



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Kansas Application #1880ks-5

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	45
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	37
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The proposal begins by describing Kansas' reform vision, which covers academic standards and assessments, developing a unified standards database, providing highly-effective teachers and principals, developing a statewide system of proactive supports for continuous improvement of schools and developing a system that produces high quality data. It then lays out the benefits to Kansas of Race to the Top (RttT) funding in each of the four ARRA education reform areas. The two Commissions that are described relate to the Great Teachers and Leaders reform area. Their plan is to build an infrastructure that capitalizes on technology and human systems of support to enable all students to be proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014, increase high school graduation rates, and increase college enrollment and early success in college. (ii) The state has almost 100% LEA participation, which could ensure statewide involvement. However, the unions have written an escape clause to any scope of work with may limit commitments in practice. (iii) There is almost unanimous sign on of each component of the MOU. The lowest was agreement to use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention, but with 90% participation, this demonstrates strong commitment across the state. However, union leaders' opt-out clause may in practice limit implementation. Of great importance is that the proposal did not provide student performance growth targets, either here or elsewhere in the proposal. Without these, the state is not going to know if it is making appropriate progress towards the overall goal of improving student outcomes. Thus a low score is awarded here.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	21
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Department staff have strong content backgrounds and experience. Indeed, a number hold national office in appropriate organizations. Their Information Technology Team Director is particularly outstanding - and received the 2008 DQC Data Director of the year award (for longitudinal data systems). (5) Furthermore, the Kansas Learning Network (KLN) provides a novel approach to the provision of intensive assistance that is not simply top-down, but creates a peer support group for the identified districts and schools. The KSDE will look outside their own staff for help in providing assistance to LEAs regarding best/promising practices, which is positive. (5) The state assumes that it's current grants management capacity is enough to manage a large infusion of funding that would come with RttT, but this is probably unrealistic. (0). The state describes that it will make efforts to pool</p>		

resources for funding coordination (4) Finally, there is no evidence that these reforms will continue after funding ends. (ii)94% of district union leaders signed on to the MOU, although there is an opt-out clause. Also the letter from the state union is ambiguous. The list of stakeholders that was provided includes key teacher preparation institutions of higher education, education organizations, and one national politician.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	17
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has been active in the four reform areas. It was difficult to assess this criterion because results were narrative, without a summary table or chart, requiring review of extensive tabulations in the appendix. And the narrative is quite difficult to follow, containing many, many statistics - with findings buried - lots of data and little interpretation for action. No data were provided for high school graduation rates. No connection was made between the data and the actions that have contributed to improvement.		
Total	125	83

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
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has joined the CCSSO/NGA Common Core Standards State Consortium. While the proposal describes the composition of its Common Core Standards Adoption Committee, and approval of the State Board is anticipated by August 2, 2010, no further evidence is provided about the progress that has been made toward this end, nor is any information provided regarding implementing the standards in a well-planned way. The state does indicate that it has a well-established process for engaging LEAs and key stakeholders in the adoption of standards, and that a streamlined process for adoption exists. But no further information is provided about how this will be used over the coming several months, resulting in adoption by the August 2, 2010 deadline. The proposal did not clearly connect the information on statutes in the Appendix to the events that are described in the main text. But since the proposal anticipates adoption by the due date, they are placed in the 'high' category.		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	8
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state belongs to two consortia, one with 11 states, and one with 36 states (Balanced Assessment Consortium). The member states of the latter consortium are not provided- so it was not assigned the highest possible points. Both MOUs are non-binding. The proposal demonstrates much more familiarity and commitment to the first consortium - with 11 states (SMARTER). The applicant does not explain how it will integrate the outcomes of the two separate consortia into a state implementation plan. No evidence is provided that the assessments will be implemented.		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	7

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provided a lengthy technical description of the various systems to be developed under the proposal but did not provide a vision of use. Buried in the description of the systems is reference to professional development. The state recognizes its need to partner with a vendor to provide professional development and in fact has already entered into a MOU for this purpose. IHEs will also offer professional development, but there is no description of how the state will assure that these activities will effectively help teachers to understand, embrace and use enhanced standards and assessments for change in the classroom.		
Total	70	50

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	20
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Ten of the twelve items have been completed. The state deserves credit for taking on the task of linking into the postsecondary sector, which will provide additional critical improvement data for P-20 policy review and revision.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	1
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: In this section, the applicant provides a description of additional data that will be linked across agencies. It does not, however, provide any information on a vision or strategy to turn the huge volume of data that will be accumulating into useful information. Nor do they address who will have access to the data warehouse. If access is dependent on requests to agency staff, information will not flow, and there will not be access for researchers.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (i) The proposal is very strong on the acquisition, adopting, and use of local instructional improvement systems to disseminate information and resources. But the vision of using data to improve instruction is weak. There is considerable commitment to developing, and implementing access to data, but no evidence that the capacity exists to get this done. It appears that a larger and larger data warehouse is being collected without an appreciation of use at the local level by non database-savvy teachers and administrators. The proposal provides one isolated mention of turning data into useful information - the inclusion of an early warning metric to identify students who need immediate assistance. How the project will turn the large reservoir of data into data views 'that make data in the Collaborative Workspace actionable' is not provided. There is an anticipation that state researchers will be interested in evaluating its implementation. The State department does plan to produce standard reports that will relieve some local reporting requirements. While laudable, this is just the beginning of what could be done with the data they plan to accumulate. (ii) The use of data to improve instruction relies on an outside vendor, and is not well developed in the proposal. (iii) The state's approach to initiating researcher access to state data - requiring a curriculum to ensure its ethical and legal use, for example - is cautious, but reasonable. Building on the Kansas City Area Research Consortium (KC-ARC) which is modeled on the CCSR, Kansas can expect to have much more provocative and insightful research being undertaken than is envisioned in this narrative. The stipends to be offered (\$50K) however, and probably too modest to stimulate the formative evaluations that the state anticipates.		
Total	47	33

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	3
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The reviewer is referred to the appendix to investigate whether Kansas allows alternative routes independent of IHEs with no interpretation in the text. The conclusion is that this is not the case. (ii) The proposal then describes several non-traditional programs, including the restricted pathway (teaching and training at an IHE at the same time, and an on-line program. The selectivity criteria into the program are basic - bachelors degree and GPA of 2.5. No information is provided as to whether coursework is limited. And productivity data are not consistently provided. (2) The discussion for (iii) does not address teacher shortages although some strategies for strengthening recruitment and retention are described. (1)</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	19
(i) Measuring student growth	5	2
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	5
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	4
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The state does not currently have an approach to measure individual student growth. They promise to establish one that will be designed by stakeholders, and promise that it will be supported by the work of several national researchers. The data will be housed in the state's longitudinal data base made available to stakeholders. No timeframe for development is provided. No performance measure was provided. (ii) The state plans to hire a vendor to develop an evaluation instrument that will bring 'a level of standardization' to evaluation requirements and processes in collaboration with stakeholders. Years 2 and 3 of the grant will consist of piloting the instruments and processes, while years 3 and 4 will involve working with the assessment vendor to design the processes that will support the strong use of the evaluation instrument. The state should consider whether its ability to view individual teacher and principal results will actually act as a deterrent to implementation. No performance measures were provided. (iii) LEAs agreed in the MOU to annual performance reviews. The state promises to provide LEAs with models that use evaluation data to compensate, promote or retain teachers and principals. But it will be several years before a qualifying evaluation is available and so a medium score is given. However, in the MOU, unions reserved the right to terminate the scope of work, which may limit the implementation. (iv) The state did not provide a detailed plan for this criterion with goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties. LEAs agreed in the MOU to use evaluations to inform key decisions. The state promises to provide LEAs with models that use evaluation data to compensate, promote or retain teachers and principals. It does not appear that the state will be providing other kinds of support to assist LEAs with implementation. And it will be several years before a qualifying evaluation is available and so a low score is given for each component. No performance measures were provided.</p>		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	21
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	11
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Kansas is only just beginning its work of ensuring equitable distribution of teachers. Data were provided using NCLB's Highly Qualified Teachers showing that small inequities continue to exist. It</p>		

was recognized that inequities would likely increase with the changing definitions of highly effective teachers. Kansas' plan now is to develop data reporting systems that will help identify the distribution of effective teachers and principals, improve their system of human capital; increase specialized knowledge skills and improve teacher working conditions - all of which may contribute to modifying the equitable distribution of teachers. But no performance measures were provided, and the timeline for identifying effective teachers is not specified. (ii) Kansas will contract for services with the University of Kansas Center for Science Education whose mission is to provide leadership in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, but no information is provided regarding what they will be asked to do specifically with regard to RttT funding. Kansas University is a UTeach institution, a program whose goal is to increase the number of new highly qualified science and mathematics teachers each year. With funding, this program will be expanded to other IHEs. To increase the specialized knowledge skills of teachers, the state and LEAs will examine field placements, identify master teachers, provide on-line professional development, and evaluate how to use teacher/student learning data for better indicators of quality. The State Department of Education will also work with LEAs to provide in-depth induction and mentoring, and strengthen leadership in low-performing schools and preparation programs. Finally LEAs will be supported in exploring and implementing merit pay for improved student achievement.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	6
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: Kansas SDE plans to establish another statewide data collection effort to link teacher and principal preparation data to student achievement and student growth data. Although the Department of Education says that it will work with IHEs to build data definitions and collection approaches, no plan of action is provided, no timelines, and no performance measures for progress. Nor is there any mention of public disclosure of results. With regard to expanding successful preparation and credentialing options and programs, Kansas instead provided a description of its collaboration with five other states on strengthening four stages of teacher practice, the first of which is to revitalize teacher preparation models. While interesting, this section did not directly address criterion (D)(4)(ii). Low points are given to acknowledge their plan to revise all teacher preparation programs over the next three years.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	12
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: Kansas is piloting two mentoring programs for selected LEAs. Administrators will be supported via other programs that have been piloted in Kansas and that will serve 35 educators. Superintendents will participate in the Harvard Executive Leadership Program (no numbers are given). The KSDE will also enter into a MOU with the National Staff Development Council to provide continuous professional learning for all educators that supports career growth and development, effective mentoring and induction, retention, and student success. Through this partnership, a comprehensive human capital and professional development system will be built that incorporates the four ARRA reform areas. Outsourcing all of this effort to an external vendor will likely provide the immediate progress needed. No mention is made, however, of how the effort will be continued over time and built into the ongoing responsibilities of state and LEA employees. (ii) A policy audit will be undertaken for evaluating the effectiveness of professional learning that reflects the state reform and RttT goals, among other things. This will be done through a policy audit for which a detailed plan of action is provided. No timeline is given.</p>		
Total	138	61

