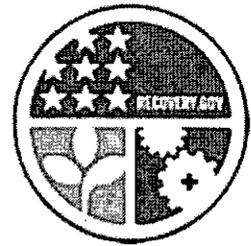


Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Idaho Application #2400ID

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	55
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	35
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>As a rural state with many schools located in remote areas across the state, Idaho considers its schools the center of the community and education is viewed as a priority. Idaho is committed to creating a system of education that meets the needs of all students and seeks to foster the innovation and reform necessary to meet the individual needs of each student with the ultimate goal of ensuring their success and readiness to enter college and the workforce. The Education Alliance of Idaho is a group of leaders and relevant stakeholders who have been working together to create a comprehensive education reform agenda that establishes a vision, mission, goals with measurable performance indicators and timelines to address accountability, standards, and a high school career path that connects students to postsecondary preparation. Idaho's comprehensive plan focuses on the improvement of the instructional core which is designed to ensure that the interaction of students and teachers occurs in the context of high-quality content. Idaho's plan includes each area of reform in ARRA and establishes goals, activities, timelines and person(s) responsible to bring about a statewide systemic change that will improve outcomes for all of its students. However the percent of participating LEAs will only address 40 percent of the student population representing only 16 percent of Hispanic students and 1.5 percent of Native American students. Participating school districts and public charters LEAs have expressed their commitment to Idaho's entire plan by signing the Memorandum of Understanding and securing the signature of the superintendent, school board, and teacher association however this appears to represent about 50 percent of their entire number of LEAs. For the participating LEAs, Idaho received a letter of support from the administrator association was also provided. Idaho's percent of participating LEAs may be a challenge to meeting statewide reform efforts, improvement of achievement of all student groups, improvement of instructional practices, implementation of the standards and assessments initiative, and implementing the transformation model in all LEAs which will have a statewide impact. Idaho designed and implemented a building capacity project as part of the Statewide System of Supports with criteria that takes into account the achievement, graduation rate, resources, and disproportional subgroup representation of students with disabilities for participating LEAs. Idaho is following a holistic approach to address system-wide reform and remove inequities in effective teacher and principal distribution, and decrease the achievement gap between subgroups. Since the project has shown to produce academic gains in student achievement and in schools making adequate yearly progress. Their concern with impacting local control may limit their ability to achieve statewide reform.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	20
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	10

(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho outlines a number of initiatives they have implemented and carried out successfully as a result of working collaboratively with each LEA, higher education, and key stakeholders, such as a statewide math initiative and the reading program initiative. As a result of the work of the Education Alliance, Idaho's education community has a vision and a strategic plan to move the reform agenda forward. However, having a cohesive plan with measurable goals and objectives, detailed set of activities and the responsible parties to provide leadership is not clearly and consistently established. While Idaho has a commitment of key stakeholders, it is not clear how LEAs will be held responsible for implementation without interfering with local control. In addition to the number of participating LEAs representing less than 40 percent of the student population, 16 percent of the Hispanic population and 1.5 percent of the Native American population it is not clear how Idaho will make a statewide impact and improve student achievement of the Hispanic and Native American population. By creating regional support teams within the university structure, Idaho has developed an organizational structure that will provide leadership to manage, coordinate and oversee each reform area in addition to regional specialists dedicated to work directly with each LEA. Idaho has received letters of support from stakeholders across the state, government officials, higher education, associations and public and charter LEAs, however the number of participating LEAs in relation to the total number of LEAs may present a challenge to accomplishing statewide reform.		
(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: Through a combination of state, federal, and other funding sources, Idaho has allocated, reallocated and leveraged funds to support education reform initiatives and to establish a foundation for continuous improvement. Idaho has created a strategic plan with specific targets and takes every opportunity presented to advance to the next level. Idaho is fully immersed in the development and implementation of common standards and assessment, has made an investment in the development of a statewide longitudinal data system with plans to extend it from k-12 to higher education and the workforce, has developed a statewide framework for performance evaluation of teachers and the creation of a principal academy, and through a building capacity project works with schools to monitor and provide support to struggling schools. Idaho has increased the number of schools making AYP by holding all schools accountable and providing varied supports according to their specific need. Idaho is encouraged with increasing student achievement with some gains in narrowing the achievement gap and exceeding the national average. Progress in the graduation rate was not referenced.		
Total	125	100

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: Idaho is participating in a consortium of states comprised of 48 states and has a plan with timelines projecting the adoption of the Common Core Standards before August 2010. Both the Office of the		

Governor and the Idaho Legislature has demonstrated a commitment to the pending approval of the Common Core Curriculum Standards by signing the Memorandum of Agreement. The standards are internationally benchmarked and will provide for high quality, college and career ready standards to prepare high school students for success in college and beyond. Following the adoption of the standards, Idaho will begin professional development, curricular materials adoption and the development of assessments.

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

Idaho is participating in a 27 States Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC) and in a 23 States Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers. Idaho seeks to have nationally and internationally benchmarked standards which are paired with valid and reliable assessments in order to improve the quality of their assessments, develop a high-quality summative assessment system connected to formative and interim assessment s.

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

Idaho is divided into 6 service regions for all state services except for education which creates a challenge in providing effective and efficient support to the LEAs throughout the state. To rectify this, Idaho has been working with higher education to establish School Improvement and Support Centers to be located within the universities enabling a connection between the PK-12 system and higher education. This relationship will provide Idaho with the necessary supports for a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards and assessments in addition to expanding teacher and principal preparation programs, professional growth opportunities for present teachers and administrators, and working with LEAs to promote research, school improvement and advance STEM initiatives. Idaho has a high quality plan that will increase the rigor and relevance of its academic content in order to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills needed to succeed in college and the workforce. The plan includes goals, activities, timelines, person(s) responsible, supports to LEAs, involvement of higher education, business, industry and other relevant stakeholders. Idaho plans to expand the Statewide System of Supports to all schools and LEAs to create a culture of continuous improvement, develop an understanding of the common core standards and assessments, provide professional development and mentoring, and to assist educational leaders with as the implementation of the standards and assessments and the alignment of instructional practices, materials, coursework and high school exit criteria. Included in their plan is an initiative called "Idaho Assistive Technology Project" and other targeted support programs designed to provide additional services and supports to high-need and underrepresented student populations.

Total	70	70
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Idaho has implemented a statewide longitudinal data system and is currently participating in a state consortium that will enable communication among multiple states' data systems. Idaho's data system is progressing in the inclusion of the America COMPETES Act as follows: Fully implemented/operational- #1, 6, 7 In process of implementation to be operational by 2010-2011- #8, 2, 3, 5 Data system's capability has been addressed/not fully implemented- #4, 9, 10, 11, 12.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho is committed to developing their longitudinal data system to meet the needs of all key stakeholder groups and has a detailed plan with activities and timelines that will make data accessible to interested parties, provide customization for users to extract and analyze data, create reports and provide timely feedback that is meaningful for decision-making to improve instructional practices and promote positive outcomes for students.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	18
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho is working towards building the data system's capacity to develop an instructional improvement data system fully connected to the statewide longitudinal data system. Idaho is committed to expand their data system in order to make academic and qualitative data available to principals, teachers, and other stakeholders. The instructional improvement data system will also be comprised of a specific learning management system that will provide detailed student-level data to help inform educators about how to intervene and support the learning needs of each student. When fully operational, the instructional improvement data system will promote the delivery of all assessment information, analysis of student achievement data, analysis of programs, curriculum and teacher effectiveness to principals, teachers and all key stakeholders for the evaluation of student-level strengths and weakness and to make determination about appropriate instructional practices and interventions. Idaho will provide support to LEAs through its School Improvement and Support Center to expand their local capacity to use data to inform the continuous improvement planning process and integrate a professional development system that will focus on leveraging data for school improvement efforts and the assessment of teacher effectiveness. Additionally, Idaho's data system will work towards a statewide longitudinal data system that expands from a K-12 to a P-20 to include college and workforce data and allow for higher education and researchers to help inform educational reform.</p>		
Total	47	29

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	6
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho has regulatory provisions allowing for alternative authorization routes to certification. This authorization is limited to four program options of which one is offered through a non-university. Alternative route programs are only available for teacher certification. Idaho's alternative routes are limited to two of the five elements listed in the definition of alternative routes to certification. Idaho monitors and evaluates shortages through an annual report and works with institutions of higher education to identify shortage areas, evaluate preparation programs and modify and create alternative programs as needed. Addressing and developing options for aspiring principals, expanding the use of providers and expanding options for teachers are areas that warrant attention.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	39
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	5
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Idaho has developed a comprehensive reform plan that takes into account the importance of teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance as a key area of all reform efforts and will work with all participating LEAs to provide supports, data management, professional development and evaluations necessary to implement the state's reform plan. Idaho has developed a plan that includes goals, measurable targets, activities, timelines and person(s) responsible to ensure that participating LEAs are focusing on teacher and principal effectiveness through a fair, transparent and consistent performance appraisal process. Idaho will enhance their data system with the goal of linking student growth to teachers and principals for the purpose of determining effectiveness. Idaho plans to utilize a learning management system that will work with the statewide longitudinal data system and the instructional improvement system to measure student growth by tracking individual student performance and linking student achievement data to teachers. Idaho requires that LEAs adopt and implement a research-based teacher evaluation model aligned to standards that also identifies levels of proficiencies, with appropriate supports and professional development. LEAs will develop and submit the teacher evaluations model to the state for approval. Idaho will work to create an evaluation process that takes into account data on student growth. A Task Force to address the principal/administrator performance evaluation will be created. As required by the Idaho Code, performance evaluations for teachers and school administrators must be completed annually. Participating LEAs will be required to exceed the requirements in code by expanding the present evaluation process into one that uses performance standards, multiple rating options, ongoing monitoring, and frequent constructive feedback designed to meet the individual teacher needs. Principals will receive support and training as they begin to develop and implement a performance evidenced-based evaluation model. Idaho's plan will focus on developing a performance based evaluation framework that addresses teacher and school performance goals in relation to student achievement. LEAs will collect and use data from evaluations to inform professional development that includes online learning, mentoring and coaching. Idaho has a pay-for-performance incentives for teachers that recognizes, rewards, attracts and retains effective teachers and has an incentive pay pilot program to reward teachers, administrators and other building-level staff who improve student achievement, fill hard-to-fill positions and/or take additional leadership duties. Idaho has statutes that determine whether to grant tenure and continued certification and contract based on receiving a rating of satisfactory or higher on the annual evaluation. A teacher or a principal may also be removed after all efforts to improve performance have not been successful. Improving principal effectiveness based on performance as outlined for teachers was not consistently addressed.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	15
(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	5

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Idaho recognizes that equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals must be achieved for education reform to succeed and has developed a comprehensive reform plan to address this area as it relates to teachers. Idaho will work in partnership with LEAs, higher education and training institutions to create standards and expectations for pre-service training. Using the data system, LEAs and higher education will gather and report data, develop measures to identify prospective teacher candidates and place the best candidates in available positions. Idaho will work with LEAs to review procedures and work to adjust mandated timelines for identifying and filling a vacancy. Idaho will assist LEAs in developing an induction program, and will use their mentor program and their New Teacher Center to provide services, mentoring and coaching to new teachers in order to ensure new teachers are developed, supported and retained. In partnership with the university, Idaho has a plan to increase the quality, diversity, and quantity of teachers in an area of STEM. The university will train current teachers and will help recruit prospective teachers who are majoring in a STEM area. A closer analysis based on reviews of prior actions of the current status of high-poverty and/or high-minority schools and in all hard-to-staff subjects will allow for setting measureable goals and specific targets by which to

increase the number and percentage of effective teachers. There is a need to elaborate on preparation programs that include opportunities for principals.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	7
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: Idaho has full authority over its program approval processes and seeks to implement accountability measures using data on teacher and principal preparation programs and alternative routes to determine program effectiveness. Idaho has outlined goals to address teacher preparation program effectiveness and will establish the minimum standard of performance to which each program will be held accountable. An annual report will be developed and distributed to the public however timelines and activities were not clearly defined. Idaho will concentrate on STEM areas within each preparation program through a research-based pilot program which includes a residency experience component. Linking student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals and their preparation programs was not addressed.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	16
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: Idaho outlines a series of initiatives to demonstrate their commitment to improving outcomes for all students and supporting LEAs. Programs and supports include instructional coaching, professional development, virtual learning communities, teacher -stipends for collaboration time during and after the school day, training and support in differentiating student instruction, behavioral strategies to reach at-risk students, required college coursework to improve competencies in STEM. Idaho will expand its Building Capacity Program in order to customize supports to LEAs based on their specific needs and will work with a capacity building coach. LEAs will use student achievement data and perceptual survey data to identify needs for the improvement of student achievement and to develop school improvement plans. Using the learning management system, Idaho will establish a data performance system to track individual student performance and to link individual student achievement data with individual teachers. The data performance system will make a connection between instructional practices and individual student achievement, guide teachers in identifying intervention practices, and support research and evaluation of effectiveness for the continuous improvement of student achievement. There is an emphasis in meeting the needs of teachers as compared to indentifying and meeting the needs of principals; providing principals with the appropriate supports was not fully addressed.</p>		
Total	138	83

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho did not establish if the State has legal authority to intervene in LEAs or directly in schools. Idaho did not clearly establish if they have legal authority and appear to have a conflict with their ability to intervene without impacting on each LEA's local control.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	10
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	0
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	10
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Idaho has analyzed each initiative, program and supports provided to determine if each approach has had the intended outcomes. In each area, Idaho has demonstrated its success in achieving its goals and how to improve upon their success. Idaho seeks to continue to work with the LEAs with lowest-achieving schools and support LEAs by considering the transformation model within their systemic reform projects. Idaho presents strategies they will continue to use to bring about improvement in LEAs. Idaho provides support to each LEA and its superintendent. Idaho made reference to working and supporting lowest-achieving schools however did not list nor identified which schools and how many currently fall under this category other than to include reference to 27% of district in the "Rapid Improvement" category and 66% in the continuous improvement trajectory. Idaho did not clearly established a plan with timelines and activities for continuous improvement of schools. Idaho is using a building capacity model however there is no clear explanation on how they will use a reform model within their current approach. Section E2ii was not specifically addressed.

