A8 of the application. No points were withheld.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	28	28
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	23	23

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

(A)(3)(i) Florida presents significant evidence of where and how its State has made significant progress towards addressing education reform in the four areas of Race to the Top (RT3). In all, Florida's application lists six reform initiatives under Great Teachers and Leaders, highlights the state's Sunshine State [academic] standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, and discusses a class-size reduction initiative along with a few other strategies to help LEAs turn around low performing schools. Outside of federal formula funding, the state has paid for each of its reform initiatives with state appropriations or private grants. Florida has also invested in organizational partners who provide mentoring and after school programs, including Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, Governor's Mentoring Initiative, and the YMCA. Additionally, Florida has enacted two significant pieces of education reform legislation since 2003 to boost student achievement and give families a variety of educational alternatives for their children. In 2006, the state legislature approved the A++Plan to boost student achievement. In 2009, it enacted the Florida Equal Opportunity in Education Act, which among other actions, adds high school graduation rates and students' participation in advancement placement classes in high school to the statewide report card and report card for individuals schools. Florida has also sought to expand parents' educational choices by

expanding the John M. McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities and offering more than 400 charter school options statewide. Combined, the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program and The McKay Scholarship provided more than \$88 million to 24,871 students in more than 1,000 private schools in the state, with black students being the greatest recipient of these scholarships. The state also enrolled more than 135,000 students in more than 400 charter schools and an additional 154,000 students in the Florida Virtual School, which the application states is the "largest enrollment of any state virtual school in the nation." (A)(3)(ii) The Florida application presents a very clear and easy to review set of tables that show progress in student achievement for subgroups from 2003 to 2009. Data presented indicates growth in student performance in reading and math on the NAEP and the state's ESEA assessment (FCAT) for "all" subgroups in grades 4 and 8. The greatest gains overall are in math and the greatest gains for a subgroup are among Black students. Florida has also increased high school graduation rates among students from 2003 to 2009: 7 percentage points among white students, 11 percentage points among black students, and 12 points among Hispanic students. The data and information in this section was very well presented. However, presenting the percentage of students who achieved at proficient and advanced levels on national and state tests instead of "at or above basic", as is presented in the application, would demonstrate higher expectations.

Total	125	108	108
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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) Florida is participating in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative, a consortium of 48 states brought together by the National Governors Association and Council of State Chief School Officers who have pledged to adopt CCSS that are aligned with college and work expectations. According to its signed Memorandum of Agreement (Appendix B1) and statements made in its RTTT application, Florida says its State Board of Education will adopt the internationally benchmarked CCSS standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics in 2010. The SEA plans to make the standards available for public comment on a website, www.flstandards.org, from March through May 2010 and will present the standards for review to its Governor and both houses of its state legislature during this time period. Florida intends to submit the CCSS to the State Board of Education for adoption in July 2010. The official CCSS are expected to be released in February 2010. The CCSS will replace at least 85% of the language arts and math standards that are presently a part of Florida's internationally benchmarked Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. The remaining 15% of the standards will be developed from feedback on the CCSS received from Florida education experts, leaders and practitioners across the state. Appendix B3 outlines the process for how CCSS were internationally benchmarked and draft CCSS are available in Appendix B4. Florida provided an excellent explanation of its process for adopting its standards; No points were withheld for this section.

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

(B)(2) Florida has taken the lead to establish a consortium of 17 states who have all signed a Memorandum of Agreement to develop and adopt a common summative assessment that measures the internationally benchmarked Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The consortium was formed in September 2009 and

the MOA was signed by participating states in December 2009. To fund the development of the assessment, Florida indicates the Consortium will seek an Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The primary aims of the Consortium are to develop an assessment that provides a "common definition of proficiency for all Consortium states" and measures students' progress towards being college and career ready. Florida has also presented evidence relative to its agreement to participate in a Consortium of 48 states being organized by Achieve, Inc. to develop and implement a common summative assessment that would also measure the CCSS. Florida addresses the overlap in effort between the two consortiums it is involved in by stating in its application that "Florida and the 16 other participant states will consider merging into a national consortium if one is eventually created that is committed to the purpose of this consortium..." and that the "principles shared by these [48] states are well aligned with Florida's Common Assessment Consortium...". According to the timeline provided in the grant, Florida expects to apply for an Assessment grant for the Consortium in 2010, begin designing the assessment in 2010-11, test pilot the assessment in 2011-12 and fully roll out the common assessment in 2014-15. No points were withheld.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments

20

18

18

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

(B)(3) Florida's application expresses a comprehensive plan to support its transition to the Common Core State Standards. The State has already implemented internationally benchmarked standards through its Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. It has also developed K-12 ESEA state assessment in reading and math that is aligned with its State Standards, as well as an aligned computer-based interim assessment in reading. Their math assessment is presently in development. Florida has also developed formative assessments for grades K-3 that are aligned with its state standards and assessments, and formative assessments for additional grade levels are presently in development. Additionally, Florida presents strategies for how it will establish additional tools and supports for schools, teachers, and students that adequately align to CCSS, provide more effective research-based teaching and learning resources, and make teaching and professional development tools available for teachers. Florida mentions four strategies it will implement to support the transition: (1) curricular tools that inform teachers and provide tutoring opportunities against the standards for students, (2) a system of interim and formative assessments, (3) increased access to rigorous and career prep courses in STEM fields, and (4) web-based lesson study kits and increased lesson study time for teachers. These tools, if implemented effectively, will be useful to their efforts to boost student achievement on tests. However, these tools should be paired with quality teaching in general. Teaching is an art and a science. Most of what is being addressed through RT3 is the science side of teaching. Florida will need to ensure that teachers who are delivering instruction have the energy, drive, and communications, relational, and presentation skills teaching in their classrooms. The State also needs to ensure it has people with these skill sets on its team as well so that districts and schools benefit from their engagement with the State Board of Education and its regional offices. One other area in Florida's plan that will make a significant difference in teaching and learning in the State is its requirement, as defined its LEA MOU, that all participating LEAs modify school schedules to provide teachers more planning and lesson study time without reducing instructional time and that professional development be aligned with the new CCSS. It also requires that (a) LEAs implement at least one additional high school career and technical program (in STEM areas), (b) schools increase accelerated and Advanced Placement courses in STEM related areas of study, and (c) all schools possess the equipment and infrastructure necessary to fully support the states RTTT initiatives. Florida presented a very robust set of transitional supports for schools, educators, and leaders in the State and has received high points as a result.

Total

70

68

68

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

Available

Tier 1

Tier 2

Init

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24	24	
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(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(1) Florida already has a statewide longitudinal student data system that meets all 12 elements of the America Competes Act. The system was implemented in 2003. The application presents a table that outlines specifically how Florida's data system addresses the elements of the America Competes Act. Based on the detail about the data system Florida provided in the application, all 12 elements have indeed been integrated. As a result, Florida is receiving full points.

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

(C)(2) Florida has acknowledged that its data system has been difficult to access and difficult to make use of the data it contains. Presently, there is no coherent plan or process for how data is collected, defined, accessed, and used and the data the state collects is not sufficiently aligned with its PK-20 education initiatives. Florida's plan will enhance educators' ability to easily access and use data to inform instruction and plan for student achievement. It will also help the State improve its ability to maintain and share data across relevant public/educational agencies for planning, monitoring, problem solving, and intervention. Florida states that it will implement a governing process for its data collection and management policies, process, and procedures. With regard to the priorities Florida listed, few details are provided for how it plans to develop a system that "automatically pre-populates state data and reports" for use by educators. They say a consultant will be hired, but don't say what the consultant's responsibilities will be. This initiative doesn't appear very well thought through. Similarly, Florida says it will create a "customer friendly, web-based interface to state data resources", but provides no information about the type of data that will be available in the web-resource. Florida also does not mention any other governmental or higher education agencies that it will need to partner with to ensure this resource addresses the State's PK-20 agenda that correlates with RT3 goals and objectives. Important details are missing; significant points have been withheld as a result.

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

Florida's Chancellor reiterated that enhancements will be made to its State Data System to provide more customer friendly access of data to staff at the District and School levels. She also expounded upon the focus of their Data System's enhancements, stating that (a) student achievement data is presently turned over in the State's data warehouse six times per year, but will turn over every two weeks with RTTT funding; (b) that teachers will be able to administer diagnostic assessments in reading and math online; (c) that achievement data from formative and summative assessments will be readily accessible in the classroom; and (d) that formative assessment tools will be readily available and accessible by educators in schools. She and the Commissioner also stated during their presentation that all assessment tools and reports would be aligned with state standards and assessments. During the presentation, Florida's Commissioner shared that while his State is a nationally recognized leader in school reform, Florida "doesn't want to just stay where [they] are." Instead, the Commissioner said that Florida's budget allocations for its data system in particular, represents "a move forward for Florida" in terms of driving student achievement and producing students who are college and career-ready.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	6	14	
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3)(i) In discussing its plan to increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems for teachers, principal, and administrators, Florida contradicts itself several times. Near the opening of section C3, Florida writes that "At the state level, Florida is **UNIQUELY EQUIPPED** [reviewer's emphasis] with a PK-20 statewide longitudinal data system and a number of technology-based tools **ACCESSIBLE** [reviewer's emphasis] to teachers, principals, and administrators statewide...." However, in this section and other areas of the application, Florida points out how this very data system is

flawed. For example, in the second paragraph of Section C(3)(i) Initiative #2, Florida states that "At present, these state data reside in multiple locations and formats. The data are not consistently available across all sources and if [the data is] available, [it] comes in different formats depending on the source." Either the system is flawed or it is not, Florida did not clarify this. C(3)(ii) Florida mentions several strategies in this section for how it will support LEA's use of data to improve instruction. Through the State Board's MOU with LEAs, Florida will require all participating LEAs to adopt (with RT3 funds) a local instructional improvement system. Florida goes on to say that it will "recommend minimum features and functionality" for the system that an LEA adopts. However, one thing that is not made clear is how the state data system will be able to share data easily with the 64 LEAs who may use different systems. The absence of a clear explanation makes it impossible to determine how beneficial the data system will be to participating LEAs. Additionally, there is not enough information provided to determine how the state's data sharing plans will meet RT3's objectives for access, sharing, and use by internal and external stakeholders. Points were withheld as a result. C(3)(iii) In Section C3, Florida makes a solid effort to explain why their initiatives are important but they stop short of sharing how their initiatives ultimately benefit schools, students, teachers, parents and researchers. Initiatives 3, 4 and 5 present strong arguments with sufficient explanation for how they can be successful but Initiatives 1 and 2 offer insufficient explanation and/or evidence of potential effectiveness. Points were withheld as a result.

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

The Commissioner explained that Florida's Data system enables it to "upload" student, teacher and other data from all of its LEAs several times per year. Both he and the Commissioner, and the LEA representatives present at the presentation, shared that Florida's proposed data enhancements will enable teachers to administer diagnostic assessments at the classroom level to determine students' learning abilities and needs in reading and math. The Data System will also provide formative and summative assessment tools for teachers to use to inform and support instruction, and will provide a "sandbox" of data for research "approved" by the State. The presenters did not, however, provide sufficient detail for how individual teachers will use the data to support and drive instruction in classrooms or how its LEAs will use their instructional improvement systems to provide professional development for teachers, principals, and support staff.