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: Again, the state's legal position is provided in an appendix with no interpretation. Since the state's strategy is to establish a learning network of lowest-achieving schools, it appears that they do not have authority to intervene more directly.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	31
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	26
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas will be identifying its lowest 5% lowest-achieving schools using the Lowest Achieving Over Multiple Years Method. Evidence from two of the past three years will provide the basis for determination. Kansas works collaboratively with its schools to help them avoid being identified as a school of district on school improvement. It appears that the state has had some success with the transformational model (2 or 6 are off) when contracting with outside support; three are in the process of using turnaround; and several school closure approaches have been used. A comprehensive plan is provided for each approach in the Appendix and summarized in the narrative. It appears, however, that KSDE relies quite heavily on guidebooks and handbooks and the state might want to consider how it might provide more direct support to lowest-achieving schools.		
Total	50	31

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The proportion of education funding increased in FY 09 over FY 08. The state's funding formula provides some adjustment for categories of students and schools. No data were provided, however, to demonstrate the extent to which these adjustments lead to equitable funding.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	22
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (i) There are no charter school caps in Kansas. (ii) Charter schools must be accredited by the state board of education and meet all current standards and accountability requirements as other public schools. Legislation provides that charter schools can operate within a district independently from other schools in the district. About 25% of charter schools have closed during the five-year period, largely due to financial considerations and low enrollment, although one was closed for not meeting academic standards. No requirements are in place to serve student populations that are similar to the local district populations, nor has Kansas closed or not renewed a charter school for ineffectiveness. (iii) Charter schools are funded as part of district budgets with no separate funding provisions or exceptions. No data were provided on the per student expenditure, either for charter schools or traditional public schools. (iv) There are no separate facilities funding provisions. Districts operating charter schools have access to the same facilities funding laws as any district/LEA in Kansas. (v) There appears to be no provision for non-charter innovative, autonomous public schools.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	3
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

The state's school funding formula was reformed in 2005 but there is no evidence that this was related to, or resulted in increasing student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.

Total	55	32
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Kansas' application did not address STEM consistently or extensively throughout its application.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Overall, Kansas has demonstrated a commitment to meeting the intent of RttT. It has addressed each of the four reform areas although its approach to Great Teachers and Leaders is quite weak. The state does not demonstrate a strong commitment to using student growth data, and did not provide targets for improvement. But the very strong support of its LEAs (almost 100%), and their sign on to all the efforts of the state's plan balances some of these weaknesses, so that overall, a positive judgement is given.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	290
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Kansas Application #2880KS-1

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	40
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	32
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	4
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State of Kansas has set forth a generally comprehensive and coherent reform agenda for implementing reforms in the four education areas and improving student outcomes statewide. Its vision centers on 3 sets of high-quality standards: academic standards, 21st century skills, and career and technical education standards, and a plan for developing a unified standards database that connects these three sets of standards. A system of proactive supports for schools, and continuous development of a system that produces high quality data, including longitudinal data, is also set forth. The reform plan has strong backing from a large proportion of districts in the state. MOU's were signed by a high percentage of the 293 LEA's in the state, with 90% or more of the LEA's (n = 268) signing various elements of the plan, as well as high percentages of schools with high poverty and/or high minority schools. Of the participating LEAS, 100% of the superintendents signed the MOUs, as did 99% of the local school boards. A high percentage of local union leaders (94%) also signed MOU's; however, they adapted the sample MOU provided and included wording that reserves the right to terminate the MOU if they find terms unacceptable for the specific plans. The scope of work description included was quite minimal, and did not provide much information about what participating LEAS were expected to implement. It does not appear that the proposal provides information specifically on A1-iii, (regarding NAEP data, high school graduation rates and college enrollment) in the initial body of the proposal.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	22
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposed plan has assembled a number of the key leaders in the state, including the Interim Commissioner of Education, and directors of Career Standards and Assessment, Teacher Education and Licensure, Title I programs and Services; Information Technology and Special Education. They have largely described existing leadership currently in place, and not offered how new organizational structures and leadership may be needed to implement such an ambitious, sizeable new set of reform work as called for by Race to the Top (RTTT). They also do not outline a timeline or plans for when the current interim Commissioner will be replaced by a long-term commissioner. Strong relationships between KDEA and LEA's are demonstrated by high response rate in MOU's, and in the pro-active work of the Kansas Learning Network. Improvement in school funding conditions emerged through legislative actions beginning in 2005, regarding an increase in amount of base state aid per pupil,</p>		

increase in at-risk and bilingual weightings, funding for special education, totaling increase in \$289 million. 2008-09 budget was \$755 million over what it was in 2004-05. The 2008 recession set back those figures. The application includes broad support from stakeholders, including KS board of regents, higher education, KS NEA and School Board Association, and families and parent groups. The MOU, however, included a clause that allows union leaders to terminate the MOU if they find the terms unacceptable, diminishing the strong voice of support from the teacher union.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	16
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has made reasonably good progress in the four key areas. For example, regarding teacher education, they have implemented a variety of initiatives, including a teacher leader license honoring career teacher leaders, mentoring programs, and an Alternate Advisory Committee to study mid-career changes. Regarding turning around struggling schools, they have the Kansas Learning Network offering technical assistance to districts. State testing in math and reading has indicated clear progress in students' learning in these two areas since 2003. Achievement gaps between students eligible for F/RL diminished, particularly for students in elementary school and middle school. For students with disabilities, achievement gaps decreased in reading, but only slightly in mathematics. For ELL students, achievement gaps lessened in mathematics, but gap analysis data is difficult to interpret in the area of reading, given changes in the assessment and cut scores in 2006. NAEP results also reflect that Kansas has made improvements in student outcomes from 2003 to 2008. The application offered little data or discussion on increasing high school graduation rates. The application also offered little information about the relationship between student achievement data and the actions that have contributed to it.</p>		
Total	125	78

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	38
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	18
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has put in place a promising arrangement regarding the development and adoption of common standards. Kansas signed a MOU in May 2009 to join the Common Core Standards State Consortium, comprised of virtually all states. They are also conducting work in aligning K-12 standards with higher education, including establishing a Common Core Standards Adoption Committee that is comprised of representatives from 10 different state-wide educational groups and associations. They describe a streamlined process for adoption of standards, and assert that they expect approval by the State Board by August 2010.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	8
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has made good progress in developing and implementing common, high quality assessments. It has entered into 3 Memoranda of Agreement re: common assessments, including SMARTER (the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (currently</p>		

w/ 11 states), and a State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessment of the Common Core Standards, a 36-state consortium. Assessments would include constructed responses and performance components aimed at higher-order skills, and curriculum-embedded performance assessments at the classroom level that can provide formative information, as well as summative information. Little detailed information was provided on the nature of the formative information and formative assessment process that would be used by teachers.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	12
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: Kansas' main effort supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments is a unified standards database that connects common core academic standards, career/technical education clusters and 21st century learner profiles. Very little detail is offered regarding what is entailed by the last two sets (career/technical education clusters and 21st century learner profiles), and the likely intersections and divergences of data across the three sets. There is some mention of professional development, but it appears largely centered on using the Collaborative Workspace. The application describes emphasizing formative assessment, being online, with predictive summative performance levels, and teacher customization of assessments, but provides insufficient detail on how this would work, or how timely information will be given to teachers.</p>		
Total	70	58

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has met 10 of the 12 required elements for implementing a statewide longitudinal system, and is thus in a good position for ultimately producing such a system. The two elements still under development are the teacher identifier system that matches teachers to students, and student-level transcriptions.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas describes its commitment to accessing and using state data. A major focus of the plan will be to link the many data systems currently existing for P-20 and across state agencies, to enhance data system connections between agencies and organizations.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	10
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The proposal outlines a number of discrete data sets that currently exist, and their plans of how it will be connected through a Collaborative Workspace for educators. The proposal offers relatively limited articulation on how the data would actually intersect with the teaching of particular subjects (e.g., math, reading), nor inform teachers' actual instructional decisions on a regular basis. The applicant also plans to implement a Unified Accountability and Planning (UAP) system for state and federally-funded programs to help focus district and school improvement efforts, and to offer training since they recognize that the system will be a major change for KSDE and district staff. While the proposal discusses that educators will be trained to use the instructional improvement systems (IIS), there is relatively little specific detail that conveys ways in which teachers would be trained to use data to impact instruction, nor the specific kinds of data that will actually be used to positively impact the learning of each student. Their plan includes the positive element of conducting formative evaluation to assess the effectiveness of training in order to improve the modules. The applicant offers a positive</p>		

plan to collaborate with a variety of university research groups, and offer competitive stipends (albeit at a relatively modest amount) to researchers to conduct formative evaluations of three outcomes of the system.