Total	50	10
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percent of total revenues available to the state increases from FY2008 to FY 2009 by 1.1 percent. Idaho's system for funding education is explained as being fully equitable. While there seems to be equitable distribution to each LEA, however within each specific LEA, there is no indication of how there will be an equitable distribution based on each school's needs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	24
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho has a law that allows for the creation of charter schools with no cap on the percent of schools that may be charters and no artificial cap on the percent or amount of funding a charter school may receive however it limits the number of new charter schools that may begin in a given year. This limitation may be considered mildly inhibiting. The State has provisions that guides the creation of public charters, but establishes limited educational standards for holding them accountable. Charter schools are to meet the same student achievement requirements as those expected of the district public schools and serve all students as is required of district schools. The state provides funding for maintenance of charter schools as it does for district schools however it does not provide specific funding for charter school facility acquisition. The State supports numerous of public school "choice" options to exist within the district such as alternative schools, dual enrollment, magnet programs, use of innovative educational approaches however the operation of autonomous public schools as with all schools continue to be under the oversight of the district and their school boards. There is no clear indication as to the option of establishing autonomous public schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: Under the leadership of the governor and the superintendent, a group of educational stakeholders was given the charge to meet and agree upon a vision, mission and goals for the educational system of Idaho that will foster the innovation and reform needed to create a system that meets the needs of all students and ensures that they graduate high school prepared to enter college and the workforce ready to compete in a global society. As a result of their collaborative efforts, Idaho put together a comprehensive plan to reform education. Focused on raising the achievement of all students, Idaho has implemented numerous initiatives designed to improve teacher and principal effectiveness, create differentiated instructional models, link student data with teachers and principals, provide for the</p>		

individual needs of teachers through professional development, mentoring and supports and build each LEAs capacity for reform that brings about continuous instructional improvement. When Idaho began their reform efforts, 26% of Idaho schools met AYP, currently 66% of schools are meeting AYP. To further advance Idaho's reform agenda, Idaho has formed a Division of Innovation and School Choice, designated coordinators to address the traditionally underrepresented populations and the various subgroups and parents, and will use a data driven approach to support instruction. Idaho has a strategic, measured plan to improve instruction and continue to raise student achievement.

Total		55	37
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho has addressed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) as a specific component of some of their initiatives. As part of their Math Initiative, Idaho will provide training and supports to teachers and will offer teachers the opportunity to take college courses. Idaho works with LEAs to support and train in the use and analysis of data to evaluate student achievement, to create quality assessments and to create advanced opportunities for students. Idaho will integrate STEM areas into the Common Core Curriculum and Assessment initiative; will create programs to bring together teachers and students with higher education programs and with experts in the STEM. Idaho will create a coordinator to guide the process and initiatives and will support LEAs and schools in addressing STEM. Idaho will create targeted support programs to attract and motivate students from underrepresented groups, promote their interest in participating and prepare them for careers in a STEM area. Idaho will work to prepare prospective teacher candidates and use the alternative routes to certification to address teacher shortage in STEM area. Through regional STEM Centers, Idaho will provide professional development, mentoring, coaching to teachers in working in a STEM area. Idaho will make funds available to pay for coursework leading to certification and offer bonus as incentives. Idaho will partner with universities to expand the opportunities for teachers to develop skill and competencies and increase their effectiveness. Idaho requires administrators and teachers to expand their content knowledge by taking college courses and has a mentor program to support educators in this area. Idaho will expand opportunities for students to have college experiences in a STEM area beginning in the middle grades. Idaho is committed to expanding opportunities for students and preparing them to enter a field in one of the STEM areas upon graduating from high school.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Idaho has established a comprehensive and coherent plan that addresses each of the four areas in ARRA, as well as the State Success Factors Criteria with goals and timelines defining each target area that includes supports and guidance along with the collaboration and involvement of all educators and relevant stakeholders interested in the continuous improvement of the PK-20 educational system. Idaho demonstrates great sensitivity to the community at large and works to develop their understanding and gain their support for reform efforts. The learning management system with its capability to connect to the PK-20 longitudinal data system and the instructional improvement data system will help to ensure that instructional practices are meeting the needs of all students. Initiatives		

focus on increasing student achievement, decreasing the achievement gap, and increasing the graduation rate with the ultimate goal of all students graduating high school prepared for college and careers.

Total

0

Grand Total

500

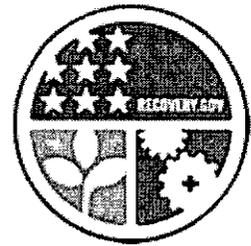
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Idaho Application #2400ID1



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	28
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	20
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	4
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State detailed its education reform agenda and submitted evidence that it was formed with broad stakeholder support including teacher, business, and parent organizations as well as foundations. Idaho's application provides a framework for using Race to the Top funds to continue building on current state reforms and how those reforms are interconnected to Race to the Top's key areas. In order to carry out the Race to the Top reform efforts the State secured participation of 79 LEAs. It appears that additional districts were interested in participating in some or part of the Race to the Top initiative but were excluded by the State. The application states the "[t]he state determined only districts with three signatures from the superintendent, school board chair, and teacher association representative, if applicable, would be eligible to participate in Idaho's plan. While many districts obtained two signatures, our stakeholder group agreed districts who gained commitments from all three stakeholder groups were most "ready and willing" to engage in and benefit from true reform." Although the State is focusing on those districts most eager to participate, its approach may be violating the spirit of the guidance on soliciting broad LEA participation. It is unclear from the narrative if Idaho was upfront with districts on the 3-signature requirement, or if they made a final selection of only 3-signature-districts after LEAs signed MOUs. By limiting district participation, the Race to the Top reforms will not reach over 60 percent of Idaho's students – and 57 percent of those who live in poverty. It appears that State's largest school districts are not participating in Race to the Top. The assessment data provided by the State indicate serious gaps in achievement between White and Hispanic students and between students with disabilities and limited English proficient students and all other students, yet it cannot be determined if from the application if the participating districts enroll the majority of students with the largest achievement gaps. Furthermore, achievement data on State and NAEP assessments provided by the State indicate that there remain significant achievement gaps between economically and non-economically disadvantaged students in reading and mathematics. At the current level of district participation, Race to the Top's instructional and academic reforms will not reach the majority of students who could most benefit from them. While the State secured the necessary signatures on the MOUs, not all districts were willing to implement all elements of the initiative. Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b) indicates that only 73 percent of the participating districts are willing to commit to the activities related to turning around the lowest-achieving schools. Again, this is disconcerting because it is the children in these schools who need the greatest supports.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	21
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	12

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application presented a clear management plan to implement the Race to the Top reforms. The initiative has the strong support and leadership of the State Superintendent. A coordinator will be assigned to oversee each of the Race to the Top elements and report to the deputy superintendent of their divisions. The plan provides clear lines of communication and authority. The addition of the proposed regional specialists may help improve service delivery to and build capacity in the State's most remote communities. While having cabinet level support for the initiative will allow the State to directly manage and coordinate Race to the Top funds and human capital, there is concern about how institutionalized the commitment is within the agency or if it would survive a change in political leadership. The State is focusing on districts who are the most "ready and willing" to commit to the Race to the Top reforms. If the State is looking to these districts to pilot these reforms, the implement them statewide, it does not provide a detailed plan on how it intends to accomplish this goal. For example, it has excluded districts without signatures from local union leaders from participating in this effort. The State does not discuss how it might effectively work with local teacher unions in the non-participating districts to implement these reforms in the future. The State is taking steps to ensure accountability by hiring a financial coordinator dedicated to tracking grant funds and monitoring compliance which should provide effective management of the Race to the Top funds at the State and local levels. Given that the State plans to leverage funds from other State and Federal programs to implement Race to the Top, it is not clear how the Race to the Top financial coordinator will work with other grants managers within the agency. The application states that stakeholders have already agreed to a set of performance indicators that will be used to hold Race to the Top recipients accountable to the SEA and to the public. These indicators were not provided in the application; therefore, a determination of their rigor could not be made. The State has requested over \$120 million to carry out the Race to the Top provisions. The budget detail shows that the State is committed to using its Race to the Top funds to invest in short-term infrastructural investments rather than expanding the capacity of the SEA. Only 11 percent of funds will be expended on salaries and fringe benefits for SEA staff. This level of staffing should be sustainable beyond the grant period. The State is proposing to make major investments in technology and formative assessments. There is some concern that the majority (81%) of the 50% allocated to participating LEAs must be used to support pay-for-performance. It is not clear if the participating districts will have adequate Race to the Top funds to support the commitments they made in their MOUs to implement reforms across the four areas. More importantly, the State is making a major investment in performance-base compensation, yet the narrative only discusses it in one section as a pilot program. The State did not provide a compelling argument on why reforming compensation systems would reform teaching and learning. There is no discussion on how alternative-based compensation systems will be sustained after the grant ends. The State appears to be incorrectly matching the LEA funds to participating districts. The State has requested funds totaling \$55,928,402 for its 50% portion. Therefore, the suballocation to participating LEAs should be in the same amount. If there is an error in the budget and the total actually is \$120,357,873, the State and LEAs would each receive \$60,178,936. Of the \$120 million requested, 13 percent is earmarked for data systems to support the Race to the Top reforms. Given that Idaho lags behind most of the nation in developing a longitudinal data system and is almost starting from scratch, it not known if this will be enough of an investment within the grant period to develop the required data systems, even with the support of additional federal and state grants. The State has a tremendous amount of work to do to build an IT infrastructure in a very short timeframe. The application provided evidence that the Idaho's Race to the Top plan has broad stakeholder support. Letters of support were provided from the State's congressional delegation; associations of teachers, administrators, school boards, and charter schools; Tribal education leaders; the higher education community; and business partners and organizations. The Idaho Education Association, while generally supportive of Idaho's plan, expressed educators' concerns about its alternative compensation provisions, suggesting that the SEA may encounter some push-back on some of key human capital reforms in the future.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps

(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: While the State used its ARRA Stabilization allocation to stave off budget cuts and retain teachers, the applicant indicated that these funds allowed the State to maintain programs related to reading and math reforms. The documentation provided shows that Idaho has made steady progress in student achievement for all students and across subgroups on NAEP and State assessments. However, there remain significant gaps between subgroups, especially between White and Hispanic students on both NAEP and the State assessments, although there is evidence to suggest the gap is narrowing slightly. In reviewing the NAEP data, students with limited English proficiency are losing ground on the assessments. The State's high school completion rate has been steadily increasing since 1998-99 and is now at 89.7 percent. The State did not discuss what programs, reforms, or strategies may have contributed to achievement gains for Idaho's students. This, coupled with the State's inability to significantly narrow gaps between subgroups resulted in the reduction of points.		
Total	125	68

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: Idaho provided evidence that it is participating in CCSSO-NGA's Common Core Standards Consortium to develop common standards in mathematics and English-language arts that are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness. Fifty-one states and territories—a clear majority of states—are participating in the initiative. The State submitted evidence that is actively moving forward in adopting these standards by August 2, 2010. The plan includes a timeline for incorporating the new standards into the Idaho Administrative Code including the required periods for public comment.		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho is participating in two consortia to develop summative and formative assessments aligned to the Common Core Standards. The SMARTER consortium consists of 23 states and MOSAIC 27, which constitutes a majority of states.		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The State described past challenges in rolling out reforms largely due to the rural and isolated nature of many communities that made it difficult for SEA staff to provide quality professional development and quality on-site to support districts and schools. In order to overcome these challenges, Idaho has developed a new service delivery model using the State's three major colleges and universities which are strategically located in each of the State's major regions. This restructuring should greatly enhance the State's ability to assist LEAs in transitioning to the new standards and assessments. In addition to this new regional structure for service delivery, the State provided a cohesive plan for providing professional development and technical assistance to LEAs around the standards and assessments		

within a clearly stated and reasonable timeline. The State also will require all districts to go through the Total Instructional Alignment process developed by ISU which walks educators through the alignment of standards, curriculum, assessment and instructional practices. The State is also creating a position to lead the formative assessment activities to focus on using assessment data to improve instruction in the classroom. If implemented with fidelity and within the proposed timeframe, the Idaho plan will provide for a smooth transition to the new standards and assessments and filter them directly into the classroom.