Total	47	31	42
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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	13	13	

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

(D)(1)(i)(ii) Florida has four pathways to alternative certification for teachers and one for principals. All of their programs have some selection criteria; provide supervised, school-based learning experience, and offer teachers full certification upon completion of the alternative program in which they are enrolled. All alternative certification pathways in Florida are approved by the State Board of Education. One of the pathways provides Districts the ability to certify teachers who have bachelor's degrees, hold temporary certification licenses, and are employed as teachers in the District. This program is the most heavily used of all four programs (1,634 certified in 2007-08). Two additional pathways are provided through higher education, with the most highly used program offering alternative certifications to individuals with bachelor's degrees who are "eligible" for a temporary teaching certificate. In both higher education programs, both public and private colleges and universities can participate. In one of the higher education programs, community colleges can offer alternative certification as well. The only non-District or Higher Education entity authorized to provide alternatives to certification to teachers in Florida is the American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence (ABCTE). ABCTE was authorized by Florida's State Board of Education in 2004 to provide alternative certification. There wasn't any indication for this particular program

if the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion is awarded to ABCTE trained teachers. There are presently no additional programs offering alternative certification in Florida and no pending or existing legislation mentioned in the application. There is also no pending legislation mentioned that would enable other non-higher education entities to offer alternative certification in the State, nor was there pending actions listed regarding the State Board of Education's plans to offer alternative certification responsibilities to additional entities. Points were withheld because key elements that RT3 considers for alternative certification were either missing or not fully addressed in the application. (D)(1)(iii) Florida has a specific statute that addresses the process by which the State will monitor, evaluate, and identify areas for teacher shortage annually. A set of calculations are used to determine what the annual teacher shortage will be. The process appears comprehensive and sufficient. Florida uses this process to identify areas of the state that are in need of teachers, and to offer prospective teachers in these shortage areas tuition reimbursement and loan forgiveness programs as tools for recruitment and retention. The application presents no evidence that a similar process is in place for addressing principal shortages. Points were withheld as a result.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	47	47
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	12
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24	24

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

(D)(2)(i) Florida has a system that enables it to measure student growth (Learning Gains) annually using state assessment data and connect students' results with teachers and the courses students' take. However, this system is not used by many Districts in the state. Florida also has a "Value Table" it created in 2006 that "calculates the amount of student growth in performance annually," but admits that it is not a reliable measure because it does not enable the SEA/LEA to set performance targets for teachers or teacher education programs. To address the issue, Florida writes that the State Board will use RT3 funds to contract with a consultant to help develop a reliable and useful method and formula for calculating student growth. Another challenge that the State Board must address is that annual state assessments don't assess all content areas and therefore, will not afford Florida the ability to apply their performance evaluation process to all teachers if they rely only on state assessments. Florida lays out a path for how it will develop its student growth measures but it does not sufficiently address how it will build its State Board's capacity to provide proposed services to LEAs or hold LEAs accountable to implementation. These are issues that throughout section D, Florida admits it has not addressed effectively in the past. They also don't address how in the future the State Board will be accountable to delivering on expectations and results related to RT3. (D)(2)(ii) Florida states in its application that it has had a State Statute since 1999 that requires that teacher evaluations be based "primarily" on the performance of their students. However, Florida also indicates that they lack a relevant and reliable evaluation system to assess student performance, that student assessments are not factored into existing teacher and principal performance appraisals, and that there has been little to no uniform enforcement of the statute by the State or Districts. Essentially, Florida has teacher/principal quality regulations but inadequate use, enforcement, and oversight. To address these issues, Florida presents its definitions of teacher and principle effectiveness. Citing data that shows that Florida school districts rated 99.9% of its teachers as "satisfactory" while less than 70% of teachers in reading of mathematics "have 50% or more of their students making learning gains in the State," the State is requiring through its MOU with LEAs that they design and implement specific requirements for teacher and principal evaluations where "greater than 50% of the evaluations are tied to student growth measures, including annual assessments." Furthermore, Florida has set a goal that by the time the RT3 grant expires, 80% of its teachers and 100% of its principals statewide will be evaluated using the new evaluation system. This goal is appropriately ambitious, but Florida does not mention how or when it plans to evaluate 100% of teachers using the new teacher evaluation. It would be ideal for Florida from the standpoint of equity and

continuity that student performance serve as the primary indicator of teacher effectiveness in all teacher evaluations statewide. To assist Districts with developing these evaluation systems, the State will use RT3 funding to contract with experts in teacher and principal evaluation. These individuals will serve as coaches and technical advisors to Districts to assist them with designing their evaluation systems in a manner consistent with RT3 expectations. To begin the transition, Florida's Commissioner of Education established a statewide Teacher Advisory Council to begin defining core practices for teacher evaluation and preparation. What is not clear is how the State will ensure, through its MOU, that LEAs will comply with designing and implementing the expectations outlined in the MOU. Florida's plans meet most of the expectations of RT3; a marginal number of points were withheld as a result. (D)(2)(iii)(iv) Florida explains that it will commit resources and technical support to participating LEAs to assist them with developing evaluations that meet the goals and objectives of RT3. The Florida MOU clearly articulates expectations consistent with RT3 and Florida mentions that school district work plans "must describe how feedback will be provided to teachers and principals." In addition, in section (D)(2)(iv), Florida presents specific statements of expectations in its MOU that demonstrate it is fully meeting the expectations of RT3. These statements reflect a strong commitment to the goals and expectations of RT3. Florida also mentions that "some collective bargaining agreements" prohibit evaluation results being connected to students' assessments, classroom walkthroughs and professional development. A clear path for how the State Board of Education, in partnership with LEAs, will engage in collective bargaining agreements that meet the goals and objectives of RT3, particularly as these agreements pertain to using student achievement data as a primary indicator in the evaluation, compensation, promotion, retention, tenure, certification or termination of teachers is silent in the application. By the end of the RT3 grant period, Florida states its expectations that all teachers in reading and math, all teachers in grade 4 – 10, and all principals will be evaluated using student performance as a primary indicator of their effectiveness. It is not clear why student performance in grades 11 and 12 are not subject to the evaluation. Florida has a hill to climb to win support from its teachers, or at least, to demonstrate the support among teachers for its reform agenda that RT3 will fund. Given the complexity of collective bargaining and factoring in the strong commitment participating school boards, district superintendents, and other key stakeholders have made to Florida RT3 plans, few points were withheld for this criterion.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	19	19
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	13	13
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6	6

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

(D)(3)(i) In 2007, the Florida Legislature passed a law that requires school districts to annually certify that they have not employed a greater percentage of teachers with temporary certifications, out-of-field teachers, first-year teachers, and teachers in need of improvement in high-minority, high-poverty schools than in schools that are not high minority or poverty. Florida annually calculates how many of its teachers are teaching in low versus high minority and poverty schools. Through its RT3 MOU with the LEAs, Florida is requiring school districts to submit goal-driven and time-bound plans for attracting and retaining "highly effective teachers and principals" to work in high poverty/high minority/persistently low achieving schools. Florida also requires LEAs to implement a compensation system that includes incentives and rewards for recruiting, placing, and rewarding highly effective teachers and leaders who staff such schools. The MOU also requires that LEAs report on the effectiveness of teachers annually across the State, thereby providing data for the state, district, parents, and the community to monitor accountability to the law, as well as annually review school performance and student achievement results. Florida is also encouraging school districts to use their Title II funds to ensure they are fairly distributing "effective teachers" to schools. (D)(3) (ii) Florida plans to (a) implement a competitive grants process that funds higher education institutions who institute "dual major programs" in STEM fields; (b) leverage the value of its teachers in the Florida Virtual School to help implement its RT3 plans, (c) establish a scholarship program to attract professionals into

teaching at "partner" higher education institutions in the State; and (d) will contract with 2-3 independent entities with a proven record for developing successful school leaders to establish job embedded learning opportunities for teachers. The scope of Florida's programs are robust, but not enough detail is given for how, beyond policy requirements and data collection, LEAs will be held accountable for ensuring that they meet the requirements for fair distribution of quality teachers to high-poverty/high-minority schools. The MOU lays out expectations for schools but this section of the application does not address accountability, which will be needed to ensure that Florida goals for its use of RT3 funds are realized. There is also no discussion about what Florida's State Board of Education will do to ensure it has the skills, abilities, and appropriate management systems in place to support school districts' engagement in RT3, or to ensure schools are accountable to Florida's RT3 Plan.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

14

14

14

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i)(ii) In 2006, Florida transitioned its teacher education programs away from awarding students teacher certification based on the courses they've taken and credits they've earned to requiring prospective teachers to demonstrate their competency to teach and impact students' learning. Of the 30 teacher preparation programs in Florida, only four have been approved by the State using the new criteria. The importance of Florida's new requirements are reflected in State sponsored reports, which show that first-year teachers' impact on student learning has been inconsistent. Data provided in Appendix D5 provides more detail on this report. Florida addresses its plan to link student achievement and student growth data with students and teachers, and teacher preparation programs in other places throughout the application. One more note: Florida reports that its higher education teacher preparation programs in the state are not producing enough teachers for critical shortage subjects or principals for hard to staff schools. Florida states that it plans to establish partnerships with interested community colleges, college and universities, and "1-2 or more" private organizations to boost the number of teachers of color (particularly males), and teachers in hard-to-staff disciplines. Florida's plans are consistent with the goals of RT3; no points were withheld as a result.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals

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17

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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i) Florida established a system for monitoring and evaluating educator professional development in 2001. In 2007, an independent evaluation found that the State performed admirably in its operational efficiency and effectiveness for "improving the delivery of professional development statewide." However, Florida did identify gaps in its professional development process and subsequently plans to build up its current practices and fill those gaps in a manner that's consistent with its RT3 goals and objectives. One of the gaps Florida found was that "learning communities [across the state] lacked focus on student data and work, and lacked precise protocols for implementation [of professional development]," as well. In addition, its use of instructional coaches has produced mixed results. Learning from these evaluations, Florida began working to enhance reading instruction in the State. Florida claims to have made significant progress with establishing expectations, processes, and programs that boosts reading achievement among Florida children and youth. To bolster its reform agenda and fill gaps in its professional development process, Florida is proposing to focus its school and District support initiatives in three areas: (1) building teacher and leadership capacity, (2) effective district and school implementation, and (3) sustaining high quality performance. Florida has presented a number of promising approaches that would enable it to achieve its objectives. Some of these approaches include implementing a coherent and collaborative combination of technology-based learning options, establishing leadership academies, providing individual coaching and mentoring to teachers and principals, establishing school based learning communities that emphasize "lesson study" and don't take away time from the instructional day, and a self-evaluation system for teachers and principals that guide and inform instructional, operational and leadership excellence at the school and district level. The State has launched a website, www.FloridaSchoolLeader.org, to support ongoing professional development of school principals. The State plans to build on, strengthen, and

recalibrate "effective" resources like these around the goals and objectives of RTTT. Florida adequately explains its aims by laying out specific expectations in its MOU with Districts. (D)(5)(ii) Florida is very focused on delivering support and results at the school and district level, but there is no discussion of how the State and its regional offices will ensure it is accountable in its work with and support of districts and schools. In several areas throughout its application, Florida stressed its plans to hire "expert consultants" to help Districts and schools define their approaches and implement the goals and objectives of RT3. However, there is little to no mention of the type of consultants the state will work with, or what it will do, to ensure it (the Florida Department of Education) is providing timely, relevant, and effective resources and support to districts and schools. While not specifically required as a matter of this grant, there is no mention of the type of skills, backgrounds, or experiences Florida expects its consultants, leaders, and support staff will need to have and demonstrate to effectively and efficiently drive the RT3 support process with schools and County districts. Florida also uses unnecessary and incomprehensible jargon throughout its application that interrupts the clarity of its application. For example, Florida uses the term "human capital systems (HCS)" several times in this section but does not explain what the phrase means specifically or why focusing on HCS is important. It's difficult to connect HCS (and other jargon) with any key components in the Florida proposal.

Total	138	110	110
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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) Florida's legislature passed a law in 2009 that gives the Florida State Board of Education statutory and administrative rule authority to Intervene in persistently low performing LEAs and schools. The law bolstered Florida's Differentiated Accountability Plan (DA) to enable all schools to be identified in six categories, ranging from "not on DA" – the most satisfactory category, to Intervene, which includes the most persistently failing schools that require the most intense intervention.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	37	37
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	32	32