Total	47	35
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	9
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Kansas does not have the sufficient laws and regulations to offer alternative teacher preparation routes independent of institutions of higher education. Kansas' primary alternate route to teaching is its CREDO program (Kansas Center for Recruitment and Educator Development Online), a partnership between high needs local school districts, teacher preparation institutes, and mid-career professionals or recent college graduates. It is a "shared responsibility" on-line teacher preparation program. 829 teacher/leaders have been certified through this alternative route, with 124 teachers in 2008-09. It is somewhat difficult to determine from the proposal how many of the five elements are part of the program. Although CREDO has an on-line component, that does not make it an alternative program; candidates were offered school-based experiences and a mentor; and that they were awarded the same level of certification as traditional preparation programs. No specific information was provided regarding selection criteria for candidates, nor whether it significantly limits the amount of coursework required or offers options to test out. Kansas also plans to offer an on-line program for troops and qualified spouses. While the proposal described a variety of professional development efforts, it was difficult to determine the extent to which it has a clear process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	26
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	5
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal generally alludes to a growth model based on student learning (designed by stakeholders and supported by research), and provides a general timeline, goals and activities for the development of a longitudinal data system. ii - It describes an arrangement it will have with an outside contractor, to develop an evaluation system for both principals and teachers. The system is described as using multiple rating categories that incorporate student growth as significant factor, and as designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement. It was difficult to determine the ways in which individual student growth would be measured, and how it would be factored into determining teacher and principal effectiveness. During the development phase, there is broad representation from different practitioner groups, faculty, local boards of education, and with good statewide geographic, levels, and other demographic diversity. While the outside contractor handling the evaluation systems provided a detailed work plan in the appendix, the proposal narrative itself did not substantively describe how the lead organization plans to ensure rigor, consistent standardization or meaningful results for teachers or their students through use of these teacher instruments. iii - While a reasonable general process for an annual evaluation system is outlined, the proposal had a lack of specificity regarding the kind of feedback that teachers will receive that can result in "actionable feedback.", and what specific information will inform teacher practice. Similarly, there were no clear examples/vision of what principals could target as need areas for his/her own practice or school, what kind of information</p>		

would be provided annually, nor the relationship between long-term professional growth plan and action plan for ensuing year. iv – In the piloting of the evaluation system, “LEA will produce scenarios of data that generated recommendations for principals or teachers to receive coaching, assistance, or other professional development to improve their content or teaching expertise.” and LEAS will be “provided with models that use evaluation data to compensate, promote, or retain teachers and principals.” The lack of definition of, or examples for, “scenarios” and “models” makes it difficult to determine how this evaluation system would work, and be valuable and effective for teachers and principals.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	19
(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	9

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The application reports valuable data findings regarding already existing inequities, regarding student performance in elementary mathematics, and core classes in high school, and describes a good system regarding data collection regarding teacher vacancies, mobility, etc. between schools. They also plan to attend to “improve system of human capital” – looking at hiring policies, cost effectiveness of financial incentives for teaching in high needs schools, and definition of teacher effectiveness. Their discussion, however, focuses primarily on highly qualified teachers (as defined by NCLB), and does not describe in depth how they plan to handle the significant shift to addressing highly effective teachers, that directly addresses the issue of student learning and growth as a core factor examined when considering teacher performance. They also do not state specific targets of equitable distribution that they wish to achieve, nor timelines, as would be necessary in any well-formulated plan. The proposal also generally lacked much discussion of programs addressing principal leadership. ii - The application reports on important data anticipating significant percentages of new teachers leaving field, retiring, fewer students entering teaching, and very significant decreases in teacher licenses in biology, chemistry and physics. It proposes contracting for services with UK Center for Science Education. Building on UKanTech, this new partnership between KU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, KU School of Education and KS school districts has already positively resulted in 100 new highly qualified science and math teachers each year. Kansas is interested in expanding this existing program and provide support to other IHES in the state to provide similar STEM teacher preparation program. The application also describes attention to other important parts of the induction program, regarding field placements, mentoring, and other on-line and other professional development modules, specific for educators in high needs schools.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	7
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Kansas states that it has the capability to link student achievement and growth data to students' teachers and principals, and plans to link this information to in-state programs from which teachers and principals received credentialing. They recognize that they need to do more than simply identify IHE's, since one institution may have multiple programs, as well as describes plans to disaggregate by program type. Elsewhere in the application, they indicate there are 432 different teacher credentialing programs in the state and 11 different principal credentialing programs. They do not specifically discuss how, and to what extent, they plan to address this large set of teacher credential programs, or how they would prioritize their strategy for implementation. They also do not mention how they would handle the public reporting of this data. Kansas is part of a 6-state consortium envisioning a new system of educator recruitment, preparation, development and empowerment, focusing on strengthening teacher practice. While the application describes the key foci of this collaborative work, it provides little information on actual ways it plans to expand preparation and credentialing options and programs successful at producing effective teachers and principals in Kansas. Kansas hopes to build upon exemplary work at Emporia State University, but does not sufficiently discuss what is entailed by

establishing "the KS Teacher Residency Program and long-term pilot of revised teacher preparation programs, professional learning and performance assessment."

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	16
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has provided a reasonable plan to implement support for teachers and principals, including current work with piloting mentoring programs for selected LEAs for teachers, and also programs for administrators. It also outlines work planned by an outside contractor to cover the four reform areas. When describing the evaluation plans, the body of the proposal did not reflect a particularly well-integrated, well-conceptualized, strong, strategic approach.</p>		
Total	138	77

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: The proposal narrative largely describes Kansas' specific forms of support and networks to help districts identified for corrective action and had schools on improvement. In the appendix, it provides a list of applicable laws and regulations. Neither the narrative prose nor appendix, however, definitively states the extent to which the State has the legal, statutory or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	29
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	24
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has defined a clear process for defining the lowest 5% or 5 schools, in order to address the problem of persistently lowest-achieving schools. In general, the proposal described a range of plans and models for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools, but lacked much substantive detail and discussion to convey a well-conceptualized, integrated and carefully considered plan that would likely lead to a high degree of success. Kansas has described in moderate detail a plan for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools, using all four models. It indicates that it anticipates having 10 Tier 1 schools and 10 Tier II schools each year, 50% of which will be transformational, 30% will be turnaround, 10% restart, and 10% closure. It describes the Kansas Multi Tier System of Supports (MTSS), and a general plan and description of the process it uses to address leadership; data-based decision making; and assessment, instruction and curriculum; empowering culture, and professional development. They intend to expand the MTSS to better support college preparation and career pathways by integrating career technical academic standards, but offer little discussion of the conceptual or practical challenges of such intended integration. The Transformational model indicates some blended funding to sustain the model (combining IDEA funds and Title 1 funds). Brief, general descriptions and processes involved in the three other models: turnaround, restart (including the option to open as a public charter school), and closing, are also provided in the proposal. For the transformation and turn around models, they list what changes are needed for the models, to comply with the requirements in Appendix C of the Application Guidelines. In the appendix, a chart of goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties for turning around lowest-achieving schools is provided. In general, the chart highlights a wide variety of planning activities, but relatively little implementation across the four years.</p>		
Total	50	29

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Kansas has shown some evidence of making education funding a priority, through increased education funding from 2008 to 2009 (a \$40 million increase), albeit largely due to multi-year school finance plan enacted by 2006 Legislature to ensure "that the state provides adequate funding for the education of all students." Beyond the base state aid per pupil (\$4,400), adjustments are made to reflect additional costs associated with certain pupil populations, including at-risk and bilingual students (school districts received an additional \$400 million) and for special education services to students with disability (\$428 million). These populations somewhat correlate, presumably, with those districts considered high need, and high-poverty schools.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	18
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>I - Kansas has demonstrated the existence of successful conditions for high-performing charter schools. There are no limitations on number of charter schools under state law, nor restrictions on student enrollment in charters. For 2009-10 school year, 35 charter schools were authorized and 34 are in operation. ii - Kansas has laws regarding how charter schools authorizers approve, monitor and close charter schools. Academic goals and requirements form a core set of criteria, but the proposal does not specifically discuss in much detail how student achievement information is involved in decisions regarding school closings (although citing that one school was closed for failure to meet academic requirements.). iii - The state's charter school statutes does not insure that charter schools will receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools. iv - The application does not specifically state ways in which charter schools are provided assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, or the ability to share in bond and mill levies. v - The proposal does not adequately nor specifically describe ways in which the State Enables LEAS to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. Instead, it lists a set of statutes regarding charter schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Kansas has improved school funding conditions through a series of legislative actions beginning in 2005, resulting in significant increase in the amount of base state aid per pupil, at risk and bilingual weightings, special education, and local option budget authority.</p>		
Total	55	30

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There was generally a very scant emphasis on STEM throughout the application. The main STEM focus was to address the decreased teaching force in STEM, through a promising program called the UKan Teach program. The proposal contained little on continued professional development specific to STEM, applied learning opportunities for students, or preparing more students for advanced study or careers in the STEM.</p>		

Total	15	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Kansas has put forth a reasonably comprehensive and coherent plan to address all four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAS are taking a systemic approach to education reform. On a highly promising note, a high percentage of the roughly 300 LEA's in the state are participating LEAS, with 90% or more of the LEA's signing various elements of the plan, as well as high percentages of schools with high poverty and/or high minority schools.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	307
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Kansas Application #2880KS-2