Total	70	70
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho reported that it currently has 3 of the 12 (6 points) of the America COMPETES Act elements in place in its longitudinal data system.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	1
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: While the application makes clear the State's desire and commitment to building the data systems required to support the Race to the Top reforms, there is tremendous concern about its ability and capacity to develop these systems with the proposed schedule. As detailed in Section (C)(1), Idaho has lagged behind most other states in creating a state longitudinal data base. The State is only in the pilot stages of creating identifiers to link student and teacher data sets which would be required to carry out most of Race to the Top's reforms related to educator effectiveness. The systems required for this reform are complex and costly to establish. It does not appear that Idaho has a well-established IT infrastructure or the human resources in place to begin and carryout such an immense effort. Implementation of Idaho's IT plan appears to be contingent on securing an IES grant; it is not known how likely Idaho will be in obtaining this grant. The State does not provide a contingency plan for developing the data system if it does not receive the IES grant, nor does it provide evidence that the IES grant will fully-fund the effort. There is too much uncertainty in this stage to determine if the State can meet its ambitious goals of having a full-scale state longitudinal data base in operation early enough in the grant period for it to support the other reform areas, especially the human capital reforms.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	9
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application documents the challenges Idaho has faced bringing technology into the classroom which has hindered the use of data to improve instruction. The State is taking immediate action to begin the process of wiring the State and LEAs to the Idaho Education Network (IEN) which will provide the physical infrastructure necessary to deliver technology to the classroom. However, the State will not be fully connected until late 2012 or early 2013—almost three years into Phase I of Race to the Top. The State intends to purchase a learning management system (LMS) to provide student-level data in a user-friendly manner to teachers and other stakeholders. The State has submitted another IES grant to fund the LMS system, but has accounted for the cost in its Race to the Top grant in case it is not funded; this shows the State's commitment to securing this system. It is not clear if schools and districts will need to be connected through the IEN in order to use the LMS. The application states that the IEN rollout began in 2009 and will be completed within three years; districts are scheduled to adopt and receive training on the LMS by January 2011. Once the LMS is in place, the application presents a clear and reasonable plan for supporting LEAs in how to use the LMS through the new regional system of service delivery. The State will also fund a Data Utilization</p>		

Specialist to support the regional centers. The support to LEAs on using the data from the state longitudinal data system is less clear. The State appears to have a contract in place to address professional development connected to the data system, but the contractor currently is focused on assisting the state in developing the system. There are plans for local professional development, but given that the State is in such early stages of developing the system, it may be too soon for concrete planning on the district rollout. The same is true for providing access to researchers. The State has indicated it will provide researchers with access to data, but this seems to be so far in the future that there is not a clear action plan. The application does not adequately address assurances for protecting the confidentiality of students and teachers in restricted use files, nor does it discuss research stakeholders beyond the colleges of education.

Total	47	16
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	7

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While Idaho statute gives the SEA authority to create a limited number of alternative routes, the application did not provide enough information to make a determination if these routes meet the Race to the Top definition. There was no systematic discussion about the selectiveness of candidates or the entities providing the routes. It appears that other than ABCTE, most routes are university based and may not give candidates the option to test out of courses. Only one route prepared principals and only 5 principals have been alternatively prepared. It is not clear if the Para-Educator to Teacher is a true alternative route. It appears to be a mechanism for recruiting paraprofessionals into the teaching profession; however not enough information was provided to evaluate the route. The use of alternative routes is not widespread with approximately 5 percent of Idaho's teachers working on an alternative authorization. The State submitted its Educator Supply and Demand Report as evidence that it monitors teacher shortage areas. The report provides detailed information on shortage areas for the State and by district, teacher turnover rates, and the projected supply of new teachers graduating from the State's teacher preparation programs. However, it does not specifically address staffing in high poverty or high minority schools or shortages by geographic location other than aggregate district-level data. Without these data breakouts, the State cannot target hiring needs in hard-to-staff school or LEAs. The report does not address principal shortage areas.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	33
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	6
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	15

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It is not clear how the State can meet its student growth targets without the data system in place to allow the State to calculate student growth. As discussed in Section A, the State is directing over 80% of the funds suballotted to LEAs to be used to develop performance-based compensation programs. It is not clear how the districts fully develop these programs without the growth measures and evaluations in place. On the positive side, the State is implementing a framework for teaching as the foundation of its teacher evaluation system that must be conducted at least annually. This research-based Framework includes formative and summative evaluations, self-evaluations, and teacher reflections. The model has been adapted to reflect the needs of rural educators. The State will be providing professional development on how to use the rubric in the classroom which should ensure

that the observations are conducted in a fair and objective manner. The State has made less progress on implementing principal evaluations; these will not be implemented until fall 2012. It is unclear how student growth measures will factor into the teacher and principal evaluations. The State is committed to using teacher and principal evaluations to develop, promote, and retain educators. The discussion on the uses of evaluations to support tenure and removal decisions. Again, it is not clear how the State will accomplish these activities without a student growth measure.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Section (D)(3) addresses the State's goals for ensuring the distribution of effective educators. Again, Idaho is at a significant disadvantage for meeting its equity goals because it does not have student growth measures in place to determine educator effectiveness. The State appears to recognize the importance of gauging effectiveness throughout a teacher's career beginning at the pre-service level. The State has plans to develop and strengthen teacher induction and mentoring programs to support teachers in becoming effective teachers. The State acknowledges challenges of staffing schools in high-poverty and low-performing schools but does not provide concrete details on strategies for recruiting and retaining educators in these schools. It is not known, for example, if districts have seniority provisions in their collective bargaining agreements that may lead to novice teachers being disproportionately placed in lower-performing schools. The plan does not address the use of incentives such as hiring bonuses or housing allowances to recruit teachers to rural areas or hard to staff subjects. The plan does document a critical need for science and math teachers and has partnered with Boise State University to develop a recruitment model based on the UTEACH STEM Teacher Training Program. Most of the points awarded in this section are related to the State's plan on increasing the number of STEM teachers. Much of the State's discussion in this section focuses on the equitable distribution of teachers; the plan does not adequately address recruiting and retaining administrators in high poverty or minority schools.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	6
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Criteria (D)(4)(i) assesses the State's ability to link student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals and to link this information to the in-State programs whose teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing. Again, the fact that the State does not have the data systems in place to link students and teachers and to calculate a growth measure puts it at a disadvantage in meeting this goal. While the plan indicates the State will create accountability measures to publicly report on effectiveness measures for educator preparation programs, it does not provide any discussion on how student growth measures will factor into these indicators. Furthermore, the plan does not address how the SDE and the higher education community will link their data systems or what IT capacity teacher preparation programs have to meet this goal. Minimal points were awarded for the State's current plan to create a multi-measure accountability index for its traditional and alternative route programs. The State did not provide a comprehensive discussion on how it might expand preparation and credentialing options for effective teachers.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	10
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The application provides little evidence that the State is using a comprehensive, data-driven approach to identifying the professional development needs of its educators throughout the State, and the plan did not go into enough detail to demonstrate how they would target professional development in the future based on data-informed needs assessments. Professional development appears to be program driven rather than needs-driven and has not been implemented consistently. This has left the State with a hodge podge of professional development programs. The State has experimented with various

professional development models through grants such as Reading First rather than identifying teachers' needs then targeting funds appropriately. Idaho plans to use Race to the Top funds to support the Idaho Building Capacity Project to provide customized professional development to LEAs. The plan calls for LEAs to hire "a highly respected retired educator as a capacity building coach, both at the school and district levels." The plan does not appear to require these coaches to be "effective" or to have had coaching training. The proposed expansion of the Teacher Mentoring System holds promise in supporting new teachers through on-going, job embedded supports during their first two years of teaching. The State's proposed LMS (see Section C) should move the State forward in giving teachers access to the information they need to make data-driven decisions about their professional development needs. Teachers should be able to see where their students are having difficulties in real time which will help them identify areas to where they need to improve their instructional practices. The applicant provided little discussion on what supports would be made available to administrators, which is reflected in the point deduction. Points were awarded based on the State's plan to intall the LMS statewide and to provide training on data-driven instruction and for the development of the mentoring program.

Total	138	66
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Although the application indicates that the SDE has withheld federal funds from LEAs, it did not provide evidence that it has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to directly intervene in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	0
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	0
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	0
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The State did not articulate a process or calculation method for identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools. The State indicated that there will be approximately 17 schools identified each year, but does not provide information on how it arrived at these projections. When asked to provide historical evidence on school turnaround the State provided information on a range of professional development and instructional improvement reforms; these models did not contain the critical elements of any of the four school intervention models. For example, it appears that none required the removal of a principal. The plan in moving forward focuses only on capacity building and does not include the use of turnaround, restart, school closure, or transformation models as required in the Race to the Top guidance. The State will using more of a capacity building model though they are calling it a transformation model; it does not require changes in school leadership. The State made an argument that the models prescribed by Race to the Top will not work in rural communities where replacing staff would be difficult given the shortages inherent to rural schools. While there is no doubt that rural communities face unique challenges in staffing, keeping ineffective staff in a failing school will further the injustices to rural children. The State should first conduct an analysis of where these schools are located; they may or may not be concentrated in rural communities. Because these are the most persistently lowest-achieving schools, it is likely that the number will be relatively low (the State is estimating 17 per year statewide); turning around—and even replacing at least the principal—should be a manageable goal even in rural communities.		
Total	50	0

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percentage of total revenues allocated to Idaho's public education system increased from 62.7% in FY08 to 63.8% in FY09. The application indicates that the State's system is "fully equitable regardless of high-need LEA status." The application further states that "[u]nder this formula, two districts of identical size, staff composition and student grade composition will receive identical sums of money, regardless of variations in each district's wealth or demographic composition." This suggests that the State's formula does not equalize funding between high poverty and other districts or high poverty and other school schools.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	21
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The State limits the number of new charter schools to no more than six per year. At this rate of growth, 5% of the State's schools are charters. The application states that schools can be closed if they fail to meet the standards established by Sections 33-5209, but does not specify what these standards are. The State did not discuss whether there is a renewal process for charters or if they can be closed for poor student performance. The State has a high degree of application approval and a low rate of school closure (2 since 2005-06). These factors suggest that the State does not have high accountability standards in place to identify and close poor performing charter schools. The average charter school receives 92% of the per-pupil funding of the average school district which puts the State in the "high" points category for this indicator. The State does not have a separate funding initiative for charter school facilities. These additional funds assist charters in building and leasing facilities. Idaho offers additional school choice programs such as interdistrict open enrollment and magnet schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The State reiterated several of the reforms discussed throughout its application and how they would be coordinated with the Race to the Top efforts. In addition, several new positions have been created within the SDE to support the needs of traditionally underserved populations including Indian Education, Limited English Proficient, Response-to-Intervention, and Parent Involvement coordinators. Establishing these positions makes clear that the SDE is reinforcing its commitment to improving the educational conditions and achievement of underserved populations.</p>		
Total	55	31

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho addressed its commitment to STEM throughout its application. It demonstrated the need for improving student achievement in math and graduating more students in STEM-related subjects. The Math Initiative requires every teacher to take a three-credit Mathematical Thinking Instruction course. It has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen STEM curriculum to ensure high school graduates have the skills they need to succeed in college. The eGirls program specifically addresses the need to</p>		

enroll and graduate more girls in STEM subjects. Working in partnership with BSU, the State has implemented a program designed to attract effective math and science teachers into the profession.