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

(E)(2)(i) Florida identified 70 schools (or the bottom 5% of its lowest performing schools) that were persistently producing low proficiency levels in reading and math, as well as low graduation rates. The requirements listed in Florida's MOU with its LEAs requires that the LEA adopt one of four "intervention models" (consistent with the expectations of RT3) – (1) turnaround, (2) restart, (3) closure, and (4) transformational – for persistently low performing schools. Florida states that its intervention models are aligned with the State's Differentiated Accountability Plan. The application includes a detailed description of the criteria a school must meet to be considered an "intervention" school, as well as what they must do to overcome intervention status. In Florida's model, LEAs can chose to manage the turnaround of schools themselves, students can be reassigned to another school and schools can be closed and re-opened as "one or more" charter schools. Also, LEAs can contract with an outside entity with a "track record of effectiveness" to operate the school. Florida also spells out in the application and in its MOU with LEAs, other actions LEAs can take during the intervention process, including removing principals, instructional coaches, and teachers who have failed to increase student achievement; providing incentive pay to recruit and attract talented teachers and principals; creating and implementing teacher and administrator

evaluations that rely primarily on student achievement; and requiring school improvement plans, among other possible actions. Florida meets this sub-criterion of RT3 and thus, no points were withheld. (E)(2)(ii) Florida has presented a very robust and comprehensive program for turning around low achieving schools in its State. Florida also has a track record of increasing the academic achievement of children in low performing schools in reading and math, and closing poor performing charter schools. During the 2008-09 school year, Florida's legislature established the Differentiated Accountability Plan (DA), which is mentioned earlier in its application. The Plan initiated the development of a statewide operating structure for improving low performing schools. Florida plans to use RT3 funds to build on and fully implement its DA program to address the lowest 5% of low performing schools in the State, as well as schools within the lowest performing schools' feeder networks. The hierarchical leadership structure for Florida's DA program adequately supports Florida's ambitious statewide expansion plans. In Florida's DA program, the initiative falls under the Deputy Chancellor for School Improvement & Student Achievement, who reports directly to the State's Chancellor for Education. This gives the program high level support within the state's educational leadership structure. The DA program is managed by five regional teams, each lead by a regional executive director. Each Executive Director is responsible for building the capacity of school leaders and teachers to fully implement and evaluate RT3 objectives and drive student achievement. Regional offices divide the State, focus on the lowest 5% of persistently underperforming schools and their feeder patterns with their region, and guide the work of instructional specialists and coordinators who support teachers and leaders in individual schools and small, rural districts. Florida's SEA designed its turnaround strategy based on its belief that quality people drive school turnarounds and support the development of high quality schools. They place a heavy emphasis on finding experienced and successful talent to lead its initiatives, and are placing a special emphasis on hiring individuals who have a track record of leading and turning around low performing schools. To this end, Florida proposes a number of state-led and district-led initiatives, all which will be funded by the state's RT3 grant. Among its initiatives, Florida plans to contract with entities that have experience and a track record of recruiting and developing high performing teachers and school leaders to consult with Districts on the development of their plans, and to help the State build its capacity to drive school reform. Additionally, Florida plans to host a Summer Academy where Regional teams will provide professional development and coaching to school leaders and teachers to ensure they possess the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to positively impact student performance. Florida also plans to partner with charter school operators nationally that have a proven track record of operating high performing schools, and partner with one or more funders of charter schools who can financially support new charter schools and match part of the contribution the State will make with its RT3 funds. Florida mentions that in the last five years, it has closed 129 low performing charter schools, which is an admirable number when considering how few low performing charter schools are being closed nationally. Florida plans to hire and distribute 40 STEM Coordinators and 40 Reading Coordinators across the state to provide hands-on support to its lowest performing schools. Florida also plans to work with Community Based Organizations and other providers of support to low-income families to establish a community agenda for preparing young people for college and careers, and purposefully instigate a college-going culture within communities. To support the expansion of cultural competence among its teachers, Florida will contract with an outside entity to work with high school leadership teams within the state's persistently lowest performing schools. At the District level, the Florida Department of Education will support providing extended learning time to students enrolled in low performing schools and expanding full day kindergarten. Florida's teacher recruitment strategy and related statements could undermine their ability to succeed, and minimize the diversity of their workforce. Under State-Led Initiative 2, Florida states that "several organizations exist that provide promising teachers from elite universities to urban districts. These teachers have been effective in raising student achievement in hard-to-staff, low performing schools, where they outperform high-poverty teachers." Florida provides no evidence to support this claim. By stressing "elite universities", they raise potentially challenging (to them) questions from the general public and the state's educators about which universities they consider "elite" and which ones are not. They also automatically limit the racial and ethnic diversity of prospective teachers by focusing so narrowly on a small number of institutions, as it is widely known that African American and Hispanic/Latino enrollment in "elite" schools has generally been very limited nationally. African American college students largely attend public colleges and universities, and private and publicly funded Historically Black Colleges & Universities, of which few are considered "elite". Florida also uses "effective" and "highly effective" throughout the application, but doesn't provide much detail about the distinction between these two ratings. Regardless,

Florida's overall plan for identifying persistently low achieving schools and supporting LEAs in turning around schools by implementing several intervention models was exceptional. As a result, few points were withheld.

Total	50	47	47
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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) According to Florida's Department of Education, the State's support for education was 26.38 percent of the state budget in FY2008 and 26.60 percent in FY2009; which is substantially unchanged from FY2008 to FY2009. The state presents a table showing the amounts of state funding going to LEAs in FY2009 but not for FY2008. (F)(1)(ii) Florida provides for the equitable distribution of funding to LEAs through its state mandated Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Property-rich districts receive proportionally less funding from the state than Property-poor districts. Florida also lists several other state funded programs that provide additional funding to districts and schools based on the needs of their students.

(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)

(F)(2)(i) Florida lists specific statutes, rules, and administrative codes in its application to clarify its commitment to charter schools and school reform. Its laws do not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high performing charter schools. In fact, the opposite is true for Florida. (F)(2)(ii) Florida's Legislature enacted the state's charter school law in 1996. There are now more than 400 charter schools in the state (4th most in the country) serving more than 137,000 students (3rd most in the country). The majority of the state's charter schools serve high needs populations of students who would otherwise attend low performing schools. The Florida law allows for a variety of charter school arrangements, including operating charter schools in the work place, university-sponsored charters and charters started by municipalities. According to Florida, the growth of charter schools of late has been hampered more by lack of available private funding to assist with start-up, as well as the challenge of effectively teaching children who are academically behind. Nevertheless, Florida presents evidence in its application that its charter law is one of the strongest in the country. (F)(2)(iii) In its application, Florida shares background on the chartering process in the State. It indicates that in 2003, the charter school law was changed to enable applicants who've been denied a charter to appeal to the State Board of Education for reconsideration. Charter schools are also funded in the same manner as traditional public schools, with the only difference being charter school authorizers in the State are allowed to subtract 5% of a school's funding to support the authorizer's administrative bottom line. If awarded an RT3 grant, Florida will use it in collaboration with Charter School Grant funds and private funding to expand charter schools statewide, particularly in communities where the lowest performing schools exist. (F)(2)(iv) Charter schools in Florida also receive facilities funding from the State; \$57M in 2008-09. Charter schools are also exempt from having to meet the State's rigorous "State Requirements for Educational Facilities" provision; however, charters must comply with building and fire prevention requirements. In Florida, charter school students are required to complete the same statewide achievement exam that is completed by students in traditional public schools. Furthermore, state law requires that charter schools be assessed in the same manner as traditional public schools, meaning that all of the measurement and accountability tools listed in Florida's RT3 application will also apply to the Florida's charter schools. In the last five years, Florida has closed 129 charter schools, 61 for poor academic performance of students, thus reflecting a commitment to accountability for student outcomes. Florida's exceptional track record and support of charter schools result in Florida receiving full

points for this criterion. (F)(2)(v) Florida lists a host of other innovative and autonomous public school programs in its application, with brief but substantive explanations of each. The Florida Virtual School is but one example. In 2009-10, it had 154,125 course enrollments, by far the largest virtual school enrollment of any state in the country. No points were withheld.

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

(F)(3) Florida has been a national leader for more than a decade in providing diverse opportunities to drive reform. Several programs and policies have been listed in this application that demonstrate Florida's commitment to creating laws, regulations, policies, and other conditions favorable to education reform and innovation. No points were withheld.

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)

Florida expects to meet this priority through offering an array of courses and increased math and science instruction, and increased courses for students in K-12. Florida also requires through its MOU that LEAs ensure that all of their students have increased access to relevant STEM courses, that high school graduation requirements are enhanced, and that Career Academies further integrate technology into their programs. Florida also plans to commission the STEM Florida Education Advisory Workgroup, which will work together to develop the "Florida STEM Plan" by December 2010. This plan will address industry needs, enhancing course curricula and student enrollment in STEM related fields and courses, and increasing student achievement in math and science overall. Florida also plans to partner with other entities (listed in its application) to address the under-representation of minorities in STEM fields and establish initiatives that engage business and industry in determining what type of training students need to strengthen their knowledge and abilities in STEM fields.

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)

Florida's application is very comprehensive. While they were not given total points in all sections in this review, they did adequately address the four education reform areas of Race to the Top.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	434	445
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Florida Application #2040FL-03

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	35	40	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	15	25	[REDACTED]
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15	10	[REDACTED]

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

(A)(1)(i): Full points are awarded. FL is very clear about its theory of reform ("effective teachers and leaders yield college- and career-ready students"), which is based on research as well as the knowledge and experience gained during the last decade while pursuing an ambitious reform agenda. It views the RTTT funds as an "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to accelerate and deepen the state's existing strategies and meet the nation's education goals." To ensure that all aspects of the RTTT RFP are addressed FL completed a detailed gap analysis of its existing initiatives, organized by assurance. As a result it has a list of existing initiatives and a list of new initiatives and programs with specific and measurable outcomes, that bring it into full alignment. Human capital is core to FL's effort. FL intends, by the end of the RTTT grant, that teachers:

- Set high expectations for their students using curricular tools informed by internationally benchmarked standards;
- Differentiate instruction through rich learning experiences and with results from aligned formative and interim assessments;
- Continuously improve their practice by engaging with other teachers in lesson study and other job-embedded professional development;
- Access compensation and career opportunities that reflect the value of effective teacher and leader effectiveness.

FL has done the work necessary to see continued improvement in all four assurance areas. A sample of elements already in place are:

- Rigorous standards aligned to college and career readiness;
- A strong accountability system;
- A longitudinal database and reporting system and P-20 warehouse;
- Supports and sanctions to schools from the State;
- A strong charter school system; and
- A voluntary prekindergarten program.

The lessons it will apply going forward, which support the RTTT agenda, include:

- Standards must have specificity and clarity;
- Capacity has to be built at the district level;
- Summative assessments must be anchored by strong diagnostic interim assessments;
- Accountability has to focus not just on the whole group but subgroups as well;
- Performance pay programs must be based on valid growth measures and assessments and observation instruments/evaluations;
- Longitudinal data systems cannot reach potential without customer friendly access and quality training; and
- State assistance has to be delivered from the district level for struggling schools.

(A)(1)(ii): The FL MOU requires participating districts to implement all elements of the proposal. It incorporates FL's theory of reform and precludes participation from those districts that can't garner union support. In FL, it is a serious commitment to agree to be a participating LEA. Participating LEAs must 1) develop a plan to implement each required element and 2) implement all or significant portions of the state's RTTT plans. 89% of LEAs have signed MOUs and are counted as participating. BUT union signatures were not required in order for FL to count LEAs as participating. FL signals its commitment to continue to work collaboratively with unions and it describes collective bargaining laws and practices that FL says provide the structure to ensure LEA plans are fully implemented. FL states it is confident that the opportunities afforded by the grant will be fulfilled. Even with almost 90% of its LEAs counted as participating, FL earns low points because of the lack of formal support from the teachers union. Even with

FL's optimism and history of reform implementation, this can't be ignored. (For scoring purposes, unless otherwise stated, participating LEAs will now be assumed to be fully participating from this point forward in the proposal. In order to avoid a double penalty on score points, with or without the union signature, if FL counts a district as participating, that is how it will be considered.) (A)(1)(iii): FL has two key goals related to its proposal: 1) double the percentage of incoming high school freshmen who ultimately achieve college credit, and 2) eliminate the achievement gap in student achievement and college completion by 2020. FL knows how well each of its subgroups are doing now, how quickly it has been closing the gap over the past decade, and believes it can achieve these astonishing goals. If it does not receive an RTTT grant, the goals remain the same, but it extends the timeframe for an additional five years. FL's proposal includes extensive data about its past success related to (a)(b) and (c) that it uses to set targets. It particularly highlights components of its A+ and A++ Plans that emphasize • accountability and transparency, • school choice, • college and career readiness, and • school and district structure and support. FL's data shows how it outperformed the national average with its increases in student achievement on NAEP, made impressive gains on both its State and international assessments, and increased graduation rates overall and by subgroup. FL also notes that its progress has been externally validated. FL's progress in the last decade makes its goals seem lofty, but not unreasonable. FL earns high points because it has meets all of the criteria outlined in (A)(1)(iii). It does not earn full points because it sets the bar too low, particularly for its White students. For example, FL wants to take fourteen years to raise the percentage of White students scoring basic on grade 4 NAEP Reading from 81% to 85%. It is closing its achievement gap, in part, by letting the top flounder.

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

The number of points awarded in (A)(1)(ii) is increased from 15 to 25. This reflects a better understanding that, although union signatures are not required before a LEA is counted as participating, five of the State's large districts have signed MOUs from their unions. These five districts represent more children than some states. The on-going nature of the negotiation that occurs between the State and LEAs were well explained. This is a continuing process, with full commitment from FL State.

The change in (A)(1)(iii) reflects a better understanding of FL's goals for its students. This also connects to the written comment from Tier I, "FL earns high points because it meets all of the criteria outlined in (A)(1)(iii). It does not earn full points because it sets the bar too low, particularly for its White students. For example, FL wants to take fourteen years to raise the percentage of White students scoring basic on grade 4 NAEP Reading from 81% to 85%. It is closing its achievement gap, in part, by letting the top flounder."