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	39
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	26
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The application is completely thorough in describing how the State has fully integrated its reform agenda into the four education areas described in the ARRA, provided a thoughtful approach for how this reform agenda will yield improvement in student outcomes statewide, presents evidence of significant Local Education Agency (LEA) support, and a credible path for implementing the plans. The narrative offers a concise portrait of its four-tiered approach cross-referencing each of the elements discussed throughout the application as clear evidence of the State's coherent strategy. (ii) The Terms and Conditions evidenced in the State's MOU with LEAs is consistent with the guidelines presented in the Application. The attached Scope of Work demonstrates LEA commitment to a significant portion of the State's Race to the Top plans. And, with 91% of eligible LEAs committing to participate, the application presents strong evidence of solid, statewide participation. Where the Terms and Conditions in the MOU are substantially weakened relates to the language in Section V - Duration/Termination. The clause in this section reads, "The Local Teacher's Association official shall have 30 days following receipt of Exhibit II to review its contents and reserves to him/herself the unilateral right to terminate the MOU if the terms of Exhibit II are unacceptable." The entire spirit intended by broad LEA participation is put at risk as, theoretically, a substantial number of LEAs, at the unilateral discretion of the Local Teacher's Association, might opt-out of participation at some point after the competition has concluded. It is not at all clear what would constitute "unacceptable" and suggests a valid question with regard to ongoing statewide participation by LEAs. Therefore, although a substantial number of LEAs have initially indicated their participation, the opt out clause results in an inability to award points other than at a medium range. (iii) The application identifies an overall 90%+ commitment by participating LEAs for each element of the State's Race to the Top plans. The lowest participation percentage comes from linking student performance as a significant factor in determining teacher compensation but even this reflects a 90% commitment from participating LEAs. In addition, critical sub-group populations are credibly represented by the participating LEAs indicating a high likelihood of translating these efforts into broad statewide impact. Consistent with the comments in (ii), the ongoing commitment of participating LEAs is somewhat questioned by the opt-out clause resulting in a reduction in the total points awarded.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	12
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	6
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(i) (a) The criterion require evidence of a dedicated, strong leadership team to implement the statewide education reform plans. However, the application simply outlines the existing leadership within the Kansas Department of Education (KDE) without explaining how a revised structure would be developed to incorporate the responsibilities emanating from the State's Race to the Top as an additive to what the KDE is already expected to fulfill. No description is given for the creation of new positions, new external advisory support, nor is any other indication given of exactly who would have the explicit responsibility for the Race to the Top initiatives. (b) Unfortunately, the application is lacking in sufficient detail to describe a high-quality plan to support participating LEAs. The narrative does not offer any elaboration for how this support will be provided other than to attribute the overall responsibility to a new entity, the Kansas Learning Network as well as generally to the KDE. The KDE currently has the responsibility of supporting the State's LEAs. The application does not illuminate any new thinking on the State's part to improve this support as part of the reform agenda. (c) Consistent with the comments in (b), the application does not provide sufficient detail or evidence of how the KSDE documents its internal controls. The narrative offers assertions without any concrete evidence to support them. (d) The application does not offer specific evidence of any local, State or Federal funds that might be reallocated, coordinated or repurposed to support the State's Race to the Top plans, which the criterion require. The narrative introducing the budget asserts that local, State and Federal funds will be used, but provides no elaboration. The projects described in the budget and amounts allocated for each are reasonable. Most of the project budgets have a line-item for "In Kind" but this is never defined as a State contribution, a contribution from some other funding source, or what is specifically meant. (e) Again, the application makes only a brief assertion with regard to the criterion without any explanatory detail. (ii) The application enjoys broad support from a significant proportion of the State's population of teachers and principals including the the statewide organizations representing teachers and administrators. While the application contains letters of support from a number of critical stakeholders, the application is lacking any evidence of support from business leaders, employers, or university presidents. While individual letters are provided from these categories, the application does not provide deep evidence of support from multiple non-profits, local education foundations or community-based organizations.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	16
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
(i) The State presents evidence of several initiatives, funded by ARRA and other State and Federal sources, that support the pursuit of reforms in the four areas. The application effectively describes its efforts in the four reform areas, demonstrates reasonable progress in each, and specifically links the purpose of the initiative to the intended reforms. (ii) (a) The criterion requires an explanation of the connection between the data and actions that have contributed to the data story. The application is silent in terms of providing any explanation. The appendices demonstrate evidence of improved student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since 2003 in reading/language arts and mathematics on both the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and State assessments. (b) Evidence of impressive reductions in the achievement gap across subgroups is consistently strong in the State assessments but considerably less prominent in the NAEP scores. NAEP scores relative to closing the achievement gap are trending positive in each subgroup category except for the 4th grade White/Hispanic gap in both reading and math where the gap widened. (c) The application does not address high school graduation rates.		
Total	125	67

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	36
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	16
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i) Kansas is participating in the Common Core Standards initiative along with 47 other States and 3 Territories. Common Core Standards are pursuing internationally benchmarked standards that are focused on preparing students for college and career readiness. Kansas has also partnered with another State consortia, Achieve in order to conduct a gap analysis between proficiency as identified by the K-12 levels and college readiness. In addition, Kansas is participating in the American Diploma Project Network to align high school standards with the demands of postsecondary education and the workforce. (ii) The application presents a reasonable plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards and asserts that the State anticipates completion by August 2, 2010. The application does not, however, offer any timetables indicating how this will be accomplished within the required timeframe.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The narrative and appendices provide evidence of Kansas' participation in two credible consortia to develop and implement common, high-quality assessments that are aligned with the common set of K-12 standards that Kansas is pursuing with the Common Core Standards consortium. Kansas is participating in both SMARTER (comprised of 11 States) and a State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards (comprised of 36 States).</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application presents an extremely impressive, robust and coherent plan to support the State's transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. Kansas' plan is detailed, elaborate and exceptionally well-conceived to suggest tremendous success in the rollout of its enhanced standards and the variety of initiatives planned or existing to ensure statewide support in their implementation. Among the many important aspects of its plan, Kansas is participating in the MOSAIC consortium as a leading State responsible for contributing to the Computerized Assessment and Learning computerized engine. The State has developed a thorough plan for incorporating early childhood education formative assessments and data into its system and carries this strategy forward across a P-20 array to include the development of blended Career and Academic Assessments that focus on readiness for work and postsecondary education.</p>		
Total	70	66

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The application provides complete evidence in the narrative and appendices that Kansas has completed ten of the twelve required elements specified by the America COMPETES Act.</p>		

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: As Kansas begins this process with two data systems, the application provides evidence of the State's plan to integrate them into one improved P-20 system with unique student identifiers. The narrative provides elaborate detail that supports the quality of the plan and its commitment to make data accessible to stakeholders, policy makers and to ensure data are central to support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	16
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (i) The application indicates a plan to collaborate with Student Information System (SIS) vendors, school administrators, and teachers to identify and standardize data elements and formats for integrating local student data into the Collaborative Workspace platform of the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The criterion requires evidence of a plan to increase the acquisition, adoption and use of local instructional improvement systems. The narrative does not specifically address this, although considerable detail is provided for how the State will assist LEAs in utilizing both locally-generated and State-generated data after it is collected. (ii) The application is coherent and emphatic in its detailed plan for supporting LEAs in not only understanding how to use the SDLS but to provide specific support for interpreting the data in order to inform instruction. The plan is exceptionally well presented and detailed in its implementation strategy. (iii) The application describes a thorough, proactive plan to encourage research of the data within the SDLS and also presents an innovative plan to develop a training platform to ensure proper access and use of more sensitive, confidential data by researchers. This aspect of the plan is visionary and credibly presented.</p>		
Total	47	41

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	7
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i) The application provides evidence of Kansas' legal provisions for alternative paths to teacher certification but does not give specific evidence for statutory authority to create alternative paths for principals. The alternative routes for teachers are restricted to providers that are or are linked to institutions of higher education, therefore this does not meet the element of the criterion requiring routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education. Again, the application is silent with regard to the availability of alternative routes to certification for principals. (ii) The plan provides evidence that alternative certification routes for teachers are in use. Since its inception, 829 teachers have been certified through the alternative route and 124 teachers were certified through this alternative process in 2008-09 compared with 1730 teachers/leaders certified through the traditional process. (iii) The criterion requires evidence that the State has a process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage. The narrative points out that Kansas enjoys an over-abundance of qualified principals and therefore does not confront a shortage nor is there any description of a plan to monitor this. The application does not address the criterion in providing evidence that the State has a process in place.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	32
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	9
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The narrative provides an assertion of the State's intention to establish clear approaches to measure student growth and to measure it for each individual student. The plan is to be designed by stakeholders and supported by research but absolutely no detail is provided. (ii) Building upon lessons learned from inconsistent standardization, rigor or meaningful results for teachers or their students, as described by the narrative, the State presents a solid plan for how it will design and implement an enhanced evaluation system that meets the requirements of this criterion. The application offers comprehensive visibility into how this system will be designed -- with the consistent input of teachers and principals at each step of the process -- and then effectively implemented as in integral part of the statewide reform agenda. (iii) The application presents an elaborate, well-conceived plan for developing a rigorous annual evaluation system for teachers and principals which will be piloted in the 2013 school year. The State's vision includes a number of innovative strategies including developing personal portfolios for teachers and the establishment of Professional Growth Teams for principals. The narrative is thorough in presenting a high-quality plan. (iv) The application makes a weak, general commitment to utilize evaluations to inform key decisions but does not elaborate with any specific visibility into how this will be accomplished. The State indicates that it is awaiting recommendations from the Teaching in Kansas Commission. However, this does not alleviate the requirement of the criterion in the four identified areas where evidence is required of the State's plans for using evaluations to inform those decisions. The application does not provide the detail needed to meet the criterion.</p>		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	25
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	15
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The application is concise and credible in its described commitment to ensure equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools. The application presents details for the shortage situation in Kansas, thereby demonstrating that the State does have a process in place for identifying these shortages. The application offers significant details with regard to its plans for accomplishing this objective through four goals. The goals are comprehensive with clear indications of responsibility for each element. (ii) The narrative demonstrates a command of the data portrait necessary to drive an effective plan that ensures equitable distribution of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. The plan offers evidence of a proven program, UKanTeach, which is already greatly expanding the number of highly qualified science and math teachers. The application describes a thoughtful approach for expanding this program and implementing other elements in order to address equitable distribution. The State's plan is impressive.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	10
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The application presents convincing evidence that the State is currently equipped to link individual student achievement data to teacher and principal preparation programs. The State has developed a plan to refine the collection of data across programs with common data elements. In addition, the State articulates a general commitment for ensuring this data is made public. (ii) The plan is clear in its commitment to expand preparation options and programs that are successful in producing effective teachers and principals. The State is participating in a consortium that, among other things, will focus on strengthening teacher and principal practice as the means for achieving this objective. What is not</p>		