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Idaho's application demonstrates its willingness to implement most of the Race to the Top reforms. It has strong cabinet level support within the SEA and broad stakeholder support from teachers, administrators, and community members. The State has secured the participation of 79 LEAs that are eager and willing to implement Race to the Top. The State has articulated its commitment to improving the achievement of all students including those who live in poverty. The State is especially committed to educating students in the many rural communities throughout Idaho who face special challenges related to remoteness and isolation. While the State is lagging behind on building the IT infrastructure it needs to carry out many of the Race to the Top provisions, it is intent on securing the funds and making the needed investments in overhauling its technology capabilities. However, there is concern that the State is not committed to supporting the reforms related to turning around the lowest-achieving schools in accordance with the Race to the Top guidelines. The Race to the Top application clearly states that the purpose of the initiative is to advance reforms in each of the four areas. Furthermore, the application provided States with specific guidance on the four intervention models to be used in turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools. None of the interventions listed in Idaho's application appear to fully meet the requirements of the guidance.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	266
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Idaho Application #2400ID-2



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	55
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho's application sets forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda with explicit goals addressing the four key reform areas. Idaho determined that the unit of participation would be school district rather than school, and required three signatures including the Superintendent, Board of Education President, and representative of the local teachers' union. These participation elements of the MOU were put in place consistent with Idaho's beliefs regarding systemic reform and the need to secure commitments to work at the district level with all players. Idaho's MOU requires district commitment to participate in all application plan elements as applicable. Idaho provided letters of support for its application from a broad spectrum of governmental entities and other stakeholders. Idaho reported securing LEA participation of 79 school districts (56% of total) which they report to be broadly representative of the state and serving 39% of the student population. While this is a substantial level of participation, even higher levels are certainly possible which is the reason for withholding five points in (ii). Critical stakeholders including teachers unions in the participating districts are onboard with the efforts which should lead to deeper impact in the districts which do participate.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	20
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	10
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: Based on information provided in the narrative, Idaho has a track record of success implementing its Idaho Reading Initiative and Idaho Math Initiative with the very positive impacts on state assessment and NEAP data. This success shows considerable state capacity. Idaho plans for networking with universities to create regional support centers. Idaho did not, however, provide a high-quality state plan, which by definition includes activities to be undertaken, a timeline for implementing the activities, parties responsible, and performance measures when requested. The budget descriptions are thin and the narrative does not coherently tie the funding projects to the four key reform areas. On the positive side, Idaho described strategic planning processes in its application which included a broad array of stakeholders which was buttressed by a wide-ranging set of support letters.</p>		
(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
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: Over the past several years, Idaho has made substantial progress in each of the four reform areas the most recent of which is the creation of a statewide data system to support instruction. The data included in the application shows Idaho has made substantial progress in student performance on state assessments over the past several years in all areas and generally with all subgroups. It is also apparent that Idaho has made substantial progress on NAEP performance and has had growth rates exceeding the national averages. It's easy, however, to envision even greater gains being made however which is why five points were withheld for section A3(ii).</p>		
Total	125	100

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	35
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho joined the Common Core State Standards Initiative jointly led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers which includes 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories. Common Core Standards will be adopted by Idaho prior to August 2, 2010, but will become effective for implementation in school year 2012-2013 in order "to permit the necessary time for professional development, curricular materials adoption and the development of ESEA assessments." Details on implementing the standards in a well-planned way were found in Idaho's narrative for section B(3). That information would have been more coherent if summarized in a table format showing key activities, timeline, and parties responsible. These high quality plan elements were missing.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	8
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho provided evidence that it has joined two consortia for common core assessment development including SMARTER (23 states) and MOSAIC(27 states). Two points were withheld in this area because Idaho could have been a player in the creation of an even larger consortium.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	15
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho's narrative for B(3) provided an overview of a comprehensive plan for transitioning to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. The information provided did not consistently include all of the required elements for a high-quality plan (goals, activities, timeline, responsible parties).</p>		
Total	70	58

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho currently has three of the twelve required longitudinal data elements in place. These include a unique statewide student identifier, yearly student test records, and records of students not tested.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	4
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho provided a comprehensive plan for accessing and using state data which included high-quality plan elements built around a set of seven goals, a description of related key activities and a date for accomplishment of each goal. The plan is a bit thin but is comprehensive, addresses the key issues, and appropriately engages the major stakeholders in the system design. The responsible parties element was not directly spoken to but can generally be assumed to be the State Department of Education. One point was deducted for the failure to systematically address responsible parties in planning.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	16
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho provided a comprehensive plan for using data to improve instruction which included high-quality plan elements such as goals, activities, and a timeline. The responsible parties element was not directly spoken to but can generally be assumed to be the State Department of Education. Two points were deducted for the failure to systematically address responsible parties in planning. Idaho described the processes by which it will adopt a single instructional improvement system for statewide use, how it will provide professional development related to the use of the system, and how access to the system's data warehouse will be made available to researchers.		
Total	47	26

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	12
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho provided information that it does have alternate pathways to certification for teachers but did not systematically address the set of five characteristics for alternative routes for each of its approaches. Of its several options, the Computer-Based Alternative Route to Teacher Certification is the only one that has all five required characteristics and the provided data shows that it is the most fully used. Idaho was able to supply extensive information regarding the number of teachers certified under the various alternative options which it uses in monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of principal and teacher shortage. Relatively few teachers have been certified with the alternative route. Alternate pathways to certification for principals is in the planning stage.		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	43
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	9
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	20
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho provided information on the use of a yet to be acquired learning management system for tracking and reporting student growth as well as how the calculations will be made. One of the		

allowable local growth measures is making AYP. Since AYP is determined primarily by performance on state assessments, it would appear that the use of AYP as a local measure is redundant and does not really add a unique second measure. Idaho described the processes and required general elements for participating LEAs to develop and submit for approval local teacher and principal evaluation plans. The work of the teacher evaluation task force is complete while the principal evaluation task force is in process. Idaho code requires annual evaluations for both teachers and principals. It is not clear from the application if these evaluation systems will include student growth as a significant factor. Rather than speaking to the review criteria concerning tenure and removal of ineffective teachers in a straightforward manner, the application narrative included vague legalistic statements directing reviewers to copies of the actual Idaho statutes.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	14
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho has an excellent system for tracking teacher shortages as exemplified in the Educator Supply and Demand in Idaho Report. The information provided in section D(3) was quite general and fell short of including the elements for a high quality plan which include goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible. In the performance measures for section D(3) Idaho set target levels of 100% for 2013-2014 which does not seem realistic. Targets of 90 to 95% would be more credible.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	8
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: The information provided in section D(4) was quite general and fell short of including the elements for a high quality plan which include goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible. It is apparent from other sections of the application that Idaho does intend to link student achievement and student growth to students, teachers, principals, as well as teacher and principal credentialing programs. In the performance measures for section D(4) Idaho set target levels of 100% for 2013-2014 which does not seem realistic. Targets of 90 to 95% would be more credible.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	15
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: The Idaho application narrative described a comprehensive plan for addressing the support of teachers and principals but did not include the elements for a high quality plan which include goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible.</p>		
Total	138	92

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Idaho did not provide evidence that it has statutory authority to intervene with either districts or schools. The application narrative suggests that there may be issues regarding Idaho's will to intervene.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	2
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	2

(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: While Idaho referenced identifying the bottom 5%, it is not clear how Idaho defines persistently low achieving schools. The Idaho application narrative described a comprehensive plan for supporting general school improvement efforts but did not include the elements for a high quality plan which include goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible. The various support systems don't seem to specifically target persistently low-achieving schools but are offered generally to all schools, though some schools may be required to participate. It is not clear that Idaho intends to implement one of the four school intervention models described in Race to the Top for use with persistently low-achieving schools. In fact Idaho did not include a section E(2)(ii) in the narrative. It appears that Idaho plans to use general capacity-building or school improvement strategies with its low performing schools rather than the more reform-oriented school turnaround models.</p>		
Total	50	2

F. General

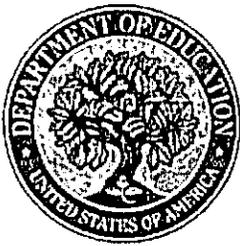
	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: From fiscal 08 to fiscal 09, Idaho slightly increased the percentage of state funds allocated to education. Idaho has laws to ensure equity of funding across all LEAs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	25
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: According to the Idaho application, the state does have a charter law which does not place any troublesome restrictions on the number or percentage of charter schools in the state. The Idaho application did not directly address whether or not student achievement is a significant factor in authorization for renewal of charter schools. Idaho does not provide charter schools with funds for facilities and the application did not provide any information regarding Idaho provisions for autonomous public schools other than charter schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho's application described wide ranging school improvement efforts which appear to have had a positive impact on student achievement.</p>		
Total	55	40

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho's application included significant attention to STEM including the creation of regional STEM centers and the hiring of STEM staff to provide support in each of those regions.</p>		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Idaho's application presented a comprehensive and coherent approach to supporting the four key education reform areas of ARRA/RTTT. Idaho has secured participation from over half of the state's LEAs and strategically determined that the unit of participation would be LEA rather than the school. Idaho will build upon successful experiences with reform efforts and improving achievement gained through the Idaho Reading and Math Initiatives and will engage in substantial partnerships with institutions of higher education to provide support to LEAs on a regional basis. Idaho included a broad array of stakeholders in strategic planning processes used to develop their RTTT plans.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	333



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Idaho Application #2400ID-4



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	57
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	37
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A.1.i Idaho has done a fairly good job of articulating goals for implementing reforms in the four ARRA areas and in showing some progress in regard to them, but its reform agenda for improving student outcomes statewide seems a little uneven and suffers from the lack of data collection and the history of resistance to collecting it and to centralized reforms. What has recently been accomplished is commendable and the State's use of technology to give on-line assessments and offer rigorous coursework statewide, particularly so. Also, the State allows professors to teach all grades. What is especially lacking though is any attention to value-added assessments and data-driven instruction, especially tying student achievement to teacher evaluations, undoubtedly because the State has no statewide longitudinal data system. The State began its current efforts by wisely pulling together representatives from the Idaho State Board of Education and the State Department, the Idaho Education Association, School Boards Association, Parent-Teacher Association, the School Administrators, the Business Coalition for Educational Excellence and the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation to reach agreement on a vision and mission and goals for the public education system. These stakeholders worked together for two years to decide how Idaho could create an educational system that would allow it to become a global leader, provide high-quality, cost-effective education to its citizens and be accountable for the necessary leadership, resources, capacity and instruction to guarantee strong achievement for all students. They established four goals that fit nicely with the RTT goals: Transparent Accountability, High Standards, Postsecondary Credit in High School and Postsecondary Preparation, Participation and Completion. The Education Alliance of Idaho was established to promote and sustain a collaborative approach to increasing college and career readiness. It removed unnecessary barriers that previously barred out-of-state teachers from teaching in Idaho and is one of only four states to implement statewide teacher evaluation standards to create fair, consistent performance evaluations using the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching model. Through RTT funds, it would develop such standards for principals. It has developed alternative routes to teacher certification and would through RTT funds research alternative routes to administrator certification. Also, Idaho allows college professors to teach grades K-12. For principals, Idaho developed the Principal Academy of Leadership in 2005 to offer targeted professional development for building administrators to increase their leadership capacity and raise student achievement. The State created a professional learning community for superintendents wherein 30 self-selected superintendents meet four times a year to discuss improving student achievement and share challenges and successes. Through RTT, Idaho would create a similar situation for school board trustees. To eliminate the digital divide between rural and urban schools, the State created the Idaho Education Network that ensures all students, no matter where they live, have access to highly effective teachers and rigorous coursework through a secure broadband intranet connecting every public

school, library and institution of higher education. A.1.ii To foster strong commitment to RTT, Idaho used a collaborative approach. The State Superintendent called together representatives of the Idaho Education Association, the School Boards Association, the School Administrators, the Governor's Office, the State Board and State Department and they met at least once a week to discuss ideas for the Grant, particularly for incentive pay. This group wrote a draft proposal and then hosted 6 regional community meetings and a webinar presentation to educate the public on the undertaking and gather feedback. It also developed an RTT website so that citizens could submit comments and questions electronically. LEA's were encouraged to work closely with local stakeholders. 100% of the participating districts obtained the signatures of all three (superintendent, school board chair and teacher association representative). The Memorandum of Understanding required every participating LEA to participate in every portion of Idaho's RTT application except Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools. Participating LEA's who were identified as lowest-achieving agreed to participate in that portion, but the MOA required every participating LEA to do so. A.1.iii Idaho decided to allow only those districts that obtained all three signatures (superintendent, school board chair and teacher association representative) to participate in the RTT proposal as it felt that the strong commitment needed to implement the grant would not be there without all three. Yet, seventy-nine of 115 districts and 25 charters or 56% of LEA's agreed to participate in RTT, that is 285 out of 659 schools or 44% of schools, 39% of K-12 students and 43% of students in poverty. Also many of the other LEA's obtained two of the three signatures and with the homogeneity of Idaho's school districts, the commitment that they have should easily translate into statewide impact. They have set achievable goals overall and by subgroup by reviewing the previous three years of ESEA data to determine the percentage achievement increases needed annually to meet the current 2014 deadline for all students to reach proficient status.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	15
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	5
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A.2.i Idaho has demonstrated that it can provide the leadership to successfully implement federal reform programs in that it did so with the Reading First program through its Idaho Reading Initiative which has focused on students reading at grade level before they leave third grade. The Reading First program served the lowest 25% of readers. In 2003 only 56% of 3rd graders in Reading First schools read at grade level and now 75% of them do. Similarly, Idaho successfully implemented a statewide Math Initiative created with a legislative appropriation of \$350,000. The State Department collaborated with educational stakeholders and industry experts to evaluate achievement data and determine need before developing a plan. The State Department then secured an appropriation from the Legislature for \$3.8 million for a multi-year initiative to train teachers, provide remediation as well as advanced opportunities for students and to create quality assessments across all grades. After two years, 4,500 teachers will have completed a 3-credit professional development course and more than 26,000 students have received additional assistance in mathematics. Idaho was one of few states to show significant improvement in math on NAEP in 2009. Through these initiatives, Idaho has created a successful model for building capacity and implementing reforms statewide. And, even before RTT, stakeholders from every sector agreed to a vision, mission, goals and performance indicators for implementing real reform focused on raising student achievement across the state. The State Department plans to use existing management to build a RTT team to manage and implement the Grant. The Department will hire a financial coordinator to track grant funds and assist in compliance. Idaho will create four coordinator level positions to manage each of the priorities and provide governance guidance. These coordinators will act as experts in each area and will report to the Deputy State Superintendents who wrote each grant section and who currently manage each reform area, insuring coordination of current state efforts and those driven by RTT. These four coordinators will travel to participating LEAs as needed as will Regional Specialists who will be hired to work directly with LEAs on the STEM and data efforts. Given the size of the state, it would seem that much of time

of this additional staff would be spent traveling rather than on actual support time. While Idaho was able to successfully implement previous smaller initiatives, implementing RTT will be far more complex. The plan seems weak on providing technical assistance for the several elements. Everything cannot be managed online. And given the state's strong history of local control, it's questionable that LEA's would ask for support whereas more on sight monitoring would note and correct for that. While Idaho is quite clear that it needs and would welcome the RTT funds, the effective use of them to carry out the goals needs more explication. Since Idaho is large state and the participating LEAs are clustered rather neatly into regions, it would seem that it might be more helpful to the districts and perhaps more cost effective to establish Regional Educational Service Centers to house the RTT personnel, build capacity, implement the grant and sustain the gains after the period of funding has ended.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	24
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A.3.i In regard to progress on ARRA goals:

- Standards and Assessments - Idaho has worked on Common Core Standards since 2007 with Achieve, Inc. to raise state standards and ensure that rigorous standards are in place. It was one of 48 states and 3 territories to join the Common Core Standards Initiative and has actively participated in this effort, collaborating with all its stakeholders along the way. Idaho adopted new high-school graduation requirements to take effect with the class of 2013. Math and science requirements are being raised. Students now must take 3 years of math including algebra and geometry, at least one math course during the senior year, and 3 years of science including two lab courses. Students must take a college entrance exam by the end of their junior year. Districts are now required to offer advanced learning opportunities such as dual credit, International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses. The State is in the process of developing a Primary Math Assessment to measure math skills and guide instruction for students in grades K-2. Idaho was one of the first states to implement standards-referenced testing via computer and it has been evaluating its assessments to move forward.
- Data Systems to Support Instruction – Idaho is one of only two states without a statewide longitudinal data system and while the State Superintendent has secured a federal grant to develop and implement one that will house data for research, federal reporting requirements and teacher and parent use, the state cannot show progress since 2003, the time period required, only for the last 3 years.
- Great Teachers and Leaders The State now requires that the professional development courses teachers take be directly related to their subject area and that every teacher take a three-credit Mathematical Thinking for Instruction course to learn the content and strategies necessary to meet the mathematical needs of all students. In addition to the progress on RTT's four educational reform areas, and possibly because of the awareness of them, the state of Idaho invested \$2.5 million to join the rest of the states and create a statewide longitudinal data system last year. It was then awarded a \$6 million dollar grant to continue development and implementation of it. Recently, the State Department and institutions of higher education joined forces to seek a federal grant that would extend the K-12 data system to higher education and the workforce. Through a reallocation of State Department funds combined with Title II dollars and teacher licensure fees, the State Department leveraged dollars to roll out a Statewide Framework for Teacher Performance Evaluation. Title II dollars were also used to create their Principal of Leadership Program. Federal funds were used to perform curriculum audits and on-site visits to improve student achievement in the lowest-performing schools.
- Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools Idaho piloted a Building Capacity Project in 2008 and after seeing significant growth in student achievement, launched it statewide in 2009. It would like to expand the program to assist all high-need schools. Regarding Limited English Proficient students, the Legislature appropriated \$700,000 annually to close achievement gaps by funding after-school programs, professional development and other supports. These efforts contributed to making a real difference for Idaho students. Idaho now leads the nation in the rate of schools making AYP, increasing the number from 26% in 2007 to 66% in

2009. - an even more notable accomplishment given that the State has one accountability plan in which all schools participate in AYP calculations, not just Title I schools. Further, ARRA funding allowed the State to continue its most effective programs and funding for remediation, text books and classroom supplies. A.3.ii Idaho began using standards-based testing in 2002 and does not have a wealth of data on student performance. What they do have shows that the percentage of students proficient in Grade 4 reading increased from 75% in 2004 to 83% in 2009 and for math, 53% were proficient in grade 8 and in 2009, 78% were on grade level. Except for one year and Grade 6, the scores for Language Use for students in grades 4-9 have remained fairly steady. This is true for both White and Hispanic, their minority, but the gap between the two seems not to have improved. Of interest is that Idaho reports scores for Language Use, not Language Arts. The improvement in reading is far greater with scores jumping from 9 to 38 points for grades 4-9 in the span of 6 years. For the most part, the scores have consistently improved, especially for Hispanics, considerably closing the gap. With the exception of Grade 5, Math scores showed improvement over 5 years for both races but not much progress in closing the gap. Idaho leads the nation in the increase in the number of schools making AYP - from 26% two years ago to 66% this year. Idaho is the only state to incorporate NAEP into the state testing program. Also, Idaho has a very low exception rate, e.g., it excluded 10% of grade 4 students with disabilities compared to the nation's 15.4% and it excluded 11% of grade 8 students with disabilities whereas the nation's percentage was 23% - more than double. In the NAEP 2009 mathematics assessment, Idaho excluded no English language learners in grade 4 compared to the nation excluding 10%. In addition, Idaho reports the percentage of students who test Proficient and Advance rather than Basic or Above. Idaho presents no evidence of increased graduation rates, no doubt because of its inability to calculate its 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate until last year. That and the lack of data hampers Idaho's ability to include some of the required information and along with the lack of progress in closing the minority gap in some instances keeps Idaho from fully meeting this criterion.

Total	125	96
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	20
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	0
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: B.1 i. Idaho is one of the 48 states and 3 territories that have joined the Common Core State Standards Initiative. Idaho has begun to revise its standards to provide ones that are internationally benchmarked. In 2008, it underwent a Quality Review by Achieve to ensure that it would have high quality college and career-ready standards in place. B 1 ii Idaho provided a complete Timeline for the adoption of its Content Standards into Idaho's Administrative Code by 2011 after a thorough review by the State Board, the Governor and the Legislature, but the deadline is 2010 and no documentation of standards requirements was included.		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: B.2 Idaho has joined several consortia to develop high-quality assessments aligned with a common set of standards partnering with two: SMARTER - with 23 states and MOSAIC - with 27. It has signed a memorandum of agreement to act as lead state in the Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) consortium with Utah and Florida that will extend the Principled Assessment Design for Inquiry and is partnering with a five-state EAG consortium to develop English Language Proficiency assessments. Both SMARTER and MOSAIC will be developing assessments that will be delivered online. They will		

develop adaptive tests and performance items for the full-range of cognitive demand described in the Common Core as well as a shared item bank, formative, interim and summative assessments along with professional development to provide educators and parents with understandable information about student progress.

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

B.3 Idaho's plan for supporting statewide transition is multi-faceted. 1. One focus will be on addressing its service delivery/geographical needs as Idaho is the 13th largest state but 44th in population density. To compensate for not having Regional Educational Service Centers, it is partnering with regional public universities to create regional support centers to gradually scale up to meet LEA needs as districts implement RTT. A Formative Assessment System Coordinator will serve as a state liaison to the MOSAIC Consortium and lead projects related to the design, implementation and data analysis interpretation of formative and interim assessments. 2. Another focus is on adopting new standards and assessments which they plan to combine with building support for them through outreach to LEA's, institutes of higher education and leaders of business and industry. For example, the Idaho State Department will convene a state review committee in July 2010 to initiate public comment on the content standards and use comments to inform professional development. A local Instructional Improvement System will be adopted by participating LEA's. This system will contain the MOSAIC item bank, have the capability to administer computer-based formative and interim assessments and provide timely feedback using performance-level reports across MOSAIC states. It will be tied into Idaho's longitudinal data system which will allow for comparative data analysis and program evaluation. 3. A third focus will be on working at all levels simultaneously – the state school board and department, the district office, the school and the classroom. 4. Their fourth focus will be on adhering to their timeline. 5. The fifth focus is on building capacity – the area the state has the most definitive steps to address to support transition. The steps: - Their three regional School Improvement and Support Centers will collaborate with the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Center and Education Northwest to provide initial training for educators. - The state will also collaborate with a regional consortium including Oregon, Washington, Montana, Wyoming and Alaska to create a professional development protocol. Math and ELA educators will meet in 2010 to establish this protocol. - Education Northwest will provide one-day professional development training on the common-core standards for all educators. -The MOSAIC Consortium's work will include defined learning progressions within each core content area, materials on instructional strategies and suggested interventions which in turn will serve as study guides for students, teachers and parents. All materials will be disseminated across all states involved and made available in a web-banked system. As a part of this process Idaho will incorporate STEM concepts throughout the entire curricula. - During the 2011-2012 school year, the state will conduct regional technical assistance including extensive webinars for LEA's and in collaboration with the Idaho Digital Learning academy and the Idaho Education Network, live and interactive satellite trainings will be made available to all LEA's, even the most remote. 6. Another focus is an emphasis on combining Idaho's wide use of technology in the schools with improving the techniques for reaching it highest needs students. The Idaho Assistive Technology Project at the University of Idaho will deliver assistive technology through direct services and create video training and train-the-teacher models for these students. It will: - Create 3 Assistive Technology Coordinator positions to be housed in the School Improvement and Support Centers; - Purchase an online video tutorial library for assistive technology and make it available to all special education teachers; and - Conduct workshops statewide to increase the capacity at the state, LEA and school levels to utilize AT devices and provide on-site training at each school that will include giving teachers the opportunity to use equipment before purchasing it for their students. These opportunities will help teachers better identify, understand and serve the high-need students with the most severe physical and cognitive disabilities, matching devices to unique student needs. 7. There will also be attention given to high-school courses and graduation requirements. - In August 2010, the State Department will begin with a review of the current exit criteria and make recommendations to the State Board for changes. - During the 2010-2011 school year, Idaho will build scope and sequence to fully align each required course

with the new standards. - During 2010-2011, the State Department will convene planning sessions with representatives from higher education's Pre- service Teacher education programs to coordinate expectations within the Common Core Standards with pre-service coursework requirements. - The State Department will emphasize the STEM areas by: a) promoting and endorsing private sector standard-setting projects; b) fostering ongoing dialogue between the private sector and educators to ensure that students are receiving the education they should to become proficient in technical areas; c) continuing to partner with local with STEM business leaders such as The Micron Foundation, The Idaho Business Coalition for Educational Excellence The Idaho National Laboratory (a science-based, applied engineering national laboratory supporting the U.S. Department of Energy's mission in nuclear and energy research, science and national defense) and to ensure that school expectations and post-secondary field outcomes are aligned; d)having professionals in STEM fields participate in Adopt-a-School programs; e) hiring 6 new support specialists who are experts in STEM education – two for each School Improvement and Support Center to: - improve STEM in-service professional development - institute mentoring programs for STEM school personnel - aid pre-service programs in how students learn - for participating LEA's, provide on-site coaching, modeling and other assistance as well as distance learning opportunities to assist STEM teachers by keeping them current with research and evidence-based instructional practices; and f) partnering with state universities to promote STEM careers as options for underrepresented populations who might not otherwise consider them and allowing teachers to apply for no- cost participation in research projects to earn graduate credits. The University of Idaho operates institutes in which STEM teachers collaborate with researchers who are working on actual U.S.Department of Agriculture research grants in areas such as Microbial Ecology, applied Nanotechnology and Biosensor Development and Water Quality Monitoring. 8. The State will focus on adopting more rigorous assessments to encourage increased post-secondary enrollments and completions. It will enable schools to measure students against international benchmarks by beginning to administer PISA in the fall of 2012. It will also require all high school students to take a college exam by the end of their junior year, effective 2012. In addition, Idaho will support a program offering dual credit courses that can result in students earning 12 college credits before entering. It will also begin collecting data to study the relationship between success in high-school and college transition, the effectiveness of LEA's in preparing students for college and the correlation between state and national performance at the high-school level. Idaho has thus thoughtfully and fully addressed how it will support a transition to better standards and assessments and therefore meets this criterion.