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	24	24
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18	18
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	6

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

FL is awarded high points because its approaches and solutions seem very likely to lead to improved student learning even if it does not achieve all of its goals. An undertaking this complex will necessarily have bumps, but FL has designed a structure and seems to have the capacity on all fronts, built over time, to make necessary course corrections. It does not earn all of the possible points because sustainability is not fully addressed and because the size of the budget warrants a larger impact on greater numbers of students. This is addressed in another part of the proposal, but these kind of dollars ought to move have a more dramatic effect on FL largest group of students. A)(2)(i)(a): FL's capacity to implement begins with an RTTT team comprised of the Commissioner of Education, Chancellor of Public Schools, Chancellor of Career and Adult Education, the RTTT project lead manager, Chief Financial Officer, and a team leader for each of the four assurances. While FL's proposal provides more detail about roles and responsibilities, each assurance team will have a team leader, project manager, and the necessary program specialists to identify, provide, or direct the expertise necessary to complete the work. Most of these people already exist

within the FLDOE so work can begin immediately and be sustained after the grant period ends. A)(2)(i)(b): FDOE provides a very detailed list, by reform area, of support that it will provide to LEAs in the appendix. These fall into the broad categories of 1) Standards, assessments, and data support including activities related to implementing the Common Core Standards and providing user-friendly web access to supporting digital materials; 2) Training and professional development support, including materials that LEAs could use locally and institutes on topics like lesson study and use of data; 3) Implementation and process support to help LEAs redevelop evaluation and compensation systems; and 4) Low-performing school support to all of the schools that are in the bottom 5 percent. (A)(2)(1)(c): FL has the existing infrastructure to provide efficient and effective operations and management. It already uses a project management system to track and monitor the results of its initiatives. Using this system, FL will manage all of the projects, initiatives, deliverables, constraints, and timelines associated with RTTT. (A)(2)(1)(d)/(e): FL's budget of about 1.1 billion dollars is well outside the guidelines suggested for in the RFP. The way that FL intends to spend the money, with a 50% (about \$580 million) flow through to the participating districts and a plan that has statewide impact, meets RTTT guidelines. The bulk of the remaining \$580,000,000 is 1) spent on contractual agreements and 2) subgranted to participating LEAs (\$100,000,000). Less than 1% will be used for oversight and management. Additional funds from other federal sources, such as SIG funds, will also be used for RTTT purposes. Recognizing that the RTTT grant is nonrecurring, some money will be used to determine how to sustain a new compensation structure. "In short, all fiscal resources, at all levels, will be closely examined to determine how they might be coordinated, reallocated, and/or repurposed to ensure that reforms are implemented effectively and that successful reforms are sustained over time." (A)(2)(ii)(a): FL highlights administrative support by printing a letter from the Florida Administrators Association. Notably absent is support from teachers unions. A quick check of FL summary signature sheets for participating districts shows signatures from less than one percent of unions, with about 90% of the districts in the State participating. See (A)(1) (ii) for a more complete discussion of "participating." (A)(2)(ii)(b): FL has strong letters of support from 75 stakeholder groups, but these groups lack a defined roll. FL would earn more points if specific, collaborative activities and partnerships with stakeholders were better integrated into its plan. FL earns overall medium points in this category because of the high administrative and stakeholder support of the proposal, but low points related to the support of the teachers unions. There are also low points earned for what is referenced in the rubric as "strength of statement or action." To be clear, community involvement is a component of its turnaround schools strategy, but it is not woven throughout the proposal.

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

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

A)(3)(i): FL points to evidence it has made progress in the last decade in each of the assurances, in establishing charter schools, and in forwarding its STEM agenda. It has done this using a variety of State and Federal dollars beyond ARRA monies, which speaks to the sustainability of programs. More specifically, the following summarizes FL's progress for each assurance: • assessments, standards and a supporting web-portal were implemented almost exclusively by State funds; • data systems to support instruction were paid for by state funds supplemented with federal grants; • great teachers and leaders are supported by a mix of State funds and Federal dollars from Title II, Part A, and other Federal funds; • Turning around Schools is mostly supported by FL's Education Finance Program which uses the funding streams of Class Size Reduction and ESOL dollars. Full points are awarded since FL has made progress using State and Federal monies. (A)(3)(ii)(a): FL compares itself to the nation for NAEP 4th and 8th grade reading and math scores, SAT reading and math mean scores, and the percent of ACT graduates tested. With one easily explained exception, FL is increasing student achievement more quickly than the national average. The exception is that its ACT score dropped by 1 while the national average rose 0.3. FL makes the reasonable justification that it increased the number of students taking the ACT by 21% while the national average of increase was 5%. (A)(3)(ii)(b): FL is making significant progress on closing

achievement gaps among subgroups and it shares detailed data to support this. Telling is the comprehensiveness of the data. FL shares the data related to all subgroups at all grade levels, rather than selecting data that paints a picture of a state that is making progress. As additional support, FL references an Education Trust report that says, "Florida narrowed the gap among more groups of students than most other states and also has a smaller than average gap than much of the rest of the nation." (A)(3)(ii)(c) Since 2003 FL has increased Overall graduation 9%; the graduation rate of White students 7%; Black students 11%; and Hispanic students 12%. Full points are awarded in this section because FL 1) is increasing overall achievement in math and reading as shown by a variety of national and international measures; 2) more students are graduating; and 3) the achievement and graduation gaps are closing.

Total	125	89	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)

(B)(1)(i): FL is an active participant in and supporter of the Common Core Standards Initiative. This is all that is necessary to earn full points. (B)(1)(ii): FL will adopt the CCSS prior to August 2, 2009. The process will begin in February or as soon as the standards are officially released. FL details its process, along with the timelines and activities that are defined by law. Full points are awarded.

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

B)(2)(i)(ii): FL earns full points by meeting the RTTT requirements. It is working in a consortium of 17 states to jointly develop and implement common, high-quality summative assessments to support the CCSS effort. This entire consortium is willing to consider merging with other consortiums that share its vision. It is also part of the Achieve-led effort associated with the Common Core Standards. Since that effort includes 28 states (more than the 26 states required to be "significant"), all requirements are met.

(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)

(B)(3): In order to transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments, FDOE developed a comprehensive plan that includes the background/rationale, detailed timelines, responsible parties, and clear descriptions of related activities connected to RTTT that will expand teacher capacity to use: 1) the Common Core Standards, 2) multiple types of assessment, and 3) lesson study to drive the continuous improvement of instructional practice. FDOE is committed to • revising its online Curricular Tools to align to CCSS, including developing a standards tutorial for students and standards instructional tools for teachers; • implementing a balanced approach to assessment that includes interim and formative assessment systems and, in conjunction with the Consortium, common summative assessments; • increasing access to STEM courses; and • providing classroom support and professional development for instructional improvement. For their part, participating LEAs have agreed to: • modify school schedules to allow for common planning time; • ensure that professional development focuses effective instruction consistent with CCSS; • implement at least one additional STEM related accelerated course, such as an AP course or dual

enrollment, or industry certification; and • ensure that each school possesses the technology, including hardware, connectivity, and other infrastructure, to provide teachers and students sufficient access for classroom instruction and computer assessment. Since FL addresses all RTTT requirements, even going beyond to address STEM considerations, full points are awarded.

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	24	24	

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

(C)(1): In 2003 FL was the first and is currently one of only 11 states to meet all twelve of the criteria for America COMPETES. Two points are earned for each component.

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

(C)(2): FL has extensive experience with data collection and management throughout the PK-20 pipeline. It recognizes that it needs to improve its data access and tools in order to create a single, customer-friendly, Web-based interface for stakeholders with a primary goal of helping educators to use data to inform instruction. To date, systems are not perfectly integrated, user-friendly, or readily available. For example, educators must go to multiple websites to access all of the PK-20 and workforce reports. And LEAs must input the same State-generated data into their local LEA systems multiple times in order to generate different kinds of information. To solve these issues FL is taking a global approach. It begins with a 1) Program and Technology Governance Initiative that will create an agency-wide data governance structure to address data collection, definition, and clear security policies. This will establish the "rules" or functionality by which all systems within the state must operate. When this is done, by 2012, FL will 2) pre-populate State applications and reports with state data, leading to increased efficiency and accuracy. At that time FL will be ready to 3) offer user-friendly access to relevant data. By 2014, it will be possible for the State to publish (push) relevant reports and information from state data resources out to LEAs. FL's plan is particularly nuanced and reflects FL's experience with PK-20 data and data systems. In other sections, including the following, FL discusses uses of data. FL meets each criteria described in the rubric and earns full points.

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

Full points are awarded. As the following overview shows, FL's plan will increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems, support LEAs in providing professional development, and make its data system available to researchers. This meets all RTTT requirements. (C)(3)(i) FL requires that participating LEAs have an instructional improvement system that meets specifications. FL will publish functionality requirements and support LEAs efforts to acquire and update their local instructional improvement systems. Up to 50% of LEA RTTT funds can be used in this way. Currently, LEAs must pull the data from many sites and then manually input it into their own systems. In two years FDE will push state data out for incorporation into local instructional improvement systems. For example, FDE will push math and reading interim assessment results as well as summative assessment results. (C)(3)(ii) FL will • create multi-media professional development materials that encourage understanding and use of the State's Web-based interface and data resources; • provide lesson-study kits for LEAs educators to use during common planning time; • offer leadership training, training in project management, data analysis and strategic planning; • set guidelines for beginning teacher mentoring programs and; • distribute professional

development specialists in the five regions of the state to work with LEAs as LEAs make the shift to using data to inform instruction. (C)(3)(iii) By 2011 FL will be able to provide data to the research community from the state and local instructional improvement systems "for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students and to help drive educational decisions and policies."

Total	47	47	47
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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)

(D)(1)(i)(ii): FL's legal system supports alternative pathways for aspiring teachers and principals. In fact, FL has had alternative routes for teachers for many years and for principals since 2008. Although there is only one alternative program for principals, it is not through an institution of higher education. Each Public School District is granted the authority to certify its own principals and FL will encourage more of this practice. D)(1)(iii): FL has a comprehensive system that monitors and identifies areas of teacher shortage and helps to prepare for anticipated shortages. For teachers it tracks a variety of measures including • number and percentage of fall vacancies; • number of positions filled by out-of-field teachers; • percentage of teachers teaching out of field; and • projects annual supply of graduations from state-approved programs. To address shortages it has 1) programs that repay the cost of education courses and 2) forgiveness of loans in programs that led to certification in a critical teacher shortage subject area. To address its principal pipeline, beginning in 2005-2006, after determining it had too many "certified" candidates and not enough "quality" candidates, it revised its school leadership certification programs. 2009-2010 will be the first year for graduates and data will be collected on the completers and their performance. High points are awarded because FL has multiple alternative routes for teachers and one additional pathway for principals. It is also commendable that it has solutions that focus specifically on the problems it identifies (shortage of teachers and quality of principals). It does not receive full points because the proposal lacks details in the information it presents related to principals. It is not clear how FL determined it knows there is no shortage of principals.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	53	53	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11	11	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28	28	