addressed, however, is the plan's intent with regard to credentialing options to produce effective teachers and principals.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	16
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The narrative describes a detailed approach, largely vendor-specific, relying upon implementation of a proposal with this respected vendor, that meets the criterion for a plan to provide effective, data-informed professional development. The State's plan includes comprehensive elements to design online tools, utilize mentoring/coaching relationships currently being conducted as pilot programs and other strategies to ensure its success. Because the State is relying so heavily on a single vendor, the question is raised as to what impact a limitation on the vendor's part to execute the State's intent would have upon the anticipated results. (ii) The application presents credible evidence for a high-quality plan to measure, evaluate and continuously improve the effectiveness of the State's supports for teachers and principals. The plan calls for a specific approach for both teachers and principals relying on proven methods. Specifically, the creative approach of the School Administrator Management Program to change the focus of the principal's role from managerial to instructional is promising and innovative.</p>		
Total	138	90

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The narrative and appendix provided do not clearly indicate the State's authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools but does seem to suggest authority to intervene directly with LEAs. One of the statutes referenced in the appendix suggests that the State Board of Education address sanctions to any school, but this is not sufficient to evaluate against the requirements of this criterion. Further, the narrative discusses a variety of additional topics that are not germane to this criterion.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	36
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	4
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	32
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The application presents the State's approved formula for identifying low-achieving schools. The formula is consistent with the guidelines provided by the US Department of Education. However, the State's identifying process seems to suggest that only secondary schools would be identified as persistently low-achieving. The application also lists the number of Title I schools and districts that have been identified for improvement. (ii) The application presents a thoughtful, detailed explanation of its strategies for each of the four intervention models, both the existing policies and recommended enhancements to each as part of the State's plan. The State's plan is rigorous, thorough and well-conceived with clearly understood responsibilities along with very elaborate, collaboratively designed protocols. The plans are linked to specific targets all focused on rapidly improving student achievement. The application also provides evidence of how each of the turnaround strategies has been used and to what degree results have or have not been achieved. While the application satisfies the requirements of the criterion, the narrative and supporting evidence do not rise to the level of excellence necessary for the awarding of full points.</p>		
Total	50	41

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The application presents evidence that the State's expenditures for public education increased from FY08 to FY09. (ii) The application provides a brief explanation of the State's per pupil funding formula with references to additional funds flowing for certain subgroup populations but does not elaborate as to the specific amounts. The application also offers evidence of two supplemental amounts of State funding targeted for supplemental education services for at-risk and bilingual education students and to provide special education services to students with disabilities.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	16
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The State does not have a limit on the number of charters allowed and, therefore, does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools or their enrollments. (ii) The application presents evidence of the State's statutes that govern charter schools. These regulations provide for how charters are authorized and the narrative describes the support offered to applicants. Student achievement is a factor in evaluating effective charter schools. The application provides evidence of the numbers of existing charters, the number of charter applications denied, and those charters which were revoked. (iii) The application does not provide sufficient detail to evaluate the State's assurances of equitable funding for charter schools. (iv) Further, the application does not indicate any funding that is available to assist with expenses related to charter school facilities, access to public facilities or parity with regard to State facility requirements for charter schools consistent with what is required of public schools. (v) The application does not provide evidence that LEAs are enabled to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. The narrative simply repeats the enabling charter school legislation.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The criterion requires evidence of the extent to which the State has created conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates. The application presents a description of legislative actions resulting in targeted State funding that is aligned with the targets defined under the No Child Left Behind Act. This is presented as a reform condition resulting in increased assessment results in reading and math. This is a reasonable condition that meets the criterion.</p>		
Total	55	27

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although brief, the application strives to meet the criterion by asserting in a very brief narrative the State's emphasis on STEM through professional development, common core standards, and addressing teacher shortages. And, the references to STEM in several sections of the application indicate that STEM is a factor in the State's reform agenda. However, the criterion require a more robust narrative of the State's commitment to STEM in several specific areas. The application lacks</p>		

evidence of a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology and engineering. The plan is silent on any vision for cooperating with industry experts or museums nor does it elaborate on any other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines. In sum, the application does not meet the criterion.

Total	15	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

The Kansas application absolutely meets the criterion for being a comprehensive, coherent plan that addresses all four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria therefore providing evidence of a systemic approach to statewide education reform. Further, the participation of 91% of the State's LEAs in support of this plan further affirms statewide alignment of funds to increase student achievement, decrease achievement gaps across student subgroups and increase rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The application exhibits examples of vivid innovation in a number of sections but in others is considerably weak. This inconsistency across the application weakens the possibilities for an effective reform agenda. But there are overwhelming flashes of brilliance sprinkled throughout to suggest real promise.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	332
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Kansas Application #2880 KS 3



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	34
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	28
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	3

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1)(i) The applicant presents a number of ideas, programs and initiatives that address the four ARRA areas. Most important/change producing are: 1- Adopt a Common Core of High-Quality Standards and Assessments: Gain support and approval of stakeholders in the developed common core standards and career-readiness standards by the August 1, 2010 deadline; participation in a consortium of states to develop and implement common, high quality assessments; create instructional reports and other database resources to link formative, summative and benchmark assessments with classroom instruction; reduce the "footprint" of the assessments on students to increase instructional time. 2- Develop Data Systems to Support Instruction: Fully implement a statewide longitudinal data system; use K-12 standard state course codes by postsecondary and labor for admissions and job qualification determination; continue to streamline FERPA-compliant methods for sharing data with other agencies via electronic access. 3- Great Teachers & Leaders: Will allow continued work with applicant's two commissions; facilitate a NSDC audit of policy, law, needs, current practices, and regulations related to professional development that supports both teachers and leaders; statewide teacher and leader mentoring pilots to teachers and leaders from selected low-performing districts 4- Turning Around Low-Achieving Schools: **nothing new or innovative that would signal a change in the way business is conducted currently, which has not produced startling student achievement improvement results for low-achieving students. (A)(1)(ii) Applicant used USED's model MOU which was disseminated to all LEAs within the state. The signed MOU has a modification added that is noted below. The response rate tally: 90.6% of the LEAs (268 out of 293 LEAs) returned signed MOUs, all of which were signed by the Superintendent, and 99% of MOUs from participating LEAs were signed by the local school board. **However, while 94% were signed by the local teachers' union leader, the MOU has a what could be referred to as an escape clause: "The Local Teachers' Association official shall have 30 days following receipt of Exhibit II* to review its contents and reserves to him/herself the unilateral right to terminate the MOU if the terms of Exhibit II* are unacceptable." Regarding elements of the State Reform Plan that participating LEAs supported, 96% agreed to support the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments; ninety-eight percent agreed to using data to support instruction. For reform efforts under Great Teachers and Leaders, at least 90% agreed to each element. The lowest percentage at 90% was agreement to use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion, and retention. The highest percentage at 98% was agreement to provide quality PD. Ninety-one percent of participating LEAs agreed with efforts directed toward turning around the lowest-achieving schools. **Regarding detailed Table (A)(1), a few LEAs have blank elements; without "Y", "N" or "NA". Questions remain as to the reason for leaving these elements blank. **Additional concern regarding union leadership commitment. In addition to the modification to the MOU noted above, a small percentage of LEAs (7) have placed "N" in the Union Leadership column and an equal number of