Total	70	50
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	6
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: C 1 While Idaho has had to combat strong resistance from local control advocates who do not support the gathering of data statewide for improvement and accountability purposes and is now addressing all of the America COMPETE's elements, the fact remains that is has implemented only three of them: the student identifier, yearly test records of individual students and information on students not tested by grade or subject. Other states have also faced resistance from the factions that fear "big brother" and while this resistance may have delayed opportunities for improved accountability, the states managed to overcome the resistance and put statewide systems in place. The state also offers geographical distances as a reason for non-implementation, but given its extensive and effective use of technology, that barrier could have been overcome. Indeed, it points out in the next section that with the technology available today, states should be able to access statewide longitudinal data.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

C 2 Idaho has developed a high quality plan with timelines to make a longitudinal data system accessible to and used by key stakeholders. It includes: • Forming an advisory group and making it responsible for developing and recommending reporting rules, operational policies and the creation of a statewide data dictionary. • The State Department developing structures and processes to inform all key stakeholders. • Developing a data warehouse for PK-Workforce data that will include connection to the Idaho Department of Labor. • Deploying web services that facilitate exchanges across agencies and states. • Creating web widgets and tools that will provide target, appropriate and customizable information to all stakeholders.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction

18

18

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:

C 3 The State has a high-quality plan to work with LEA's to fully use data for all the purposes it is intended and believes that by being a Johnny-come-lately to the process, it has learned and benefitted from other states' trials and errors. Its plan includes a roll out of the Idaho Education Network (IEN) which will lay the wired groundwork necessary for ensuring high-speed broadband access for all Idaho students and connecting this network to the local instructional improvement system (LIIS) using a specific learning management system (LMS), to the School Improvement and Support Centers and the existing Idaho Building Capacity Project (IBC), thereby creating an infrastructure to permit teachers, administrators and researchers to access, study and use the data collected. By using a common platform of the LMS, the State will be better able to support both the technological implementation and all the aspects of data collection to more effectively expand the system and use it to drive school improvement and academic achievement. By 2012, the State will have a statewide longitudinal data system warehouse that will house all the assessments used in the state and the results for all stakeholders to access. The LMS will serve as a repository for easily accessible state content standards and curricular materials, making possible instructional and necessary intervention resources and a great deal else: a digital library where lesson plans can be stored and accessed by multiple users across the state, all sorts of assessments and item banks, test printing, online administrative capability, electronic grading and analysis and of course, the academic data for instructional decisions. It will also enable schools, LEA's and local school boards to better evaluate all facets of their systems. The State Department has been evaluating other systems on ease and comprehensiveness of use for teachers, the types and usefulness of data that could be integrated into the platform, the degree to which data can be rapidly reported, especially qualitative data aligned with the risk of academic failure and has benefitted from this knowledge, demonstrated in the approaches taken in its plan. Also, the state will be greatly aided in these efforts by being part of MOSAIC. C 3 ii Idaho will build on its history of supporting LEAs through Reading First, IBC and the Idaho Math Initiative and roll out training that coordinates with the adoption of the LMS, create a statewide regional support system and improve stakeholder ability to interpret and utilize data to improve achievement of all learners. Idaho will further support the LEA's by creating a project director level position in the State Department to oversee and direct all activities as well as 6 Data Utilization Specialist positions located in the regional Centers to provide technical assistance directly to LEA's. This team will create a data-use certification program for local data coaches and a well-designed, comprehensive professional development system centered on the LMS with the training delivered both live and online to reach everyone. It will gather robust feedback to evaluate the state's professional development efforts. The regional specialists will also facilitate sharing of best practices with neighboring states. The State Department will contract with an educational consulting organization to make sure that their professional development system focuses on leveraging data for school improvement efforts, understanding that the key element of its success will be the ability of participants to interpret available data to make decisions. To that end, the selected consultant will aid in connecting the data system with end-users to meet the needs of state, regional district and school personnel by identifying specific student data sets, developing strategies to ensure that data can be connected to practice, developing understandable metrics and analytical reports at all levels and providing assistance in creating early warning systems to identify at-risk students. A process of professional development will also be developed aimed specifically at using the data to improve student outcomes which will include both local and technological delivery systems and use of

a mentor/training system on multi levels to connect to regional Centers and bring uniformity to the aspects involved, e.g., building teachers' capacities to use data and decision-making rules to inform practice. C.3.iii Information from pre-K through higher education and the workforce will be available to researchers. An advisory panel will not only guide policy but also initiate requests. Upon approval, researchers will be granted a web-based user sign-on that allows access to information on a requested research area. State Department staff members will collaborate with researchers from colleges of education to define research questions that will benefit the educational community at large. State Department coordinators will facilitate collaborative university partnerships to design studies that evaluate the effectiveness of school and district systems, specific school reform efforts, teacher effectiveness, instructional materials, methods and their implementation, school climate and culture – all in relation to meeting the needs of all children. Given all of the above, Idaho has demonstrated that it will effectively use data for the several purposes outlined and thus meets this criterion.

Total	47	29
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

D 1 i Idaho has described the legal requirements for some alternate routes to certification, but some of them are really providing for emergency certifications and cannot be renewed and while one of them is aligned with a non-traditional, non-university-based program, the certificate granted is a three-year interim one only; none of them allow for teachers to teach indefinitely or permanently without at some point being certified by a traditional higher education preparation program. D1 ii Idaho lists five alternative certification programs: • Teacher to New Certification for which districts agree to provide mentoring and supervision. 241 authorizations were issued in 2009-10 of which 213 were for teachers, 7, for superintendents and 5 for principals. • Content Specialist for which course work is significantly reduced. This certification has been in effect only since July 2009 and just five educators have taken advantage of it. No principal has. • Computer-based Alternative Route to Teacher Certification (ABCTE). 142 teachers statewide were certified under this plan in the 2008-2009 year. Since its inception in 2006, 272 teachers have been certified. No principal has been. • Para-Educator to Teacher is a new one to encourage special education aides to become certified. No legal documentation was included for it and no numbers of certifications granted were included. • Pupil Personal Services and Ohio Educator Credential were listed in the appendix but not mentioned in the narrative and no figures were given for them. So for all intents and purposes, Idaho really has only two programs that are being used D 1. iii. Idaho prepares an annual Educator Supply and Demand in Idaho report and that, along with yearly Alternative Authorizations Reports, monitors shortage areas and evaluates and develops applicable alternative routes. These reports, in addition to identifying shortage areas, will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of current alternative route programs to determine modifications needed in the programs.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	47
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	7
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

D 2.i Idaho has no restrictions on linking student achievement and growth directly to teachers and principals for the purpose of determining effectiveness and is pursuing a contract to develop a system

to do that. D.2,ii While Idaho monitors rather closely its evaluation system for teachers and principals and currently at a minimum must identify proficient or unsatisfactory practice, there doesn't seem to be any plan to differentiate beyond that. Although participating LEA's must agree to complete pre- and post-qualitative surveys on the conduct and usefulness of evaluations, the extent of teacher and principal involvement does not seem great and the new models the State is implementing seem to be more concerned with overall validity and reliability than with involving teachers and principals in their design. However, by fall of 2012, districts will, under the direction of a statewide task force of all vested stakeholders, implement a rigorous, transparent, objective and fair evaluation system for school administrators. D.2.iii Idaho does conduct annual evaluations, but participating LEA's will be required to exceed the minimum state requirements in place. Principals will receive vigorous training and ongoing support in the evaluative process so that they are able to provide constructive feedback and differentiated support to teachers. The extent to which the feedback will be timely is not clear nor is there any mention in the plan of the evaluations including data on student growth, individually or in classes or the whole school. D.2. iv Every district in Idaho has a provision for using data collected from evaluations to inform professional development. Idaho's educational stakeholders have developed an incentive pay pilot program to reward teachers, administrators and other building-level staff who improve student achievement, fill hard-to-fill positions and/or take on additional duties. Building certificated employees will receive bonuses by meeting state and locally established performance goals with the average employee receiving a \$1500 bonus. Incorporated into all participating LEA's ' teacher and principal performance evaluations will be when and how teachers are dismissed, what professional development they will receive and which teachers are eligible for hard-to-fill and teacher leadership positions.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	11
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	3
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	8

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

D 3.i While Idaho is involved in planning sessions to raise teacher pre-service standard, expectations and expected outcomes so that the chances of new teachers placed in high-poverty schools will be reduced, there is no mention of the extent to which their plan will ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals in such schools. There is a reference to rural, isolated schools having access to highly effective teachers through the Idaho Education Network, but being a rural isolated school doesn't necessarily equate with being a high-poverty school. D 3 ii The State knows that it will need 540 new or replacement math teachers and 430 science teachers in the next 5 years so it has developed a plan to substantially increase the quality, diversity and quantity of STEM middle/high school teachers using the UTEACH Institute STEM Teacher Training Program. This STEM model training program will actively recruit top science and math majors into the teaching profession, giving them early and intensive supervised field experiences (one wonders how plentiful qualified supervisors will be). Regional STEM Centers will provide additional coaching and professional development in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through the use of expert practitioners for experienced master teachers as well as new beginning teachers. The proposal is silent about any other hard-to-staff or specialty areas such as special education.

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

D 4 i To improve teacher and principal preparation programs, Idaho will create an index of program performance by collecting data on all programs preparing teachers and principals including: • Satisfaction ratings of school principals, superintendents and university supervisors of programs' interns, using a standardized form to permit comparison; • Satisfaction ratings by individual candidates of program preparation collected after the first full year of service; • Academic achievement gains of graduates' students averaged over the first three years of service; • Evaluation results from the first two years of service; and • Five-year retention rates of graduates in the profession. An outside

evaluator will assist the state in defining a minimum standard of performance for each of these categories. To its credit, the state will produce and distribute an annual report card demonstrating the effectiveness of each teacher preparation program. However, the proposal does not mention how it will link the preparation programs to student growth and student achievement data. D 4 ii While not explained in much detail, the State has plans to expand and improve current credentialing options.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	20
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: D 5 To provide effective professional development, Idaho will continue to rely on Professional Learning Communities. It has a long history with each one having at its core data-driven decision making at the classroom, building and district level, collaboration and strong instructional focus. Based on its success with Reading First, Math, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol and Response-to-Intervention coaches, Idaho believes that the best catalysts for change are instructional coaches. It will also offer opportunities through Idaho's Digital Learning Academy and the Idaho Educational Network for data analysis and interpretation, differentiating student instruction, instructional strategies for improving student learning and behavior and discipline classroom strategies for at-risk populations. Also, Idaho will offer to the lowest-performing districts, stipends up to \$1600 for time spent collaborating during the day (substitute pay) or outside the school day. Idaho will require of all elementary, secondary, math and special education teachers and administrators that they take one of three Mathematical Thinking for Instruction courses developed by their Math Initiative Task Force. Follow-up support is offered for these courses through webinars and by regional math specialists. In addition, The State Department and post-secondary institutions created a Mathematics Consulting Teacher endorsement to produce exemplar teachers who will serve as leaders in their districts and help build math knowledge of their colleagues. Funding will be provided to increase the number of these teachers and to foster partnerships between the state department and higher education institutions to prepare stronger STEM-focused pre-service and in-service teachers. The Idaho Building Capacity Project, a comprehensive school improvement technical assistance program developed by the State Department with the Center of Innovation and Improvement for Needs Improvement districts/schools, will be expanded to all participating LEA's, customized to their needs and supported by a highly respected retired teacher as a capacity-building coach. This program has an online planning tool that uses achievement data and perceptual survey data to identify highest priority needs and the most current research and improvement strategies. The Idaho Mentor Program that offers support to new teachers and veteran teachers implementing new strategies will assign a mentor teacher to participating LEA's for two years. These mentors will coach teachers in implementing standards created in collaboration with the New Teacher Center with the goal of expanding mentoring opportunities statewide to create and support STEM specialists, pre-service specialists, special education specialists and data coaches for participating LEA's. These teachers may receive incentive pay from the Local Incentive Fund. D 5 ii Idaho plans to adopt a Learning Management System capable of linking data on student achievement with teachers to provide them with help in exactly what should happen in their classrooms. It will also use information from the longitudinal data system being developed to inform professional development strategies. Idaho intends to put into place several programs that should provide strong support to its teachers and principals and meets this criterion.</p>		
Total	138	102

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: E 1 Idaho does not cite the legal, statutory or regulatory authority to intervene in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and it has been reluctant to do so because of the traditionally</p>		

strong resistance to such intervention. However, it is implicit in their plans that the State Department is not prohibited from doing so.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	39
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	4
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