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

(D)(2)(i): The FL plan establishes a clear approach to adopting an accurate calculation for measuring individual student growth in courses associated with the state assessment system and so full points are awarded. FL's experience in this area means it is refining its system of student growth while many states are designing theirs. FL already has several years of experience in implementing performance pay systems based largely on student achievement. It is now revisiting its system to take advantage of the lessons it has learned. In 2006 FDOE developed a Value Table, which is a method of calculating the "amount" of growth. Time has revealed shortcomings related to 1) ability to determine if students were receiving comparable instruction in the same courses taught by different teachers; 2) many teachers do not teach reading or math and it is difficult to anchor their performance; and 3) difficulties handling students who move into FL's

system. To improve its system, FL has already contracted with a national expert to assist in selecting a measure for calculating individual student growth in state-assessed courses. The FDOE and representatives from participating LEAs will select from options developed by the expert so that FL can present districts with growth models in SY 2011–2012. By 2013–14, district-developed assessments for core and high-incidence courses will be shared and FDOE will adopt recommendations for performance measures in performance-based courses. "By 2013–14, 95% of participating LEAs will measure comparable growth in student performance annually for students in courses taught by 80% of their teachers." FL earns high points. Its plan to work cooperatively with LEAs to develop models or options for LEA use is a productive approach. This takes into consideration that FL already has a system of performance-based compensation in place. The lack of support from teacher organizations would be more troubling if this were new ground. (D)(2)(ii)(a): FL earns high points here. There are two minor issues that cause less than full points to be awarded. First, it is not completely clear that LEAs must implement a new system. They must participate in developing one, but it is not certain that implementation must follow. And second there is a difference in degree between FL's approach and RTTT language regarding the emphasis on student achievement. FL requires that evaluations be "primarily based" on student achievement while RTTT wants "multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth." "FL is committed to significantly improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, primarily defined through improved student learning." It is worth highlighting that in FL teacher evaluations are required to be primarily—more than 50%—based on student achievement/growth. These differences are differences only in degree. Principal evaluations are required to be primarily based on student growth while the remaining elements must relate to the FL Principals Standards, with an emphasis on recruiting, training, and retaining high quality teachers. (D)(2)(ii)(b): LEAs are involved in selecting the student growth measure. Each LEA selects one of the options provided by the State or develops its own that meets State criteria. Additionally LEAs are responsible for developing local evaluation systems and can use RTTT funds to do so. (D)(2)(iii): FL earns full points. It already meets the RTTT expectation of annual feedback and is using this grant opportunity to ensure that the annual feedback be high quality feedback related to improving student learning. It also specifies an increase in the number of evaluations for early career teachers and teachers at milestones in their careers. Participating LEAs agreed to this condition in their MOUs. If LEAs want yet to require and offer additional evaluations, FL will support any LEA-sought increases that LEAs can sustain after the grant period. FL is awarded full points because it meets both the letter and the intent of RTTT. (D)(2)(iv)(a): Participating LEAs will use teacher evaluations to create an Individual Professional Development Plan for every teacher. The plan must connect to improving student achievement. New teachers will, additionally, have individualized support provided by effective mentor teachers. Similarly, every principal will have an Individual Leadership Development Plan. (D)(2)(iv)(b): FL requires that participating LEAs will institute performance-driven compensation systems that • tie the most significant gains in teacher and in principal salary to effectiveness demonstrated by annual evaluations (which are tied to student achievement) rather than experience; • implement statutory requirements that differentiate pay for teachers and for principals because of academic responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas (including STEM) and high-needs schools; and • provide opportunities for teachers to advance. (D)(2)(iv)(c)/(d): FL statutes do not include the term, "tenure." That said, it does award contracts for employment. In FL this happens at the LEA, not State, level. FDOE will monitor closely and is collecting the data that allows it to do so. FL expects that LEAs will implement their new evaluation systems for a year before applying it to the awarding of contracts. Specific RTTT activities related to the awarding of contracts (tenure) include that • LEAs use student effectiveness data in determining who is awarded contracts; • LEAs report to FDOE who was dismissed for ineffective performance; and • LEAs report who resigned or are no longer employed in order to capture those "counseled out" of the system. In broad strokes, FDOE provides the best possible data related to student growth and LEAs use this data to evaluate, support, promote, remove and compensate their teachers and principals. The plan is comprehensive, detailed, realistic, and nuanced.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	17	17
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	10	10

(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7	7
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(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(3)(i) FL has made significant gains in the area of equitable distribution and now 93% of its core courses are taught by highly qualified teachers, including the 92.8% in high poverty schools. Still, FL has determined that the teacher effectiveness (effectiveness as opposed to qualifications) in high poverty schools is only half of that in low poverty schools. Since hiring and staffing decisions are local LEAs will • develop a plan using effectiveness data to attract and retain highly effective teachers and principals to high minority, high poverty schools; • implement a compensation plan that incentivizes working in high minority, high poverty schools; • engage in parallel activities related to hard to staff and STEM fields and • implement strategies to increase the pool of teachers in the district. (D)(3)(ii) Everything that is being done to effective teachers in high-minority, high-poverty schools, is being done to increase the number of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects. Additionally, FL supports the pipeline for some hard to staff areas through grants and loan forgiveness to students and by increasing access to its Virtual School. High points are awarded because for both of these criteria because 1) FL has closed the gap using the measure of highly qualified teachers; 2) FDOE has a compensation plan that incentivizes hard to staff schools; 3) it has established expectations for LEAs that should ease the situation; and 4) it is working to enlarge the pipeline of effective teachers and principals. Less than full point are awarded because hiring is a local decision and it is not clear how LEAs are held accountable.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	12	12
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i): FL has already begun work to revamp both its teacher and its principal preparation programs and has allocated 1.4 million dollars to this task. It is revising the content, the delivery mechanisms, and the evaluation. Course credits are no longer required; rather demonstrations of competencies are necessary. The programs are designed to be job-embedded, residency-type programs. Teachers will rely on certification examinations before a Professional Certificate is awarded. RTTT funds allow the following activities to occur: • Improve the rigor of the certification examinations, especially in examinations for STEM fields; • Set outcome-based performance standards; • Institute a competitive grant for FL teacher preparation programs; • Utilize results from a competitive grant program to provide models; and • Pursue a tool for electronic data collection, analysis and reporting. Based on the data, FL will determine the impact of program 1) completers on student achievement, 2) in addressing hard to staff subjects and schools, and 3) the program's contribution to its completers induction and professional development. D)(4)(ii): FL has the authority to set program approval standards. Programs that fail to meet standards are no longer allowed to endorse completers. It will use its legislated authority to close gaps in principal preparation, FL will award contracts to two or three entities that will offer Level I and Level II leadership programs to be run in conjunction with a school district, since they must be job-embedded. FL's system is sophisticated and far ahead of most states. Slightly less than full points are awarded. It does not receive the points associated with having a tight connection between principal preparation and student achievement.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	15	15
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i): FL intends to provide RTTT related professional development activities including 1) tool kits for teachers and leaders to use in data analysis and lesson study; 2) access to follow-up training and trainer materials related to implementing standards, instructional coaching, beginning teacher support, and methods of evaluation; 3) multi-media training on the use of the new state data resource; 4) summer leadership academies; and 5) training for school boards. In FL responsibility for professional development rests at the district level. Participating LEAs have agreed to modify schedules, provide professional development focused on increasing student achievement, and, in short meet the requirements of RTTT. FL

will support district efforts by providing training and support to • help them improve the evaluation of their professional development; • develop and publish guidelines for beginning teacher support; and • develop and publish guidelines for instructional coaches. RTTT also requires that FL "measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports..." and it is not clear that FL has a mechanism for this. Overall the state has an impressive system of connecting teacher and principal evaluations, professional development and perks to student achievement and it seems to well support the LEAs. BUT, there does not seem to be any sort of evaluation for the quality of the supports. FL earns all points except those associated with evaluating the quality of the supports.

Total	138	112	112
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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): Full points are awarded because FL's "Board of Education has both specific statutory and administrative rule authority to intervene directly in Florida's persistently lowest-achieving schools...and LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status."

(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)(i): In 2008 FL instituted its Differentiated Accountability Plan (DA), which makes all schools eligible to be placed in one of 6 categories that signal students are not progressing as they should. Prior to this, FL had a system, but it lacked statutory authority to overcome collective bargaining issues and it ignored subgroup performance. Using the new system, FL identified the group of seventy schools with the lowest proficiency rates in reading and mathematics and the lowest proficiency rates when reading and math scores are combined. Since FL does exactly what is required by RTTT, it earns full points. (E)(2)(ii): As a requirement of RTTT, LEAs must choose one of four turnaround models identified by FDOE. Characteristics of these models include • removing principals, teachers, and instructional coaches; • offering performance or incentive pay; • hiring extra instructional coaches; • developing instructional focus calendars; • creating a school improvement plan; and so forth. LEAs are required to establish a defined governance structure to support these schools within each district. Since this is statutory, it affects all LEAs, not just the 90% that are participating. To support this work, FL will expand the footprint of its DA Regional Team. The Team will engage in the following initiatives to extend support to all districts with persistently low-achieving schools, beginning with helping them choose a model that fits their locale. • It will partner with organizations to recruit and train teachers for Miami-Dade and Duval County, districts that each have nine struggling schools. • It will support affected rural districts with training for "community involvement" and "developing a shared vision for improving schools." • Hold summer academies to provide professional development to instructional coaches, department chairs, and lead teachers in order to increase local capacity. • Develop more charter school partnerships. • Improve and expand STEM Career and professional academies. • Hire 40 reading coordinators to be distributed throughout the state. • Hire 40 STEM coordinators to be distributed throughout the state. • Build community compacts based on Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence. • Run a public awareness campaign to promote college readiness. • Provide an Algebra Incentive Bonus to STEM skills. • Secure "cultural competency" training to help schools make the necessary shifts. To ensure its students succeed, LEAs must • Extend learning time in Intervene Schools. • Expand full-day kindergarten. •

Provide evidence-based programs to at risk students. Full points are awarded since FL is doing what is reasonable to ensure success. It is helping match districts with a model likely to succeed, it is providing support that shores up school and district capacity, and it is helping to shift both school and community climates and expectations.

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): FL expenditures were 0.22% more in 2009 than in 2008. Additionally its FEPE policies have been subjected to review by the courts and been determined to be equitable. It accommodates pupil-rich (high population) districts as well as property-poor (not exactly low income, but related) districts. The amount of state support varies from about 77% of the operating revenue to 91% of the operating revenue. Since FL increased spending slightly and its policies lead to equitable funding, full points are awarded.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	36	36
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(2)(i): FL law does not prohibit or "effectively limit" the number of charter schools. It is nationally recognized as a charter-friendly state. (F)(2)(ii): Florida has regulations and guidelines regarding how it authorizes, approves, monitors, holds accountable, reauthorizes, and closes charter schools. With some exceptions for universities, this authority sits with school districts. FL's proposal includes information about the number of charter school applications, approvals, denials, and closures showing that the system is working. FL also has evidence that many, not all, of its charter schools are more effective with hard-to-teach students than its public schools and it is making an effort to scale effective charter school models. (F)(2)(iii): FL funds students in charter schools in the same way it funds students in other public schools. Charter schools receive all of their state and their Federal funds. Additionally, FL is setting aside a pool of RTTT funds specifically for vendors of charter schools to submit bids that meet their unique needs. (F)(2)(iv): Beginning in 1998, FL established a charter school facility funding program. They can receive funds from impact fees assessed when residential developments cause increased enrollment and they can access district-owned facilities that are surplus in the same manner as can other schools in the district. (F)(2)(v): FL allows districts to operate innovative public schools via the Florida Virtual School, via School District Virtual Instruction, through a university department of education, and by partnering with an approved provider. The intent of RTTT seems to be broader than this. FL is restricting district charters to those it has chosen. It does not seem possible, for example, for a district to open a STEM charter of its own design. FL earns half of the points associated with this criteria since it falls short of "The State allows LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools." FL gets high, but not full points. It meets RTTT criteria for (i) through (iii), but not for romanette (iv) as explained above.

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

One thing that stands out in FL's proposal is its cohesiveness. With reform work there is a synergy that occurs when everything works together and the result becomes more than the sum of the parts. Every piece and part of this proposal pushes in the same direction with a relentlessness that can't be overlooked. In its proposal FL discusses its A+, A++ Plans and it highlights other initiatives it has implemented over the years. All this is evidence it has been engaged in serious work to improve schools for a more than a decade. It is

using RTTT as another opportunity to reflect on this work, make adjustments, and to stay focused on improving student achievement by improving the quality of instruction.

Total	55	51	51
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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)

The FL proposal has a strong STEM component woven through out. A quick check found references in sections (A)(3), (B)(3), (D)(2), and (D)(4). FL's proposal considered its STEM agenda as it discussed teacher and principal preparation, as it discussed turnaround schools, and as it discussed teacher compensation.