LEAs have this column blank. Questions remain as to the impact lack of union support may have on success of this initiative. It should be noted that most of the blank/no response LEAs have a small number of schools, however, further disaggregation reveals that although many of the LEAs are small, their numbers reflect high percentages of students/families in poverty: Bonner Springs 204 – Union response: No; 2488 students; 1193 in poverty=nearly 50% Quinter 293 - Union response: Blank; 280 students; 94 in poverty=nearly 33% Wellington 353 - Union response: No; 1130 students; 920 in poverty= more than 50% Augusta 402 - Union response: No; 2378 students; 861 in poverty= nearly 33% Pawnee Hts 496 -Union response: Blank; 107 students; 44 in poverty= nearly 50% These numbers, particularly the high percentages of students in poverty in these LEAs ring bells of caution if the teachers' unions are not on board with this initiative. Furthermore, two LEAs, Clearwater 264 and Baldwin 348 both of which have Blank union responses, have student populations over 1000 (A)(1)(iii) The Applicant completed the required summary table for this sub-criterion, however, there is no accompanying narrative for elements (A)(1)(iii)(a-d), therefore, minimum points were awarded and possible statewide impact cannot be assumed.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	22
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	13
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(2)(i)(a) Listed Applicant leadership appears qualified and some are recognized nationally in their fields of expertise (Directors of Assessment and Instructional Technology (IT) seem particularly strong.) There is no discussion in reference to the size of teams or intent to hire additional staff with RTTT funds. Also, the Commissioner of Education is operating in an interim capacity and there is no mention of the timeline for a permanent commissioner to be appointed, be it the interim or another person. (A)(2)(i)(b) The Applicant's discussion of LEA support is weak with little detail provided other than citing the low-achieving LEA network convened in 2009 and planning to contract with Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) and other organizations. (A)(2)(i)(c) The applicant states that the internal controls to ensure that all state aid programs and federal grants are effectively and efficiently administered in accordance with all state and federal rules, laws and regulations currently in place are working well for all funded programs. A statement acknowledging that the size and complexity of the RTTT grant might warrant a review of the current system and that changes would be made where necessary would have earned additional point in this sub-criterion. (A)(2)(i)(d) Little information is provided regarding how funds would be repurposed or reallocated to support RTTT funds. The discussion focused mostly on increased state funding through legislation. (A)(2)(i)(e) Again, little more than a statement of confidence that the state will continue funding efforts for RTTT programs and initiatives after 2014 is offered. (A)(2)(ii)(a) While the Applicant has a letter from the President of the State Kansas National Education Association (KNEA), it is only partially supportive of RTTT. Issue is taken with RTTT, particularly with regard to longitudinal student data and assessment being part of a teacher's evaluation. (A)(2)(ii)(b) Other stakeholder support, from their U.S. Senator to community organizations, is much stronger, as evidenced by thirteen letters of support included in the appendix.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	15
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(3)(i) The four ARRA reform areas were specifically responded to. For the important ARRA reform area, Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools, the Applicant discussed the Kansas System of School and District Support. In 2008-09 the applicant initiated the Kansas Learning Network (KLN), a network of five identified, low-achieving LEAs. These LEAs represent 20% of all students, 50% of

minority students, 41% of all ELL students, and 33% of all low SES students. There was not a lot to report on as the network was only recently formed. It does not appear that much has been accomplished in the area of assisting low-achieving LEAs and schools. (A)(3)(ii) Required data tables and narrative for ESEA and NAEP are presented. Consistent growth experienced for all students and most sub-categories except for ELLs in reading. **No data or discussion regarding high school graduation rates.

Total	125	71
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (B)(1)(i)(a) Applicant is a signatory on the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governor's Association's (NGA) Center for Best Practices' Common Core Standards State Consortium, which includes a significant number of states as required. Applicant has a Governor's P20 Council that has partnered with Achieve, Inc. to conduct a gap analysis between proficiency as identified by the K-12 levels and college readiness as identified by the postsecondary level. While a good idea, no mention of progress regarding the gap analysis was made in the narrative. (B)(1)(ii) Applicant included statutory documentation regarding state's ability (and intention as stated in narrative) to adopt CCSS by August 1, 2010.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (B)(2) Applicant has entered into three Memoranda of Agreement re development of high quality assessments: Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER), a consortium comprised of 11 states; a State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards, a consortium of 36 states; and the Balanced Assessment Consortium.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	15
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (B)(3) Applicant has a considerable narrative covering nine areas of planned foci (e.g. formative assessments for early childhood and ELLs). Questions remain regarding the feasibility of the Applicant's discussion of a collaborative work space due to lack of specificity in the application.</p>		
Total	70	65

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(C)(1) Applicant has completed 10 of the 12 America COMPETES elements. Narrative also includes four elements that will be "enhanced" with RTTT funding.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2) The Applicant has presented a detailed plan of activities to enhance data system connections between agencies and organizations. It speaks to old reporting and alignment issues that the state has looked to resolve over the years. While the plan is ambitious, no suggested timeline, nor indication of which activities will be tackled first, are included in the narrative.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	14
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3)(i) The Applicant again has many ideas to implement. The collaborative workspace and reporting system is an interesting concept, and within it, the state proposes to develop a Unified Standards Management and Reporting System (USMRS) to link the State standards (reading, mathematics, writing, science, and history/government), and more. The timeline for completion is 2013, and in some cases, 2014, leaving no time for accountability to the RTTT funding of this part of the Applicant's RTTT proposal. The timeline found in Appendix C-3, would be improved with interim benchmarks of success that could be measured ongoing, prior to the conclusion of the grant period. (C)(3)(ii) The Applicant plans to train staff on the use of the collaborative workspace, and acknowledges that, "Since not all individuals or educators learn in the same way, multiple training modes will be offered, including online, train-the-trainer, and remote delivery. The KSDE will conduct formative evaluations to continuously assess the effectiveness of its professional development and training opportunities to inform needed enhancements to the modules." These are the correct words, but it does not appear to the reviewer that an understanding of how difficult providing successful professional development on using data systems can be. For example, it should be noted that a very capable data expert should be on-site for weeks at a time during implementation (after training) to support staff as they transition to this new system. (C)(3)(iii) With regard to making data accessible to researchers, the Applicant plans to develop a curriculum that will be mandatory for researchers wanting access to restricted use data. The training will be offered online and a minimum threshold of competency will be established before access to restricted use data is provided. This curriculum, if successful, should prove useful for sharing with other state departments of education to further their relationship with university researchers and streamline the process for required permissions to conduct the research. In addition, budget considerations are included for researchers for the purpose of conducting formative evaluations of three outcomes and presenting back actionable information about outcome progress. Detailed information on the timelines and persons responsible for these goals and activities is provided in the Budget Narrative for each project/activity.</p>		
Total	47	39

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	9
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D)(1)(i) Applicant has two regulations for alternative routes to certification for teachers in addition to institutions of higher education: State regulation defines an "alternate teacher education program" as "a program to prepare persons to teach by a means other than the traditional, college-based, teacher-education program." K.A.R. 2008 Supp. 91-1-200 (d) as amended August 28, 2009; and, K.A.R. 2008 Supp. 91-1-234 establishes procedures for establishment of innovative and experimental teacher education programs. However, neither explicitly states that any program can operate independent of an Institution of Higher Education (IHE), resulting in low points as prescribed. In addition, there is no</p>		

mention of principals. In (D)(1)(ii) While the Applicant has what it refers to as an alternate route to licensure called Restricted Teaching License Alternative Pathway, it is really more of a non-traditional route as opposed to an alternate route (as defined in this application). The license is for to middle and secondary levels, all levels of foreign language, art, music and physical education and candidates are required to hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in the content area. The program has a number of components including an online alternative curriculum, plan for implementation developed by key educational stakeholders, and a Troop-to-Teachers and (Troops') Spouses-to-Teachers component as well. Total "teachers/leaders" certified in this program last year: 124. Total "teachers/leaders" certified statewide last year: 1730. (D)(1)(iii) Applicant has three organizational structures, all of which focus on various areas of teacher leadership. Two are Commissions: The Teaching in Kansas Commission (TKC) and the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission (KELC). The third is membership in the National Governor's Association's Center for Best Practices Policy Academy on Creating New Models of Teacher Compensation That Enhance Teacher Effectiveness. There is no discussion of monitoring, evaluating or identifying teacher or principal shortages as required in the notice, although the two Commissions may eventually get to the point where they will identify shortages. Applicant states in narrative that there are no principal shortages; that over 8000 teachers are certified to become principals, but remain in the classroom.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	14
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	26
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(2)(i) Applicant plans to use a growth model based on student learning that will be designed by stakeholders. While Applicant goes on to state that research from well-respected researchers in the field will be utilized for support, a longitudinal growth model is not an instrument to be designed by "many hands", i.e. stakeholders. Information in the narrative is insufficient for mapping a "clear approach" as requested in this notice. (D)(2)(ii) The Applicant plans to contract the Educational Testing Service (ETS) through an MOU (Appendices D-13 and D-20) to develop multiple measures for teacher and principal evaluations. This thorough, achievable plan includes: -- A diverse and representative Evaluation Design Team (EDT) to be formed for each of the two educator populations -- Timelines: for the teacher evaluation: Three overlapping phases: Design and Development (Years 1-2); Pilots (Years 2-3); Implementation (Years 3-4) For the principal evaluation: Design and Development (Year 1); Pilots (Year 2); Implementation (Years 3 and 4) -- Multiple measures over time will be included in the evaluation system for principals, including job-embedded performance activities, school progress on the state assessments, and principal interaction with individual teachers with whom the principal has elected to work during the course of the year for teacher professional growth. A suggestion for an additional stakeholder on each EDT is parent representation as they, too, are critical stakeholders in this process. (D)(2)(iii) While the applicant plans to develop and utilize an annual evaluation system for teachers and principals, the information submitted does not support the granting of full points for this portion of the sub-criterion. (D)(2)(iv)(a) Applicant plans to use piloting LEAs' data to inform other LEAs. (D)(2)(iv)(b) Applicant will use information gathered from the Teaching in Kansas Commission to provide LEAs with models that use evaluation data to compensate, promote or retain teachers and principals. (D)(2)(iv)(c)(d) LEAs will assist in defining fair and transparent processes for data use and decision-making and the data generated by the evaluation system will be used to inform tenure, certification, and dismissal decisions. Since (D)(2)(iv)(d) doesn't specifically affirm 'Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve', two points were deducted from this otherwise well-developed sub-criterion response.</p>		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	25