E 2 i and ii Idaho had opted for a Mega System approach and to identify not lowest-achieving schools but districts and has identified 6 of them. Since 2004-2005, Idaho has intervened as follows: 1. Idaho Reading Initiative - in 484 schools that improved reading proficiency among third graders 26%. The lesson learned was the value of a more systemic approach (evidence-based curricular materials, comprehensive assessment plan, need for curriculum map/pacing calendar). 2. Idaho Reading First - in 30 schools that resulted in the students either meeting or exceeding the state average in reading in three years. Learned the value of both top down and bottom up focus. 3. Principal Academy of Leadership - in 25 schools. Learned that administrators and principals need more opportunities to collaborate on the role they play in improving student outcomes. 4. Lighthouse Project – in 8 LEA's. Learned the importance of providing professional development and coaching to local board members. 5. Strategic Planning Tool - in 254 schools. Learned that LEA's and schools benefit from an online strategic planning tool for schools in need of improvement and that educators also need professional development to implement the planning tool effectively. 6. Superintendent Network – in 30 LEA's. Learned that district leaders value opportunities devoted to enhancing their role in improving the quality of instruction and that the program needs to include other leaders such as special education directors and federal program coordinators. Idaho plans to initiate an intervention model in 17 of its lowest-performing schools next year and will apply "positive pressure" to all levels of stakeholders. It has found that prescriptive strategies work best in its state so the following strategies must be employed to participate in RTT funding. 1. Focus Visits - Prior to a visit a complete analysis of student achievement and perceptual data is conducted creating a gap analysis. Once on site observations of all classrooms, interviews with at least half the instructional staff and focus groups with students, teachers, parents and non-instructional staff in each school are conducted. Recommendations are then made on areas of strength and areas for improvement. The process is expensive and time consuming, but in their pilots, they have seen a marked difference in student achievement and strategic planning. This step will be the first one taken in transforming an LEA. 2. Idaho Building Capacity Project – Provides support by distinguished educators for three years to the schools and the superintendent: 30 visits averaging 8-10 hours a week in the first year; two times a month the second year and once a month the third year. Modeled after Washington State's school improvement model, it has 10 components such as establishing a relationship with an outside partner. One pilot district improved from having no school meet AYP to 6 out of 10 meeting it in the first year. Another district that was on the verge of restructuring met AYP for the first time in 5 years. 3. Lighthouse Project – School Board Member Training – Given the rural nature of the state and history of local control, local board members are critical to reform efforts and the average tenure is 17 years. This program has also had positive results. 4. Idaho Superintendents' Network – Due to the distance involved, collaboration on a regular basis is difficult so with counsel provided by the Center on Innovation and Improvement, the University of Washington, Boise State, and the Kentucky DOE, a superintendents' network was formed wherein these administrators meet consistently during the academic year. 30 superintendents have joined voluntarily, but only one in the 6 districts in need of transformation. 5. Central Office Network – An article sponsored by the Wallace Foundation discussing research on central office staff's role in supporting school improvement was so powerful that the authors were brought in and will partner with the State Department and Boise State to set up networks in the six highest-need districts similar to that of the superintendents' networks to focus on central office's role in improving instruction. 6. Principals Academy of Leadership – This program has been successful in bringing middle school principals struggling to meet the needs of all students together and Idaho wants to expand it to all building leaders in each of the six districts identified. Each principal's school agrees to onsite observations of instruction in each classroom with the goal of increasing the leadership capacity of

each principal. 7. Total Instructional Alignment – Teachers work together to establish the most effective ways to deliver content and assess students' mastery. 8. Incentive Funds for Recruitment and Retention of Leaders – Each participating district will receive funds for an instructional coach, tuition for teacher leaders to expand areas of endorsement, loan forgiveness if they agree to work in the district for five years or housing subsidies if they move into a high-need community. 9. Expanded opportunities for students to participate in college/career ready experiences – These would include one-week middle school camps for students and teachers at the nearest community college emphasizing STEM and dual credit opportunities in STEM subjects. 10. Research-based curricular materials and expansion of engineer/science labs – funds to provide these. 11. Expanding Early Childhood Services – Providing guidance to participating LEA's in creating a plan to expand pre-K programs and provide training to parents related to adult literacy and parenting. 12. Support for Rapid Process Improvement Schools and Schools in Continuous Improvement – The 27% of LEA's that are Rapid Improvement Districts – can elect to participate in 6 of the above programs and the 66% of Continuous Improvement LEA's can participate in all of them. Idaho has obviously given this criterion serious thought and developed a wide-range of credible programs that are aimed at successfully turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Total	50	39
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F. General

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

F 1 i Idaho reports that the percentage of total revenues for public education increased from 62.7% in 2008 to 63.8% in 2009. F 1 ii Idaho's funding system no longer depends on property values. The state repealed the operating levies in 2006 and replaced them with funds from a state General Fund appropriation. Now districts of identical size, staff composition and student grade composition receive identical sums of money regardless of a district's wealth or demographic composition. Local voters may still authorize a supplemental levy, but that is not limited or driven by the level of property values in the district.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	29
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F 2 i Idaho has had a law allowing charter schools since 1998. The number has grown to 36, representing 5% of the total public schools. There is no cap and no artificial cap on the percent or amount of funding charter schools can receive. Pursuant to Section 33-5208, Idaho Code, charter schools are funded by the same state formula as school districts with very few exceptions, receiving almost the exact same level of per-pupil funding as school districts. Also, charter schools do not have any geographic limitation on which students may attend. While Idaho does not determine that there can be only a certain number of charter schools in the state, region or district or limit any particular kind, it does allow only six new ones a year to be able to provide adequate technical assistance and whatever the reason, this limitation does constitute a cap. This restriction does not seem to present a hindrance as since 1998, only three schools have been delayed in opening and just by one year, but it could be that more schools have not been delayed because more schools did not apply as they are aware of the limited number allowed to start up each year and did not attempt to seek authorization. One could conjecture that if the demand would increase greatly, so could the capability to provide technical assistance, thus not preventing growth. Charter schools may be authorized by local school boards or by the Public Charter School Commission which consists of three individuals with a school district background, three with a charter school background and one outside education – all appointed by the Governor. In 2009-2010, 22 charter schools that are independent LEA's were authorized by the

Charter School Commission and 14 by the local school boards. Those wishing to start a new charter school may transfer their petition to the state Commission if the local school board has not agreed to accept it within 60 days of submittal. Virtual charter schools are under the Commission. The only type of charter school that the Commission can not authorize is a conversion of an existing public school into a charter school. Only the local district can do that. F 2 ii Under Idaho Code provisions, public charter schools can be created with any of these goals: 1. Improve student learning. 2. Increase learning opportunities for all students. 3. Include the use of different and innovative teaching methods. 4. Utilize virtual distance learning and online learning. 5. Create new professional opportunities for teachers. 6. Provide parents and students with expanded choices of learning opportunities. 7. Hold the schools established accountable for meeting measurable student educational standards. Also charter schools must meet the same AYP goals as all Idaho schools do. If a charter school is oversubscribed as often happens, students are selected by lottery. A charter school that fails to meet standards established in the Idaho Code will be issued a Notice of Defect by its authorizer and if it fails to correct the defect within the time prescribed in the notice, it will be closed. Since 1998, 4 schools have closed. Idaho provides funding for facilities' maintenance but not acquisition. However, since these schools spend less on administration and have larger class sizes, they are able to use the difference to pay for leases or mortgages. The State enables LEAs to operate autonomous public schools, e.g., magnet programs organized around a particular area of interest such as the Renaissance High School which has three tracks – law, medical and international studies - and alternative schools for students at-risk of dropping out.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: F 3 In 2007, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna secured \$20 million in ongoing annual funding specifically for textbooks, remediation and classroom supplies and materials and for each teacher to receive \$300 a year to spend on necessary classroom supplies. To better serve traditionally underserved populations he created with the State Department an Indian Education Coordinator, a Limited English Proficient Coordinator and coordinators for Response to Intervention and Parent Involvement. He also formed a Division of Innovation and School Choice to expand choices within public education in Idaho. In addition, he secured funding for a variety of task forces to collaborate and create significant reforms.		
Total	55	44

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho has strongly addressed all three aspects of the STEM Priority.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Idaho has met this priority.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	375
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Idaho Application #2400ID-5



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	57
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	45
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state sets forth a series of goals that reflect the ARRA reform areas and provides a list of projects/programs to support the goals. The pathway to implementing the list of projects/programs is not clearly stated in this section but is spelled out in a little more detail in the state's planned budget and under Criterion B3. How the projects are coordinated to produce the desired results for these goals (reform coherency) would benefit from further explanation. ii. The state has 79 LEA's signed up to participate. Participating LEA's constitute 40% of the student population. All participants have provided signatures from the Board, Superintendent, and local teachers' union (where applicable). In addition, there is strong evidence of commitment as all participating LEA's have signed on for all parts of the RTTT plan. iii. The state's goals for improving achievement and reducing achievement gaps on the ESEA state assessment program is delineated and appears fairly ambitious. The state reports its goal for NAEP is to maintain a cumulative effective size larger than its "national public education peers" in mathematics and reading in grades 4 and 8. However, there is little discussion of how the state's NAEP results compare to the state assessment results to identify the size of gap between the two assessments. A strong response to this criterion would address whether there is a gap between NAEP and ESEA state scores and, if there is, the size of the gap would have implications for how rigorous the state assessment is in comparison to the national assessment. Credit is given, however, for progress the state has achieved on NAEP and the fact that Idaho was one of a few states that showed significant improvement in mathematics on the 2009 NAEP assessment.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	24
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state earns points for its plans for creating a leadership structure within the DoE to oversee the work both at the Department and in the field and for establishing traveling coordinators with specific focus areas (standards/assessments, Great Teacher/Leaders, data systems, and turning around schools) that will provide technical assistance to participating LEA's by providing regional specialists to fill the void of not having regional service centers to assist LEA's with RTTT implementation. Points are also earned for providing a budget narrative gives explanations for expenditures that appear in line with the goals of each part of state's RTTT plan. The state also gains points for indicating how it will allocate state and federal money to align state efforts to the RTTT plan. For example, state funds are being used in the current development and adoption of state standards, the state made an investment</p>		

in 2009 to develop a state SLDS which it did not have before, and the state plans to use its funds, along with Title II and teacher licensure fees to support a statewide framework for Teacher Performance Evaluations and a state principal leadership program. The state claims that the RTTT reforms will be put in place whether the state receives RTTT funds or not, but receiving a grant would significantly speed up implementation. Throughout the application the state mentions the problems inherent in implementing programs in such a high poverty rural state, and, while describing how some of these will be overcome with technology and increased local assistance (regional specialists), a more in-depth analysis of the barriers to overcome and how the state plans to overcome them would have strengthened the argument that the state has the capacity to achieve its goals and resulted in additional points. ii. The state receives full points for letters supporting the state's RTTT plan that reflected broad support for the reform across educator organizations, political leaders, foundations, the state workforce office, universities, and other stakeholders.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	18
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The application receives points for progress made in three of the ARRA reform areas: 1) development of more rigorous standards and assessments; 2) supporting and developing teachers and leaders; and 3) turning around the lowest-achieving schools. The state has been working in the area of standards with the consortium developing the Common Core Standards. It developed standards-referenced testing via computer, has adopted new and more rigorous high school graduation requirements to be implemented in 2013, developed a state math initiative, has revised its teacher certification (removing some barriers to entry for teachers and leaders), developed a Principal Academy of Leadership, and has implemented an Idaho Building Capacity (IBC) Project that was launched in 2009 based upon evidence of significant growth in student achievement. While the state appears to be making progress in three of the four ARRA areas (and receives points for these), it has not make progress in developing and implementing a longitudinal data system which affected the score for this criterion. Recently, however, the state has obtained state and federal funding to begin implementation of the state data system which is addressed in the Idaho RTTT plan. ii. The state earns substantial points for increases in both state and NAEP assessment scores and for the fact that the state leads the nation in increase in number of schools achieving AYP. The state went from 26% of the schools achieving AYP in 2007 to 66% in 2009, when a realignment of the assessments to the state standards and standard settings occurred. The state has shown some improvement in NAEP scores and, to the state's credit, the state's exclusion rate for several subgroups (e.g., disabilities and ELL's) is less on NAEP than the national average, and the state's scores are above the national average in math and reading at grades 4 and 8. A deeper comparison and analysis of the state assessment and NAEP assessment scores would have strengthen the response to this criterion.</p>		
Total	125	99

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	39
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	19

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes a copy of the signed MOU between the state and the Common Core Standards Initiative consortium that includes more than half of the nation's states. In addition, the state is scheduled to adopt the Common Core Standards that are to be internationally benchmarked prior to August 2010. The new standards, however, will not be implemented until 2012-2013. The state will be developing new curricular materials and conducting professional development prior to statewide implementation, therefore, there is a logical lag between adoption and implementation. The state included the description of the benchmarking of the Common Core Standards along with a copy of the standards. The state's commitment to implementation of the Common Core Standards appears strong, particularly as it will be adopting the standards prior to August 2010.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state is a member of two assessment consortia. One of the consortia is the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) that consists of 23 states. SMARTER will be used to develop a summative assessment system aligned to the Common Core Standards. The state is also participating in Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC) that consists of 27 states that are developing a shared item bank of formative assessments. The state's plan to create the state assessment and aligned formative assessments for in-classroom use is a positive for sending a clear standards message and approach to the LEA's.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application receives full score points on this criterion, as it presents a thorough roll-out approach for a transition to internationally benchmarked k-12 standards that build toward college readiness. The plan is comprehensive in scope and inclusive of partners from the state's colleges and universities to business and industry. There is a consistent focus on the STEM subjects ranging from more challenging instruction and assessment to a focus on recruitment and sustaining of underrepresented youth who might not normally move toward STEM courses and careers. The state is planning an Adopt-a-School program to connect business and industry with schools to enrich their STEM programs. The state implementation plan also focuses heavily on college preparedness, planning to work closely with colleges and universities on alignment of standards and instruction, assistance to regional centers, providing opportunities for teachers to be involved in research at no cost and earn graduate credits. This research will help inform the state through studies of the relationship between success in high school and success in college and the effectiveness of school systems to prepare students for college success. The state's focus on college preparedness and success addresses a major issue the state has identified regarding its college graduation entrance and graduation rates. There is also an extensive roll-out through the regional centers of professional development on implementation of the new Common Core Standards and assessments. The state plans to collect data and use the proposed new state technology system for instructional improvement, as well as delivering professional development (e.g., via extensive webinars and live and interactive satellite trainings). The roll-out plan appears to be well thought-out, addresses the state plan goals that are tied to the ARRA areas, and includes on-going external evaluation that will allow the state opportunity to make changes along the road to implementation.</p>		
Total	70	69