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)

FL addresses all four of the assurances. Its proposal begins with a detailed gap analysis between the assurances and existing FL programs and initiatives. FL was well on its way to meeting most elements of all four assurances before RTTT. It has now written a proposal based on its gap analysis and so designed a plan aimed squarely at the assurances.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	434	439
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Florida Application #2040fl-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	50	50	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	35	35	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10	10	

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

(A)(i) The Florida RTTT Plan sets forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda. The agenda calls for the doubling number of students who ultimately get college credit and closing the achievement gap by 2020. The student goal is challenging but the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has a creditable plan for reaching those goals. It recognizes that to reach that goal, Florida must invest in significant teacher and leader effectiveness. (ii) To reach those goals, FDOE has and will invest heavily in strategies that advance teacher and leader effectiveness. Plans for increasing student achievement are: Developing high expectations, Use of curricular tools targeted to high standards, Differentiated instruction, Rich learning experiences, and aligned assessments. FDOE plans to provide training and support for using lesson study and other job-embedded professional development. Florida has had impressive student improvement results using a variety of strategies and programs that have had significant improvements in student achievement. It has shown gains in reading and mathematics and in closing the achievement gap. It has a very solid base of programs and strategies that suggest that they have a credible path to continue their improvements in student learning and effectiveness of teachers and leaders. (ii) The Florida RTTT proposal through use of Table A-1 showed that the State Board's Strategic plan and the RTTT plan have a strong interface. The six components of strengthening foundational skills, improving career and college readiness, expanding opportunities for post-secondary degrees and certificates, improving quality of teaching, improving K-12 choice options and aligning resources are inherent in the RTTT proposal. The gap analysis and the new RTTT supporting initiatives provided in Table A-2 an important picture of why improvement efforts were selected and general strategies for closing those identified gaps. Strategies 3, 4 and 5 focused on great teachers and leaders and strategy 6 focused on turning around low-performing schools provided important overviews and priorities in very challenging areas. The MOU that Florida is using is detailed and rigorous. It contains the significant elements of the model MOU developed by the U.S. Department of Education. It spells out mutual responsibilities between participating LEAs and the Florida State Department of Education. The preliminary scope of work is clear and demanding and closely tied to the RTTT proposal. However, only some of the expectations have measurable outcomes. One example of a measurable outcome in the preliminary scope of work is "The LEA will devote a minimum of one lesson study per week for each grade level or subject area." Other outcomes have less measures of accountability. An example of the less measurable outcome is "The LEA will provide effective professional development to teachers and administrators on the use of its instructional improvement system." Sixty-four districts out of a total of 72 districts are participating in the RTTT proposal. All sixty four Title I districts are participating in all elements of the proposal. Sixty-three of the sixty-four districts have union representation and only five of the sixty-three had union representative signatures. These statistics indicate that only 8% of the districts had union sign-offs and those districts represented only 13.67 of the student population. (A) (iii) Florida has a

comprehensive plan that addresses all the expectations of the RTTT program. The Florida plan works within the framework of two over-arching goals. It has challenging targets of growth and they appear to have had success in the recent past at the basic levels of NAEP. However Florida's NAEP proficient and advanced achievement levels are presently low and those levels will be an even greater challenge. They have had significant recent increases in basic achievement in reading/language arts and even more in mathematics and those results suggest they have a plan and strategies for continued improvement. Eighty-nine percent of the LEAs with over 80% of the poverty students are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans. These large percentages of involvement should translate into broad statewide impact especially given demanding goals that all participating districts committed to accomplish. All participating districts have committed to work with all of the goals of the proposal. Florida has a goal of doubling the number of students who earn college credit. Florida presently has only 22 percent of its student earning college credit. The goal is to increase the percentage of students earning college credit to 30% in four years and 40% in ten years. In its plan, Florida noted that the two most fruitful areas for improvement were reducing the 41% drop-out and decreasing the twenty-five percent of students who never enroll in college. Florida's comprehensive plan is designed to increase student proficiency levels for all students. Florida expects to eliminate the achievement gap by 2020. By some measures, especially NAEP data, less than half of the white students are classified as proficient or advanced. Closing the achievement gap to present white student levels would still leave a lot of students of all classifications classified as not proficient. Florida does have clearer targets for reducing the achievement levels at NAEP's basic levels. Florida would have the same goals for increasing student achievement whether they get RTTT funds or not but note that they could reach their targets five years earlier with RTTT funds.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	20	22
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	16	16
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	4	6

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

(i) The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has proposed a plan that would give it the capacity required to implement its proposed plans. FDOE will have a leadership team that includes the higher management team that it would employ in other large projects. In addition the RTTT project would employ a team leader, an assurance project manager and the program specialist needed for each of the four assurance areas. Florida currently uses and will use an established project management system to track and monitor the results of education reform initiatives. This system follows and reports on the scope, deliverables, stake holders, constraints, and timeline for each of the projects. The projects would be managed through weekly team meetings and status reports FDOE has specific plans for providing support in standards, assessments, training and professional development support, implementation and process and low-performing schools support including providing 40 STEM and 40 reading coordinators to schools in the lowest 5% and their feeder schools. Appendix A lists a variety of Internet-based, multi-media and print resources that FDOE will provide teachers and principals. It will place professional development specialists in the five regions and use a trainer of trainer model to move information and strategies to schools. The FDOE response for providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant was that it would use procedures similar to those used for other major federal programs. The additional FDOE staff, assigned RTTT responsibilities, seem appropriate to ensuring accountability and support for the additional work undertaken. Given the challenging economic conditions in many school districts, FDOE plan for monitoring RTTT related budgets should include determining specific budget codes that require RTTT linkages. (ii)(a) Teacher buy in is important if any education program is to be successful. Because there was strong evidence of teacher union opposition, only half of the total points for this subsection were given. Principal and other educational administrator organizations did support the proposal. Other key education stakeholders organizations, such as board members and PTAs also supported the RTTT program Teacher union opposition was very strong. Only 5 of the 63 union leaders in the participating districts signed the MOU. Union opposition is primarily focused on use of student's test scores to evaluate teacher performance on issues such as dismissal, tenure and promotion. (ii) (b) The Florida RTTT proposal

had strong support from many important stakeholders who will be important in making the RTTT proposal a success. The FDOE received over 75 letters from a variety of stakeholders that included: Florida's legislative leaders, Florida charter school organizations, Florida Association of District School Superintendent, Florida School Boards Association, Florida Association of School Administrators, Florida Chamber of Commerce, Florida Council of 100, Florida Education Foundation, Florida Philanthropic Network, Space Florida, and Workforce Florida, Florida PTA, NAACP and many Institutions of higher education from across the state. Budget Comments The total Florida RTTT proposal request is for 1,141,622,870 or 163% of the top end of 700 million dollars guideline. This proposal requests approximately 25% of the total budget available for the 50 states and the District of Colombia. Specific to the budget for administrative costs for a program this size, the budget seems appropriate except for the \$1,300,000 per year for consultants. In practice, consultant costs should be lower each year as their work is completed and attention turns to implementation. Evaluation costs would continue for the four years. The Florida RTTT proposal is problematic in providing assurances that the very large budget requests made in the proposal will be continued in a substantive manner after the project ends. The proposal only indicates that effective components will be continued but that could mean that almost all would be terminated after four years. It is unlikely that the Florida Legislature would continue to fund all of the \$1,300,000 per year consultant funds requested in the RTTT proposal in years five and beyond.

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

(A)(2)(ii) Two additional points were given to this subsection because Florida panel gave examples of how support would come from people who wrote letters. The panel noted the following examples: Passing legislation, Leading community meetings, and Providing information and support .

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	27	27
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	22	22

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

(i) The Florida RTTT proposal provided strong evidence of making progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas and those successes have been held up as models for other states in several studies. Funding for these programs seem to have a variety of sources. (ii) Florida has exceeded national NAEP results in both reading/language arts and mathematics by every category of students and in all grade levels tested. All in all, the achievement gains show impressive results. Florida has decreased achievement gaps across subgroups quite significantly for both Blacks and Hispanics since the base year 2003. This is especially significant in mathematics where trends show continued improvement each year tested. While the achievement gap in reading/language arts was improved dramatically between 2003 and 2007, the results were more mixed in 2009 with an increase in achievement gap for Hispanics between 2007 and 2009 at the 4th grade. There was no data for exclusion rates for testing of students by specific categories. Florida statistics show increasing high school graduation rates for all categories of students of approximately nine percent between 2003 and 2009. Unfortunately those statistics also show that Florida began from a low base and even with the impressive gains only 53.7 percent of Blacks and 63.4 percent of Hispanic students are graduating.

Total	125	97	99
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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)

(i) Florida has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards by being an active member of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS) jointly led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association in partnership with Achieve, Inc., ACT, and the College Board. Forty-eight states are participants in this effort. The proposal provides several instances of Florida's commitment and leadership to this effort. (ii) Florida has a high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards by August 2, 2010. Florida law states that the NGSSS are the core content of the curricula to be taught in this state and represent the skills that K-12 public school students are expected to learn. Florida's State Board of Education's rule on student performance standards establishes the standards, benchmarks, and access points for students with disabilities as part of the state's student standards regulations, requires school districts to incorporate the standards in their subject areas and pupil progression plans. Florida has already adopted NGSSS in Mathematics (in 2007), Science (in 2008), Social Studies (in 2009), Physical Education (in 2009), and Health (in 2009). Language Arts NGSSS, has been delayed to prepare for the adoption of the proposed Language Arts Common Core State Standards.

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

Maximum points were given to the section because Florida is a member of the Achieve Consortium the includes 27 states. The Florida State Board of Education has ruled that the NGSSS will serve as the basis for statewide assessments. [Rule 6A-1.09401] As noted in the proposal, Florida is a leader in organizing an assessment consortium of 17 states whose leaders have signed a MOA. The consortium plans to expand its membership either by soliciting new member states or joining a national consortium if one is created.

(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)

Florida has very ambitious plans for working closely with its participating LEAs. FDOE clearly understands that there must be a triangle linkage among standards, curriculum and assessment. Its plan address all three components of the triangle in its plan. Florida proposes to support the transition to enhanced standards and the related high-quality assessments. Florida will expand teacher capacity to use college and career-ready standards. It then will train educators on seeing and using multiple types of assessment (summative, formative, benchmark). It will provide curriculum to address deficits revealed by the assessment. Lesson study will be used to drive continuous improvement of instructional practices. FDOE will align State Curricular Tools to the CCSS and will provide districts and schools with formative assessment systems. As required by Florida's MOU, LEAs must "modify school schedules to allow for common planning time for lesson study focused on instructional quality, student work, and outcomes." FDOE will provide resources for school districts to use on effective instruction consistent with the new standards. Teachers will have opportunities to discuss problems and success through weekly lesson study opportunities and to develop appropriate modifications and solutions. In short, Florida deserves high points because it is providing systemic assistance in the areas of standards, assessment, curriculum and professional development in a systemic fashion instead of in isolation that has proven to have been less effective in improving student learning. Budget Comments The \$55 million dollar budget for development of interim and formative assessments is extremely high. The rationale for such expenditures are not convincing and they do not demonstrate how such expenditures will result in equivalent student performance gains. There are several commercial options that would prove less expensive and they have the advantage of validation studies. The \$10,700,000 budget for development of materials for lesson study

are also very high. Materials already exist on lesson study. Several Midwest and Northwest states are working on lesson study and use or purchasing commercial materials would likely be much more cost effective.

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	24	24	

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

(C)(1) FDOE has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. The FDOE system has the capacity for tracking students through their academic careers and into the workplace. FDOE's EDW currently contains over 13 million unique student records, out of which 2.6 million are current PK-12 students.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data

5	3	3
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(2) Florida acknowledges that the present system frustrates users because it is difficult to use and is not readily accessible to inform and engage appropriate key stakeholders. Florida's RTTT proposal would improve governance so that the various contributors would standardize information formats, consolidate the various databases and web-site locations and create easy-to-use interfaces that would encourage utilizing information found in the data system to improve instruction in K-12 classrooms. There was little discussion on how the system would be improved for use by non-educator stakeholders. Budget Comments The confusion for this section continues. If the system in place is so advanced, why is it necessary to issue contracts for \$44 million dollars of primarily developmental cost. It appears that Florida is rebuilding the system. The \$9 million budget for the longitudinal data system development seems appropriate.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction

18	9	11	
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3) The information for all of section C was the least clear of all the six components of the proposal and will require questions during the team visits. This is especially true of (C)(3). Responses in other sections of C described a robust system that had lots of data elements. However in reading this section, it appears that because of divided authority on its purchase and use, the system has limited connectivity. The proposal did not indicate whether the system is web-based or whether it requires specialized equipment and locations that limit access for principals, teachers, parents and other stakeholders. It did not indicate what databases were most useful for supporting instruction at the K-12 level. The budget requests suggest that Florida may be considering a major do-over. Florida has a problem providing data system connections that are applicable to classroom use. Only 71% of districts have local instructional improvement systems accessible at the school level and only 52% of them provide student-level data. The proposal suggest that the system is not web-based and requires special LEA approval and purchase of specialized equipment. The solution proposed for sharing equipment among small districts implies that teachers would need to leave their classrooms to get substantive interfaces with the data systems. Unless teachers can access information from their school, those data bases will remain unused. Two of six points given. FDOE acknowledges that even the best data systems will not be used by educators to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness if the interfaces are not easy to use and people have not been trained in their uses. FDOE proposes to develop customer-friendly, front-end systems that are easy for students, teachers, parents, and principals to use and to provide educators with professional development on applications that will improve instruction. That necessary interface does not exist and the proposal did

not provide sufficient information to make a judgement as to its quality. Three of six points given. The RTTT proposal does appear to have a plan for researcher use. The concept of a "sand box" where researchers could use student data free of identifiers appears to be a viable solution. Similar questions about specialized equipment necessary to access the information apply to researcher use. Four of six points are given for this subsection.