(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	15
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(3)(i) Applicant has developed a four-goal plan for providing high-poverty and/or high-minority schools with equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals. The stated goals are: (1) to develop a cohesive data reporting system that provides measures for the qualifications, assignments, performance in the classroom, and distribution of teachers throughout the state, (2) to improve the system of human capital and revise it as a mechanism to ensure a highly qualified, highly effective teacher in each classroom, (3) to increase specialized knowledge skills to ensure teachers are more effective with the populations of students typically served in high-poverty, high minority, and low-performing schools and that those skills are linked to teacher compensation, and (4) to improve teacher working conditions. (D)(3)(ii) Applicant shares data regarding STEM teacher shortages as well as overall stats such as, 42% of teachers leave the field after seven years and 36% of teachers can retire within the next 5 years. To address STEM teacher shortage concerns, the Applicant will contract for services with the University of Kansas Center for Science Education (CSE), which has a proven track record of increasing the numbers of highly qualified math and science teachers.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	14
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(4)(i) The Applicant has the capability to link student achievement and student growth data to students' teachers and principals and will work to establish a statewide data collection effort that will link teacher and principal preparation data to student achievement and student growth data and will work with IHEs to identify and establish common data elements for preservice programs so that outcome data can be disaggregated by program type. (D)(4)(ii) The Applicant has joined five other states with similar challenges in recruiting and retaining highly skilled teachers to form a consortium to envision a new system of educator recruitment, preparation, development, and empowerment. Key foci of their collaborative work include the recruitment and retention of teachers, job-related interests and behaviors of Generation Y teachers, 21st century teaching and learning skills, career continuum blueprints, and educator assessment instruments. This consortium has developed an interesting "continuum of practice": Pre-practitioner, Novice practitioner, Developing practitioner, and Experienced practitioner, based on the practitioner's development and growth to effectively enhance student learning. In addition, the Applicant has developed a schedule to revise all teacher preparation programs over the next three years as well as, to establish a Kansas Teacher Residency Program at Emporia State University, as described by the Secretary as "the home of the National Teachers Hall of Fame and (where) 'the Teachers College is the crown jewel of the school'". Responses to (D)(4)(i) and (ii) constitute a high-quality plan for improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	20
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(5)(i) The Applicant has a high-quality plan for providing effective support to teachers and principals in participating LEAs. This plan includes well-known and experienced programs that will likely be successful in Kansas as well. Performance data is being collected to measure success within each program and to inform plans to provide induction support, coaching, or professional development for teachers and leaders. (D)(5)(ii) Along with additional activities, the Applicant will develop a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of professional learning that reflects the state reform and RTTT goals, implement the NSDC Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) statewide, develop support documents to ensure effective use of SAI results that align with state statutes, regulations, and guidance, develop a tool kit to guide the implementation of effective professional learning at the team, school, and system levels, and facilitate a state policy audit and develop a local school education agency policy audit process to assist local school boards in reviewing and revising professional learning policies.</p>		

Total	138	119
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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
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(1) Narrative does not address criterion regarding intervention by the applicant; mandating participation in a network (KLN) is not considered statutory authority. In the appendix, Applicant lists six statutes/regulations, four of which speak to accreditation. One, K.A.R. 91-31-40, "sets out the "sanction" actions available to the state board of education which may be applied to any conditionally accredited or not accredited school". However, the referred to "sanction actions" are not quantified, nor entered in evidence, therefore the information is insufficient to assess the ability of the Applicant to intervene in low-achieving LEAs and schools. As a result, zero points are given for this sub-criterion.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	34
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	29
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(2)(i) The applicant has a process for identifying persistently low-achieving schools. Figure (E)(2)(i) Defining Persistently Low-Achieving Schools found in appendix E-3 is offered as evidence of this process. (E)(2)(ii) Most of the steps taken thus far, as well as future plans, indicate that the Applicant appears to be relatively new to the school improvement process. No discussion or evidence is presented for school improvement prior to the 2004-05 school year. If additional actions had been taken previously, (and shared in this application), a fully picture of the strategies the applicant has taken to improve low-achieving schools in the past would help to set the context for the current plan presented here. The Applicant states that the four models offered in RTTT, Turnaround Model, Restart Model, Close/Consolidate Model, or the Transformation Model are included in the handbook they developed to serve as a resource for schools entitled, Title I School Restructuring Handbook. Applicant also states that this handbook will be revised to include current guidance for each model, and listed the changes required. Applicant included charts and required data on past and future planned use of approved turn around models. There is scant information provided regarding the "human capital" side of the reform equation: teachers, parents, principal, community, and alas the students. While plans and process are important, evidence of the human equation in turning around low-achieving schools is missing. For this Applicant, the RTTT initiative can thrust the school reform agenda, especially sections focused on ARRA component, Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools, to the forefront of the Applicant's school improvement efforts. In addition to the lessons learned through the Applicant's experience and noted in the required chart included in the narrative, the Applicant and it's low-achieving schools and districts may be well-served by meeting with and observing schools and districts that have been successful in their turnaround efforts.</p>		
Total	50	34

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(F)(1)(i) The Applicant's legislative budget for elementary and secondary education had an increase of 5.7% in FY2009 over FY2008. (F)(1)(ii) The Applicant asserts that to fund the general operations of schools, the state's school finance formula provides a base state aid per pupil amount for each full-time student enrolled in a school district. In addition to receiving base state aid, school districts during FY 2009 received an additional \$400 million through the school finance formula to provide supplemental education services to at-risk and bilingual education students and \$428 million to provide special education services to students with disabilities. There is no discussion regarding equitable distribution of funds between high-poverty and lower-need schools within LEAs.

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

40

27

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(2)(i), (F)(2)(ii) Kansas' state statutes allow for the creation of charter schools. According to the Applicant, there are no limitations on the number of charter schools under state law. For the 2009-10 school year, 35 charter schools were authorized and 34 are in operation. Kansas charter schools may operate within the following type – Charter and/or charter/virtual. Nine charters are operating as charter/virtual schools – four charters have a virtual component. The remaining 22 charters operate without a virtual aspect. Charter school applications are reviewed by a Review Committee using a Charter School Petition Rubric to rate the quality of each component, provided on page F1 in the Appendix. A table, Five-Year Summary of Charter School Applications, Approvals, Denials and Closings is listed as required in the narrative. There is no notation of the percentage the currently operating 34 charter schools represents of the total number of schools in the State. With regard to laws, statutes and regulations, the Applicant cites eight relevant statutes/regulations with respect to charter schools in the narrative. (F)(2)(i), (F)(2)(ii) Kansas' state statutes allow for the creation of charter schools. According to the Applicant, there are no limitations on the number of charter schools under state law. For the 2009-10 school year, 35 charter schools were authorized and 34 are in operation. Kansas charter schools may operate within the following type – Charter and/or charter/virtual. Nine charters are operating as charter/virtual schools – four charters have a virtual component. The remaining 22 charters operate without a virtual aspect. Charter school applications are reviewed by a Review Committee using a Charter School Petition Rubric to rate the quality of each component, provided on page F1 in the Appendix. A table, Five-Year Summary of Charter School Applications, Approvals, Denials and Closings is listed as required in the narrative. There is no notation of the percentage the currently operating 34 charter schools represents of the total number of schools in the State. With regard to laws, statutes and regulations, the Applicant cites eight relevant statutes/ regulations with respect to charter schools in the narrative. P122 (F)(2)(iii) The Applicant states that the state's charter school statutes do not specify separate funding provisions or exceptions for charter schools. Districts operating charter schools are subject to the same state funding laws and regulations to which any district/LEA in Kansas is subject. (F)(2)(iv) The state's charter school statutes do not specify separate facilities funding provisions or exceptions for charter schools. Districts operating charter schools have available the same state facilities funding laws and regulations as any district/LEA in Kansas has. No other data or discussion is provided, for example, regarding possible assistance with facilities acquisition or access to public facilities. Space and facilities for charter schools is of the utmost importance and charters often need assistance in this area. (F)(2)(v) In response to this sub-criterion, the Applicant cites the following statute, which only refers to charter schools, and therefore, does not serve as an adequate response to this sub-criterion: K.S.A. 72-1903 (a) evidences the nature of the charter school as an independent school—"It is the intention . . . to provide an alternative means within the public school system for ensuring accomplishment of the necessary outcomes of education by offering opportunities . . . to establish and maintain charter schools that operate within a school district structure, but independently from other schools of the district." No other discussion is offered in this response regarding autonomous schools that are not charters.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

5

3

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(3) In response to this criterion, the applicant cites evidence that "... all other things being equal, districts that spend more had better student performance....we can be more than 99% confident there is a relationship between spending and outcomes." Proof of this fact operationally is reflected in the acknowledgement that Kansas' assessment results in both reading and math have shown an increase for the nine years in a row. This is attributed, in part, to school funding conditions resulting from a series of legislative actions beginning in 2005 Kansas Legislative Session. House Bill 2247 coupled with Senate Bill 3 modified the school finance formula resulted in significant increases in the amount of base state aid per pupil, at-risk and bilingual weightings, local option budget authority, and funding for special education, all totaling an increase in school funding of approximately 289 million. While laudable, there is no discussion of programs, strategies, practices, etc. that were supported by this increased funding that resulted in the associated increases in achievement. Nor were any disaggregated statistics included that showed increases in graduation rates or narrowed achievement gaps.