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state reports having gotten a late start on implementing a statewide data system, mentioning that it was hindered somewhat by being a rural western state with strongly held local control and limited government beliefs. Fully operational are only 3 of the 12 the America Competes Elements - 1, 6, and 7, resulting in a weak score in this area. A pilot is going on now for full implementation of four more elements by the 2010-2011 school year. These elements are 2, 3, 5, and 8. The remaining elements are related to data exchange between the colleges and IDE - 4, 9, 10, 11, and 12. The present law does not require the state universities to provide access of data to the State Department of Education but the SDE believes that the State Board will change this soon. If the latter does not occur quickly, it would be a real set back for some of the college preparedness and success work that the plan entails.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state does appear to have a high-quality "plan" for use of data and accessibility from the evolving statewide longitudinal data system. The possible "bump" in the road will be on implementing the America Competes Element that allows access to state university information that is presently not required by Idaho law. The plan would have reflected a stronger score had the legislation already been changed to facilitate full implementation of all America Competes Elements.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	15
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state plan for using data to improve instruction appears to be well thought-out both in the roll-out plan and also in the RTTT budget. Besides providing technical assistance to participating LEA's on how to access the newly evolving SLDS system, the state's plan reflects considerable professional development on how to use the system to improve instruction. In addition, the planned implementation of a Learning Management System will be integrated with the SLDS by 2012, allowing teachers to access assessment data from the state level to the classroom (e.g., state and formative assessments, professional development, aligned instructional materials, etc.). While the state realizes it has been behind in implementing a statewide SLDS and the America Competes Elements, it is studying what has worked and not worked for other state systems and hopes to learn from their experiences - an example of how the state is planning to use evaluation to inform its work. Not having the law in place that allows for access to state university data could be a problem. Assurance that a new law allowing access to university data would be in place by 2010 would have benefited the state's application.</p>		
Total	47	24

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	6
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state does not support many alternative routes to certification, especially by providers outside of the university system. Most of the variations reported are merely different types of endorsements. There is a "test-out" provision for teachers to obtain certification/authorization to teach in an area for which a teacher lacks a major. One outside provider for teacher certification is the American Board for Teacher Certification (ABCTE), which has granted certificates and/or endorsements to 272 teachers (142 during 2008-2009). However, in reading the detail in the appendices, it appears that this certification is only good for three years. There appear to be no alternative routes for principals at this time. The state does have a report that identifies shortages by subject area, grade levels, etc. On the whole, the state does not suffer from great teachers shortages. Of the ten area districts identified as areas of greatest shortage, the only STEM subject area shortages were in natural science and</p>		

chemistry. Providing a greater number of alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals would strengthen this part of the state's application.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	49
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

i. The state earns full points for this criterion (i). Part of the state's RTTT plan is to establish a Learning Management System (LMS) that will assist teachers/principals in tracking student growth and achievement through standards-aligned formative assessments, as well as state summative assessment data. The state believes this system will provide continuous evaluation of student growth and achievement. Timely implementation and intensive professional development will be required for teachers, principals, students, and parents to use this kind of a system effectively. The state appears to have considered this and is phasing in the implementation from fall 2010 to spring 2013. This is still an aggressive implementation schedule for the number of schools involved. The state will need to conduct careful monitoring of implementation. Teachers, who are introduced to learning management systems where the technology is not fully ready or without intensive professional development provided, frequently dislike the systems and avoid using them, even if they are improved at a later date. ii. The state's RTTT plan will require LEA's to adopt and implement a research-based evaluation model for teachers with different levels of proficiency. In preparation for this, the state has adopted and begun to implement a research-based framework for teaching as a foundation for evaluation models to assist districts in establishing fair and equitable evaluation systems that meet the state's Standards for Certification of Professional School Personnel. The state plans to create an Administrator Performance Evaluation System too that will include a strong focus on teacher effectiveness and student achievement. It appears that the new administrator evaluation will not be implemented as quickly as the teacher evaluation system. As principal leadership is crucial to the success of the school, having the administrator evaluation system in place as quickly as the new teacher evaluation would have strengthened the state's plan. iii. The state receives full points for this criterion, as it requires evaluation of all teachers annually and will be evaluating administrators annually beginning in 2012. iv. The state earns substantial points for using evaluations to inform some of the key decisions in the areas of developing, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals. However, there does not appear to be a plan to connect teacher/principal evaluations to pay for performance. The state reported in its application that a recent Idaho poll indicates that 80% of the state's citizens support at least a part of a teacher's pay being tied to job performance so the state has developed an incentive pay pilot program to reward teachers and principals who improve student achievement or take on hard-to-fill positions. Regarding tenure, the application uses vague language concerning the language around removal of tenured teachers. It does not appear that the state is taking an ambitious approach in this area.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	14
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The state's plan addresses ensuring equitable distribution of teachers and principals going from 25% in year 2010-2011 to 100% by 2013-2014. The goal is ambitious, however, without any kind of state mandate or significant reward to LEA's who accomplish the state equitable distribution goals, nor an agreement of support from teachers unions/organizations on achieving the goals, it is doubtful that the state will attain its target on the time line presented in the application. The data show that the state will have to hire/replace 540 mathematics and 430 science teachers over the next five years. While there

is reference to a program with the University of Boise, led by astronaut Barbara Morgan, to recruit math and science majors into teaching, there is no discussion on steps the state and university will take to recruit the required number of math/science teachers. In addition, it is not clear that the state has a well-defined plan of how to accomplish this, making chances of equitable distribution questionable.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	7
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The application receives some, but not all, points for D4 (i), as the state plan does address developing a teacher/principal evaluation program that links student achievement and growth to professional preparation programs. The state's RTTT plan includes a target of 100% accessibility to data on student achievement and growth of graduates of teacher and principal preparation programs by 2013-2014. ii. The state's plan for expanding preparation programs that produce effective teachers and principals is not strong so does not gain full points for D4(ii). Little detail is provided about how the state plans to expand effective preparation programs and improve those that are not effective other than to indicate that the state will identify effective programs for participation in a pilot project on alternative routes to certification.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	10
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state's plan for providing effective, data-informed professional development is built upon its own experience and, to some extent, research-based programs. Both of these are strengths. Included in the state's list of planned professional supports are professional learning communities, instructional coaching, virtual professional learning communities, and the expansion of three programs: 1) support for STEM; (2) the Idaho Building Capacity Program which customizes technical assistance to Title IA schools, and (3) the Teacher Mentoring System. The state receives substantial points for building upon successful and research-based programs. More points would have been earned had the state discussed how each of these would contribute directly to the ARRA areas and provided more evaluative data about what makes these programs successful enough that the state is convinced they are worth a serious investment of time and funds. ii. The state does not earn many points for D5 (ii), as the state's discussion of how it will measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of professional support to teachers and principals in order to raise student achievement did not present a coherent and well thought out program evaluation plan. Rather than directly addressing the list of professional development supports the state plans to provide to teachers/principals, the state discusses the value of the new Learning Management System (LMS). This could have been informative if the capabilities of the LMS had been tied to the professional development supports the state plans to implement. A strong response would provide a more "integrated programmatic" or "systemic" approach to teacher/principal support and the evaluation of those supports rather than, what appears to be, a menu of programs without an evaluation program that will provide timely and targeted feedback to improve instruction.</p>		
Total	138	86

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The state application does not directly state whether it can intervene directly in schools and LEA's. Rather it discusses the pioneer and independent nature of the rural Idaho people and indicates that the state finds it works best to build relationships with the LEA's and provide support to them. The state does not support what is termed in the application as "urban restructuring models," such as closing a</p>		

school, restarting a school and dispersing students, restarting a school as a charter, or dismissing half the staff. It is stated in the application that the State Department of Education is not afraid of intervening in the best interest of children when it has statutory or regulatory authority to do so and then provides the example of having withheld federal funds and imposed sanctions on several LEA's when the SDE believed that the LEA's were not meeting their responsibilities. It also reports that Idaho has led the nation in the increased percentage of schools meeting AYP for the past two years. The tone and vagueness of the wording around whether the SDE would intervene directly in schools and LEA's that are in improvement or corrective action is not a strong response to the criterion. In addition, the response indicates that the state, should it intervene, would probably not intervene in a school but work through the LEA.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	5
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	0
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: i. The state receives full score points for identifying the 5% lowest performing Title I schools, as well as non-eligible Title I schools which are predominantly secondary schools. ii. According to the state plan, none of the four "systemic" turnaround models has been used in the past. The application states that the state plans to use a transformative model that it has found success with, but the state does not state clearly that this is the "transformation model" included in the RTTT school intervention models. The fact that the state does not state clearly which of the four RTTT turn around models it intends to use, results in the loss of points for E2 (ii).		
Total	50	5

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percent of total state revenues that were used to support public education increased from 62.7% to 63.8% from 2008 to 2009, a strong showing in a tough economy in a rural state with a high poverty rate. The state application indicates that two school districts of the same size, staff composition, and student grade composition receive the same funding from the state. Local voters may authorize a supplement levy. A voter-approved levy is not limited or driven by property values in the district. The application does not address equity in funding "within" LEA's between high-poverty schools and other schools, a critical factor in determining equity in educational opportunity. Had the state addressed this, full points might have been awarded in this section.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	25
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: i. The state application indicates that there is no cap on the number or percent of charter schools in the state. There is a limit, however, as to how many charter schools can be started within a school year. The limit is six. The state claims this is to ensure that the start-ups are successful. The state allows two routes to becoming a charter school: 1) authorization by a district school board; and 2) authorization by a state Charter School Commission. The later route strengthens the state's response to this criterion by allowing for alternative routes to becoming a charter school. The state receives full points for the part of this criterion that addresses having no state legal cap to the number of charters the state may have. ii. The state does not gain many points for F2 (ii), because (while not having a legal cap to the number of charters possible in the state) the state limits how many charters may be started each year.		

There are presently 36 charter schools which total 5% of the all public schools in the state. This number expands in the 2010-2011 school year to 41 when there will be 25 independent LEA charter schools and 16 districts authorized charter schools. Three schools have been delayed one year as a result of Idaho's charter school law and four schools have been closed. Charter schools are held to the same goals pertaining to AYP as all state schools. The state leaves the ultimate responsibility for closing a charter school to parents – customer satisfaction. It appears that the state only closes a school when it fails to correct a code violation. iii. The state provides the same funding for facilities, transportation, etc., for charter schools as it does for other public schools. Idaho also appears to provide strong funding support for its charter schools with the average charter school receiving 92.1% per pupil funding from the state. Charter schools would receive 96.1% of state/local funding if the federal funds were eliminated. iv. The state also funds charter school facilities maintenance as it does for other public schools. However, the state does not appear to provide funding for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements. Charters can use savings from small administration costs plus possible additional funding for per-student funding that smaller schools receive on facilities. The state receives less than the full amount of scores for this criterion, as funding for facilities does not appear to be equal in relation to costs that charters have that other schools would not. v. The environment for operating charter schools seems fairly strong in Idaho. Although accountability appears a little weak as it does not seem to be dependent upon student achievement. Instead, whether a charter school is closed or not is dependent upon "customer satisfaction," with the exception of legal or code violations in which case the state would step in. The state's score would be stronger in this area if the state took a more active roll in determining whether a charter school closed using student achievement criteria rather than leaving this entirely up to the "customers," and if it had provided some analysis as to the effect the state annual limit for opening schools may have on charter school growth.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state application indicates that the state allows other public school choice options, including alternative secondary schools for students at risk of dropping out, open enrollment, dual enrollment, magnet schools, and others. The state seems to provide strong support for innovative and autonomous public schools.		
Total	55	39

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The state's plan reflects an emphasis on STEM careers with strategies for increasing the number of math and science teachers with the aim being to provide highly effective STEM teachers, resulting in higher student achievement in the STEM subjects. The state's plan includes STEM Regional Specialists who will lead k-12 STEM education programs to provide professional development to teachers. In addition, the state plans to contract with STEM professionals for an adopt-a-school program in which the STEM professionals collaborate with teachers to support strong instructional practices in the STEM areas. Professional development to be provided through the RTTT plan provides a consistent focus on STEM subject areas.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The state's plan comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas and appears to have strong LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and reach its goals. The state has committed to implementing the new Common Core Standards and two assessment systems aligned to the new standards - one a summative assessment and one a formative assessment. The implementation of a Learning Management System could greatly increase the state's chances to succeed if done in a timely and user-friendly way. The LMS has great potential for providing teachers and students with a tool that will greatly increase access to data, access and use of aligned instruction and formative assessments, as well as be a vehicle for connecting teachers to professional development offered anywhere in the state and beyond. While the goals of the RTTT plan are aggressive in light of the rural nature of the state, the roll-out plan is promising and there appears to be significant support from the state's various educational, political, business, and other constituencies.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	337