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

(C)(3) Two points were added to this subsection because the Florida panel was able to give explanation on data system's capacity in classrooms. The explanation noted that information would be in data formats and packages that were intended to provide teacher friendly information in classrooms regardless of location.

Total	47	36	38
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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)

(D)(1) In addition to institutions of higher education, Florida has four alternative pathways to teacher certification. All four alternates were authorized by the Florida Legislature and State Board of Education. The four are: (1) District Alternative Certification Program that is associated with Teach for America in some districts; (2) Passport Certificate issued by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE); (3) Educator Preparation Institutes (EPIs); and Professional Training Option (PTO). It has a District Educational Leadership Option program in some districts for principals. Reviewer is not certain that this option meets all the conditions requested in the proposal guidance. From 2003-04 to 2006-07, the percentage of Florida's program completers from alternative routes jumped from 10% to 27% (2,222 of 8,228 completers). Florida reports 37 individuals received a certificate through this route. Florida has a systematic approach for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher shortage and for preparing teachers to fill these areas of shortage. Each year the State Board of Education approves critical teacher shortage areas for the coming school year.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	47	47
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11	11
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	25	25

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

(i) Florida is examining the many issues associated with measuring student growth for each individual student. The next few years would be primarily focused on design and development of an appropriate system. It has a plan with the follow characteristics: "By 2013-14, participating LEAs will administer assessments that measure comparable student performance in core courses in grades 1-3, middle school science and social studies, biology, and two high incidence high school social studies courses. By 2013-14 the state will adopt recommendations for student growth performance measures in high incidence performing arts, visual arts, and physical education courses and/or grade levels. By 2013-14, 95% of participating LEAs will measure comparable growth in student performance annually for students in courses taught by 80% of their teachers." Budget Comments Budgets seem appropriate (ii) The RTTT proposals in

its MOU requires evaluations that would put student performance as the primary (50 percent or more) of teacher and principal effectiveness. The proposal reiterated that the absence of appropriate student growth measures would delay implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and has set the following goals: "By the end of the 2011-12 school year, each participating LEA will have designed evaluation systems for teachers and principals that weight student growth as the largest combined factor, assess performance of the state's Accomplished Practices, and include a rating system that differentiates performance. By the end of the 2013-14 school year, each participating LEA will incorporate comparable student growth results into the evaluations of 80% of teachers and 100% of principals." The proposal does not elaborate how the evaluation systems will be designed with teacher involvement. (iii) Florida's plan meets all the requirement of RTTT but much of the work is in the design and development stages for reasons previously noted. The RTTT plan does call for annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback. A majority portion of the evaluations will be concerned with student growth or their students in their classes for teachers and in their schools for principals. Budget Comments Budget seems appropriate. Hopefully the results will be shared with other states. (iv) Florida expects participating districts to use the results from the evaluation to develop an Individual Professional Development Plan for each teacher that is based in part on an analysis of student performance data and results of prior evaluations. Evaluations of first- and second-year teachers would be used to individualize their support and training. The evaluations also would be used to determine who were the most effective teachers and possibly identify them to provide coaching/mentoring for the district's beginning teacher support program. Evaluations described below would take place in 50% of the districts in 2011-2012 and 80% in 2012-2013 and 95% in 2013-2014. Individual Leadership Development Plan (ILDLP) would be developed for each principal. The evaluation that is based in part on an analysis of student performance data would inform professional development priorities. The RTTT Proposal would require LEAs to institute performance-driven compensation systems as described below. It would require or teachers: (1) Tie the most significant gains in salary to effectiveness demonstrated by annual evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii), rather than to degree level or years of experience. (2) Implement statutory requirements of differentiated pay through bonuses or salary supplements. Categories for differentiated pay are: additional academic responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas (including STEM areas), and level of job performance difficulties (including working in a high-need school). (3) Provide promotional opportunities for effective teachers. (4) Determine whether professional service contracts (tenure) should be issued after three years of service. (5) Determine which teacher should leave when there are reductions in force (6) After a year, determine whether an effective teacher as determined by the evaluation should be dismissed. For principals: (1) Tie the most significant gains in salary to effectiveness demonstrated by annual evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii), rather than to degree level or years of experience. (2) Implement statutory requirements of differentiated pay through bonuses or salary supplements. Categories for differentiated pay are: additional academic responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas, and level of job performance difficulties (including working in high-need school). The MOU also requires the LEAs provide annually to the FDOE its salary schedules indicating how these requirements have been met.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	21	21
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	13	13
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	8	8

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

(i) Florida has excellent data on the distribution of effective teachers. It reveals that while there has been important progress, highly effective teachers are more numerous in non-title I schools. Title I schools have approximately five percent more first year, temporary certified and out-of-field teachers. Participating RTTT districts will commit to having equal number of effective teacher in high-poverty schools as in low poverty schools by 2013-2014. Considerable of the equitable distribution goal will be met through recruitment and professional development of teachers. (ii) The Florida plan intends to provide a variety of professional

development strategies to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specially areas including mathematics, science, and special education. The heart of the plan is providing higher pay to highly effective teachers that choose to teach in high-poverty schools Budget Comments Budget seems appropriate for work planned Equal efforts will be made to having equal numbers of highly effective principals in high-poverty schools as in low-poverty schools by 2013-2014. Similar strategies as noted for teachers will be used to reach those goals.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	13	13
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

This subsection was given 6 of 7 points in (i) because considerable of this work is already operational and the plans for the future are well defined. The timeline was not as precise as would have been desired but that is because not all student-learning measures are available. The Florida RTTT plan place great emphasis on working with teacher and principal preparation organizations to ensure that their training is focused on actual work needs and that the instruction is job-embedded. It also expects that teacher and principals would know how to use data to improve student achievement. Florida will require that teacher and principal preparation organizations use student data to improve their programs and ultimately to justify their existence. The proposal indicated that in the future, decisions on the continued approval of teacher preparation programs would be made on "their impact on students and schools, rather than on numbers of credit hours and syllabi content." Florida has begun to act on those new declarations. Last summer (2009), the State of Florida provided each approved programs with data which showed how their graduates impacted student learning primarily on a measure of graduates student learning growth. Data provided to teacher preparation programs was intended to inform them of their relative levels of success on these new performance-based measures. That data was included with the proposal as attachment D-5a. The data showed average ranges of 70 to 99 percent. In the future, Florida intends to examine that data for each teacher preparation entity and determine what programs are having success in having their graduates improve student learning and which are not. Once the new evaluation measures are implemented, the State Board of Education will set meaningful standards for determining what performance is required to maintain program approval and what standards will be required to be classified as "high performing." Similar plans are underway to provide the same information for principals. Presently the programs for principals are primarily IHEs working with school district in a mentor style program that provides content knowledge at the IHE with actual practice in a real setting working under a mentor. FDOE also plans to have competitive proposals that would implement residency teacher and principal preparation programs. (ii) This subsection was given 7 of 7 points because the plan called not only expanding good programs but a plan using increased student learning criteria to close bad programs whose graduates do not significantly improve student learning. FDOE would continue to deny or remove approval of teacher preparation programs that are not effective and publicize those that were most effective in providing teachers and principals that met the new expectations of RTTT. It would use the stick of closing down programs that do not meet a defined standards of having graduates who improve student learning in schools and a carrot of giving great publicity to those who have great successes. As noted the data already available when appropriately shared would likely influence many students wishing to become teachers as to what teacher preparation programs they should attend. Budget Comments Budget seems appropriate for work planned

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	17	17
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5) (i) Reviewer gave 9 of ten points to this subsection. One point was not given because plan was not as rich for principals as it was for teachers The Florida RTTT proposal was very strong in responding to this section. It had a detailed systemic plan and needs-based priorities. The Florida RTTT plan will provide effective support to teachers and principals by refocusing professional development so that its priority is improving student performance. Special attention would be given to making certain that the professional development is job-embedded and that the new elements in the RTTT expectations are thoroughly covered. Some of the new elements included working with new standards, new curriculum materials targeted to

those new standards, formative instructional assessment tied to the new standards. Teachers and principals will learn to use lesson study to share success and challenges. FDOE will also have as a priority helping districts building professional development systems that provide added support to beginning teachers and those teachers and principals working in struggling schools. This would be done by instituting standards for coaches and other individuals with responsibility for helping teaching professionals improve their practice. FDOE knows that for many districts working with data at the classroom level will require significant assistance. This include knowing how to use the data to improve learning for individual students (ii) Reviewer gave 8 of ten points to this section. Two points were not given because there was no detailed action plan associated with the work of (ii). Far too often, support efforts to schools are so concerned with the content that issues of evaluating their quality and success are overlooked. This is not the case with this plan. It has a clear plan on how it will address issues noted in (D-5). Considerable of the third of three activities in (D-5) was devoted to measuring, and continuously improving the effectiveness of efforts to support teachers and principals improve student learning. The RTTT proposal noted that "significant resources, tools, and training will be provided to participating LEAs that will improve their ability to evaluate the professional development delivered through this grant, as well as build their capacity to evaluate all of the professional development in which their staffs engage". The proposal was exemplary in recognizing that evaluation is important from day 1 and not something that is left to do at the end of the year when reports are due or even worse at the end of the grant. The proposal also notes that an electronic system will be used to report professional development successes and student learning results. Budget Comments Budget seems appropriate for work planned

Total	138	116	116
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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)

House Bill 991 gave the Florida Board of Education both statutory and administrative rule authority to intervene directly in Florida's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	20	20	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	15	15	

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

(i) FDOE through its Differentiated Accountability (DA) program has identified Florida's lowest-performing schools. Fifty-one Title I SINI schools that are Intervene, Correct II "F," Correct II "D former F," and Correct II "D" for two consecutive years, as well as 19 Title I eligible secondary schools that were Correct II "F" and "D" for two consecutive years, were identified as the state's persistently lowest-achieving 5%, for a total of 70 schools. (ii) Significant number of points were not given to this section because the proposal had only a small amount of information on school intervention models as required in the notice. The proposal did not identify procedures for why, when, what and how of determining which of the four intervention model would be used. It did mention that one of the models had been used. However little detailed was provided about that experience except that "After implementing one of the four school intervention models, Florida believes that in order to sustain turnaround, our lowest-performing schools must be given human capital, community, and curricular support." Florida has attempted to turn around the lowest achieving schools through state and district-led initiatives as detailed in the narrative below. As noted, they use sixteen strategies. Florida

during the past few years has had significant success in improving student performance in low-performing schools. To continue and improve on its successes, Florida will implement 13 state-led initiatives and three district-led initiatives to support school turnarounds. Some are on-going efforts and others appear to be start-ups. The thirteen state-led interventions include: (1) Use of regional teams specializing in assisting low-performing schools. (2) Teacher recruitment in locations that have teacher training programs targeted at low-performing schools. (3) Leadership pipelines for turnaround principals and assistant principals (4) Building district-level capacity for turnarounds in rural districts (5) Differentiated Accountability Summer Academy (6) Charter School Partnerships (7) Improve and expand STEM and Career and professional Academies (8) Reading Coordinators (9) Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (Stem Coordinators (10) Community Compacts that involve parents and community members (11) Public Awareness Campaign to Promote a College Readiness Culture (12) Algebra Incentive Bonus to develop STEM skills (13) Cultural Competency The three district-led interventions are: (1) Extended learning time in Intervene Schools (2) Expanded full-day prekindergarten (3) Evidence-based and proven programs to support at risk students Budget Comments: The annual cost of \$7,200,000 for the 40 reading and 40 STEM coordinators needs to be considered in the context of what happens after the RTTT project ends. While a commendable project, will it be sustainable into the future?

Total	50	30	30
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9	9	

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

(i) Florida's expenditures used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was .22 percent higher going from \$13,441,014,030 (26.38%) in FY 2008 to 12,033,304,404 (26.60) in FY 2009. While the percentage was slightly higher, actual dollars were lower in 2009 than in 2008. (ii) The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) was designed to provide equalized base foundation funds regardless of the wealth of the district. Supplemental Academic Instruction funds is added for students in need of intensive supplemental funds. Safe school and reading funds are targeted at high need 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)

(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. Charter schools are assessed in the same manner as traditional public schools and students. Charter school renewals are largely driven by success in student achievement. (iii) The State's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues. (iv) The State provides charter schools with similar per-pupil funding for facilities (v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools and the Florida Virtual School is an example

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

The Florida proposal mentioned seven systemic reforms that warranted attention. They highlighted A+ Plan and noted six others. They were: (1) Voluntary Prekindergarten, (2) Teach for America, (3) Knowledge is Power Program, (4) Southern Regional Education Board, (5) College Reach-out Program and Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program.

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)

The Florida RTTT proposal does have a high-quality plan to address the need required for a competitive preference priority. The proposal in the section dealing with STEM provides three pages of evidence that STEM is integrated into in many elements of the RTTT proposal. The proposal addressing all the requirement for receiving the 15 preference points.

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)

Florida's State application comprehensively and coherently addressed all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The State demonstrated in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans that 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.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	415	419
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Florida Application #2040FL-5



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	53
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: Florida does a good job of setting forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that is aligned to the state's current strategic plan. Florida did a gap analysis in each of the RTT reform areas reflecting on their historical initiatives and have set forth key strategies moving forward that speak to their gap analysis. The applicant receives points for attaching its MOUS with participating LEAs and for securing signatures from almost 90% of its LEAs. A detailed table is also attached listing which districts will execute which parts of the Preliminary Scope of Work. Florida has two of the key constituents on board in participating LEAs, which is important for statewide impact. At the same time, Florida does not earn full points because of the lack of support from union leadership, which is at 13% of the participating LEAs for Florida. This brings up concerns about whether or not some of the critical reforms in Race to the Top will be supported by a key stakeholder in the execution of this plan, the teachers. Florida does not adequately address how it will tackle this challenge in their plan. Florida has set some very clear overall and subgroup goals for student achievement, increasing high school graduation rates, college enrollment and closing the achievement gap as evidenced by the tables and graphs in the narrative. The goals however do not appear to be very ambitious especially when you look at the growth rate of some of the NAEP goals in the coming years and the size of the budget which Florida is requesting for Race to the Top funding. It's very commendable that Florida wants to close the achievement gap between all other students and white students by 2020 but it's not clear from the plan how Florida will be pushing the achievement of white students during this time. Florida's goals seem to be about getting all other students to the current level of performance of white students. The state's overall goals for student achievement are not very ambitious.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	21
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has identified the leadership and teams necessary to implement the Race to the Top (RTT) strategies. The state plans to hire additional staff members to support current Florida DOE staff and together they will provide effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing RTT in areas such as grant administration and oversight. Florida has also laid out clear activities such as providing support for standards, assessments, training and professional development to participating LEAs to implement RTT. It is not clear from the plan however if Florida has put the right capacity in place to evaluate the effectiveness of promising practices and for holding LEAs accountable for</p>		

progress and performance of the overarching student outcome goals. Florida received over 75 letters from key stakeholders who support the states's RTT reforms. The Florida Association of School Administrators along with key legislative members have committed to support the implementation of Florida's RTT plan but the key stakeholders missing are union leadership. It's also not clear from the application how Florida will integrate all the community support that it has gained into the execution of the plan. Florida does an overall solid job of laying out how it will use the RTT funds to accomplish its plans and meet its targets. The SEA provides very specific projections on how the budget lines up with each reform area. The size of Florida's overall budget is concerning however, especially when looking at lack of ambitiousness in their overall student achievement goals and the fact that the state went over the suggested RTT guidance for their budget request. Additionally, there are huge line items in the budget for outside contractors. It's not clear how the effectiveness of these outside contractors will be assessed. Florida states that it is working to re-purpose funds so other federal programs like Title I and II align them with the RTT activities but there isn't clear information on how much of these funds have been re-purposed to date or will be moving forward. Finally, Florida does state that educators and policy makers are committed to maintaining reforms with results after the RTT funding goes away. The state does refer to accessing private funding at one point but there is no clear plan of how the state will execute this.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	25
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: As per the narrative, Florida has made progress over the past several years in each of the four RTT reform areas given the examples provided in the application. The state has also used its current state and federal funding to pursue these reforms. Florida has made strong progress since 2003 in improving student outcomes and closing achievement gaps. As per the state's application, 4th grade NAEP assessments in reading and math have increased and all Florida subgroups are above the national averages. The 8th grade NAEP results are mixed but Florida outperformed the national achievement levels for black and Hispanic students. According to the narrative, the Education Trust says Florida stands near the top of all states in making the most progress in closing the achievement gap among all races, as measured by the 4th and 8th grade NAEP assessments. Florida has also made gains in improving high school graduation rates. In the past 6 years, the graduation rate has increased from just over 56% to over 65%. Florida does not earn full points here though because the state does not make connections between the data and actions that have contributed to their results.		
Total	125	99

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
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: As per the applicant's attached MOA, Florida is part of a standards consortium that plans to adopt internationally benchmarked standards in K-12 English/language arts and mathematics that are aligned with college and work expectations. Florida's consortium includes 51 states in the country and a copy of the draft standards are attached to the application. Florida has a clear plan in place to adopt		

the common standards by August 2,2010. As outlined in their narrative, the state has laws in place that dictate the process for standards adoption between February 2010 and July 2010.		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Florida is a part of a consortium of 26 states that is working to develop high-quality assessments fulfilling a set of principles as articulated by Achieve. A copy of the agreement and list of states is attached to the application.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: As per the applicant's narrative, Florida has a high-quality and thorough plan in place for supporting the statewide transition of its participating LEAs to implementing internationally benchmarked K-12 standards and high-quality assessments tied to these standards. Florida has planned activities that are aligned with reaching the goals for the transition.</p>		
Total	70	70

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Florida has a statewide longitudinal data system in place that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements. The narrative documents how the state's statewide longitudinal data system includes each of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Although Florida does have a plan in place to better align data systems across the state, it is not clear whether or not Florida's plan moving forward will allow key stakeholders like teachers, parents, researchers and institutions of higher education to easily access this data. Florida is aware that its current system does not allow various institutions or individuals in their P-20 system to easily access each others' data. As a part of the state's plan moving forward, Florida hopes to provide a single, customer-friendly, Web-based interface to provide a single location for public access to the data. It is not clear however if any individual will be able to easily access this data without training or knowledge of data systems.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	9
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: Florida's plan to use data to improve instruction needs improvement. Although the state has some good strategies in place to increase the acquisition, adoption and use of a local instructional improvement system, it is not clear if these strategies will increase usage by stakeholders like parents who might not have a great deal of technology background. Their plan also doesn't speak adequately to how it will use data from these systems to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and approaches to instruction for all their students.</p>		
Total	47	36

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	17
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: Florida has four alternate routes to certification in place for teachers and one route for principals. The providers for these routes are mostly institutions of higher education and districts however and are not very selective, as they mostly require only a bachelor's degree as entry criteria for teachers and a Masters degree for the principal program. There is no information shared on the total number of applications for instance to each of these programs. According to the narrative, all of these programs except one do have school based experiences and all except two provide ongoing support. These alternate routes to certification are in use and according to the narrative, Florida's DOE has a very comprehensive and systematic approach for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher shortage and for preparing teachers to fill these areas of shortage. Although Florida states that it doesn't have a principal shortage program, there is no information provided on how principal shortages are monitored.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	52
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Florida has a plan in place to work with participating LEAs to identify a way to measure student growth for each individual student. The state plans to invest in measures of student growth that are applicable to more subjects and grades outside those included in the state assessment system and has already contracted with a national expert to assist in selecting this measure by February 2010. It is concerning however that Florida does not address the Race to the Top definition of student growth in their application. Florida also has a plan to have its participating LEAs design evaluation systems for teachers and principals that weighs student growth as the largest combined factor, assesses performance of the state's "Accomplished Practices" and includes a rating system that differentiates performance. The state's plan for this evaluation system requires the participation of teachers and principals in this process along with other key stakeholders. The only thing lacking in Florida's plan is a definition of how the state will differentiate teachers in terms of effectiveness when it comes to student growth. According to the narrative, the MOU for Florida's participating LEAs states that districts will conduct annual evaluations for teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback and as a part of these evaluations, teachers and principals will be provided with data on student growth, classes and schools. Because Florida does not stake a stand now on defining what student growth will look like for individual teachers and principals and leaves the execution of these plans up to individual LEAs, there could be huge variances in how LEAs view the importance of student growth in their final evaluations. As stated in the narrative, participating Florida LEAs will use the results from teacher and principal evaluations to provide the relevant professional development opportunities for teachers and principals, to compensate, promote and retain teachers, to grant tenure and/or certification and to remove ineffective teachers. Florida has also set some goals for meeting annual targets, as per the narrative, in each of these performance measures in the coming years.</p>		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	18
(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	8
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: According to the narrative, Florida has set targets to increase the percentage of students in high-poverty and high-minority schools being taught by effective teachers and led by effective principals in the coming years. The state plans to create a plan to use the data from annual evaluations to attract and retain teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority classrooms and schools and to create a compensation system to encourage teachers and principals to work in these schools. The state does use high numbers of free and reduced lunch in its narrative but it's not clear if this is the only factor used in defining a 'high-minority' or 'low-minority' school. Florida has some set some targets for ensuring that the percentage of effective teachers in math, science and special education increases in the coming years, which aligns with their goals of increasing the effectiveness of teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools. The activities for reaching these targets appear to be completely dependent on rolling out their evaluation plans. Florida does not earn full points in this section because their targets of ensuring there are effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools and subject areas in the coming years do not appear to be very ambitious.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	10
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: Florida has a plan in place to ensure that 100% of its teacher and principal preparation programs allow the public to access data on achievement and student growth of its graduates. Although Florida states in its narrative that it plans to explore more job-embedded teacher preparation programs and seeks to award two to three entities that have proven results in improving leadership in schools, it is not clear how these efforts will truly expand preparation programs that are effective in producing student achievement and student growth. Beyond linking the impact of graduates on student growth, it is not clear that these programs will change their practices.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	17
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: Florida has a solid plan for providing effective support to teachers and principals. The state has set clear targets to focus its professional development efforts in building teacher and leadership capacity, ensuring effective district and school implementation and sustaining high-quality performance system-wide. Through its MOU with districts, Florida plans on focusing its professional development activities on what most impacts changes in classroom practices and student outcomes. It is not clear from the plan however how Florida will measure and evaluate the supports that are most effective in improving student achievement.</p>		
Total	138	114

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: The passage of House Bill 991 in 2009 allows Florida's Board of Education the authority to intervene directly in the state's lowest-performing schools and LEAs.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	35
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>As per the narrative, Florida has a process in place for identifying the persistently low-achieving schools, and at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest achieving schools if they were eligible to receive Title I funds. Florida has a "Differentiated Accountability Plan" that separates schools into one of six categories, based on their proficiency rates in reading, math and high school graduation. As a requirement of its MOU with participating LEAs, Florida will use their RTT and other funds to support LEAs in turning around their lowest performing schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models: turnaround, restart, school closure or the transformational model. It is not clear from the plan however how Florida will help individual schools or LEAs to identify which turnaround model they will use. Florida has had a track record in moving 79% of its persistently low-performing schools one or more letter grades and in making improvements in their AYP targets. Given this, it is not clear to the reader if these improvements were ambitious given where these schools are performing.</p>		
Total	50	45

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>According to the narrative, the expenditures for public education were 26.38 percent of the State total expenditures for FY 2008 and, for FY 2009, the total actual expenditures for public education was 26.60 percent, which meant expenditures increased for education. Additionally, the Florida Legislature has enacted policy that established the FEFP funding formula to provide equitable distribution of state and local funds to the 67 school districts. The distribution of funding resources is made to districts and schools based on the education needs of students.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	40
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>According to the narrative, Florida has been cited as one of only 13 states that does not require revisions to its current charter school laws in order to meet the RTT criteria. Florida's charter school laws do not prohibit increasing the number of high-performing charters and the state does not impose caps. In its narrative, Florida includes a description of its state's approach to charter school accountability and authorization along with the description of its laws and a list of charter schools for the past years that have applied to the state for approval, been approved, denied or closed. Additionally, as per the narrative, Florida law requires that students in charter schools be funded the same as if they were enrolled in a traditional public school. The state also provides charter schools with facilities funding and enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools such as the Florida Virtual School and the School District Virtual Instruction Program.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>According to the narrative, for the past 10 years Florida has been committed to education reform that includes efforts like adopting internationally benchmarked standards, providing facilities funding for charter schools and enacting a Differentiated Accountability system to turn around the lowest performing schools. The state has also instituted efforts like Voluntary Prekindergarten Program and brought programs like Teach For America and KIPP to the state.</p>		
Total	55	55

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Florida addresses the STEM priority throughout their application and they have a clear and focused emphasis on STEM initiatives that are designed to reform education and prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy. Their plan offers a rigorous course of study in mathematics, technology and engineering. According to the narrative, the state also has a plan to cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers or other STEM-capable community partners and to prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Florida's application for RTT comprehensively and coherently addresses all four of the reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria needed to demonstrate that the state and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. Florida has demonstrated through almost 90% participation of its LEAs and MOU agreements that it can successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plan.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	434