Total	55	39
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Applicant did not have a high quality plan addressing STEM criteria. Narrative included nothing on: (i) rigorous course of study; (ii) partnerships and cooperatives with industry experts, museums, or math, engineering, science or technology-based organizations; (iii) preparing more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, nor addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This resulted in zero (0) points for this Competitive Preference.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: While the Applicant has submitted a proposal in which there are a number criterion areas not addressed satisfactorily to warrant full points for all criteria in the application, overall a passable effort was made to do so.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	367
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Kansas Application #28808ks4

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	51
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	36
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas presented a thoughtful, well articulated plan on its four-tiered approach to systemic and sustained reform that aligns with the Race to the Top principles and goals. Kansas has undertaken authentic reforms in each of the four key areas and appears to have the infrastructure and capacity to begin the immediate implementation of the Race to the Top elements. The application presents a strong connection and collaboration between the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) emphasizing the State's commitment to P-20 education and joint responsibility for implementing reforms. The State demonstrated that it has secured widespread participation from LEAs with 91 percent of the State's school districts agreeing to participate in the Race to the Top effort. Because the State has near universal participation, these districts enroll 97 percent of the State's students overall, and of those who live in poverty. While the State permitted LEAs to opt out of specific Race to the Top provisions, participation remains fairly high across the key elements. Areas with the least support included using teacher evaluations to inform compensation, promotion, and retention (89.6% supportive) and to inform educator removal (90% supportive). Still, with these exceptions, the Race to the Top reforms will reach the vast majority of Kansas' students and teachers including those in high poverty and high minority districts. Further evidence that the State has widespread support for the Race to the Top initiative is that 97 percent of school board principals and leaders of local teacher unions in the participating districts signed the MOUs. Even with the high-level of LEA support, there is serious concern that the State is allowing the local teachers' association to unilaterally terminate the agreement within 30 days of receiving the scope of work. This could undermine the State's ability to implement many of the human capital reforms. This, coupled with the ability of LEAs to opt out of MOU provisions led to the subtraction of points related to Section (A)(ii). The State did not provide evidence showing its goals, overall and by subgroup, in increasing student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment or what those goals would look like were the State not to receive an award.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	26
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The State has a team in place to manage the Race to the Top initiative including the commissioner of education and the directors of standards and assessment, teacher education and licensure, Title I programs, information and technology and special education. The State is commended for having the</p>		

IT director as part of the management team. Too often states view IT units as a support service rather than an integral partner in strengthening teaching and learning. There is concern that the Commissioner is serving in an interim position. Changes in leadership could undermine the implementation of the Race to the Top reforms. Kansas has provided a detailed staffing plan with reasonable levels of effort for positions funded within the agency. The budget clearly indicates which team member will be accountable for each activity. Supporting staff and coordinators have been identified for each subtask and have explicit job descriptions and responsibilities. Job descriptions were provided for any open position. The application provides evidence that the State has well-documented and proven internal cost controls to administer grant funds and has used technology to automate fiscal processes to improve efficiency. Kansas has developed a budget that focuses on building the infrastructure to support long-term reforms rather than significantly increasing the size of the KDE staff that would need to be sustained over time. Examples of these short-term capacity-building investments include: \$15 million to develop the Blended Standards and Assessments; \$3 million to expand the scope of the postsecondary data system; \$13 million for the National Governor's Association Policy Academy; and \$15 million to develop the Kansas Teacher Preparation Residency Program. Approximately 16% of funds not subgranted to LEAs will be used for salaries and fringe benefits within the SEA. It seems feasible that the agency could sustain this level of effort after the grant concludes. Kansas' Race to the Top grant received broad stakeholder support. Letters of support were provided from a range of constituency groups including the state board of regents, colleges and universities, the state teachers' association, the school boards association, and community organizations. While the leader of the State's teacher union wrote in support of the initiative, the letter expressed concern about several of the human capital provisions.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	20
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	16
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application documented an array of reforms the State has undertaken—and accomplished—in the four ARRA and Race to the Top reform areas. The State did not indicate the sources of funds used to support these efforts. The State provided the required NAEP and state assessment data which showed that the State has made significant gains in improving student outcomes since 2003 for all students and across subgroups. However, gaps remain between White and minority students and between those eligible and not eligible for free and reduced price lunch. The large gaps between Black and White students are especially disconcerting. Students with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency also are achieving at lower levels than other students. So while the State is making progress overall in improving student achievement and reducing gaps between subgroups, it still has work to do to ensure that all students are proficient in reading and mathematics. The State has made many achievement gains since 2003, however it did not discuss reasons or theories for those improvements. While the State provided overviews of several programs designed to improve student achievement, it did not sufficiently address the connections between the data, interventions, and improvements in student achievement. The State did not provide an analysis of its graduation rate data.</p>		
Total	125	97

B. Standards and Assessments

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

(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas provided evidence that it is participating in CCSSO-NGA's Common Core 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. Kansas has an existing process in place for engaging LEAs in the adoption of new standards and for securing State Board approval. The State submitted a plan and a timeline that shows it is actively moving forward in adopting these standards by August 2, 2010.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas is participating in three consortia of states that are developing common, high-quality assessments. The SMARTER consortium will consist of 23 states, the State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards will consist of 36 states, and MOSAIC 27 states.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: Kansas provided its vision for a balanced and coherent system of standards and assessments. The plan presents a clear alignment between standards, assessments, curriculum, and instruction. The standards and assessments will be vertically aligned, expand measures for early childhood and ELL students, and integrate academic and CTE standards. The system will include both formative and summative assessments that will be accessible at the classroom level. The State plans to use its existing Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) to provide professional development to LEAs around the standards. Funds from the Race to the Top grant would support a collaborative workspace for LEAs and educators to facilitate sharing and learning about the standards and assessments. Kansas has already begun several of the planning activities related to rolling out the standards and assessments. If Kansas proceeds as planned, it should have a fairly seamless and transparent transition to the new standards and assessments especially given its long-term history of providing students with a standards-based education.</p>		
Total	70	70

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has implemented 10 of the 12 required elements of the America COMPETES Act.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Kansas has demonstrated that the State is committed to enhancing both its elementary/secondary and postsecondary data systems and connecting them to provide stakeholders with the data they need to make informed decisions. The State has strong leadership supporting the development of a statewide P-20 longitudinal database and has committed the necessary resources to build the system. Kansas is redesigning its data infrastructure to support teaching and learning as well as to improve the efficiencies and operations of the KSDE. Points were deducted in this section only because Kansas</p>		

currently does not have its longitudinal data system in place which may hinder its ability to scale-up in implementing several reforms that are related to the availability of quality data.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: One of the limitations of Kansas' proposal is that the State currently does not have the IT infrastructure in place to meet several of the reforms that are data-dependent, including giving teachers the data they need to make informed decision about their instructional practices. While the State indicated that it has made progress in developing a models and it is feasible that Kansas will have a growth measure in place early in the grant period there is still concern that it will not be able to build enough capacity in this area to meet the aggressive requirements of this initiative. The growth measure will be critical in informing instructional practices. The deduction in points reflects the concern that Kansas' data system currently cannot support several of the proposed reforms. However, the State's proposal includes several new investments in technology to expand the data collection and help make the data assessable to a range of stakeholders. The Collaborative Workspace, for example, will put a wealth of user-friendly data into the hands of educators at the classroom level to help them make data-driven decisions to improve instruction. The State has developed a plan to provide professional development to teachers not only on how to use the technology, but on how to use data to identify student needs and differentiate instruction. Other enhancements include a more streamlined process for program accountability reporting. One of the strengths of the State's proposal is that technology appears to be an integral part of the proposed reforms. The State has developed a comprehensive and cohesive IT infrastructure that supports the reform efforts in a coordinated manner; it does not appear that technology is siloed to meet the needs of specific individual programs or offices. In addition to making data more accessible to educators and program managers, the State will further develop its processes and procedures for making data available to researchers. The application discusses a commitment to protecting the confidentiality of students and teachers. The agency will review requests for restricted use files; researchers who wish to access restricted data will be required to take a course on data ethics.</p>		
Total	47	35

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: Kansas appears to have only one alternative route--the Restricted Teaching License Alternative Pathway. Only 7 percent of teachers were certified through this route in 2008-09 indicating that it is not a widely used pathway to certification. The route does not meet several of the criteria in the Race to the Top definition. It is not highly selective (minimum of a 2.5 GPA for acceptance into the route) and is based within IHEs only. The narrative does not discuss testing as a way to opt out of coursework. While Kansas does not have a strong commitment to creating and using alternative routes, points were awarded because the State does have the legal authority to operate such routes and it is using a route to address shortage areas. The application describes an online route to certification in this section, but this appears to be an online curriculum developed and delivered by a consortium of IHEs. It appears to be a traditional route where the coursework is taken online. While the application restates Kansas' commitment to assigning an effective educator to every classroom and the steps it is taking to strengthen the profession, it did not detail how it currently is monitoring or reporting on shortage areas by subject, geography, or by high-needs schools.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	34
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	9
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	15

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application clearly articulates Kansas' plans for developing a student growth model. The State has convened a working group of highly respected researchers and stakeholders, including educators, to guide the development of the model. As mentioned above, Kansas currently does not have the mechanism to link their student and teacher databases which is needed to calculate an effectiveness measure. While the State has already laid the groundwork to accomplish this task, there remains concern that it will not have a growth model or student/teacher linkages in place to support the Race to the Top educator effectiveness provisions in a timely manner. Because the growth measure is critical to the success of the State meeting the human capital goals, points have deducted to reflect the State's progress in developing the effectiveness measures. The State clearly is moving forward, but it cannot ensure it will meet its deadlines with certainty. The State has already moved forward to create teacher and principal evaluations that are rigorous, transparent, and fair. The State has a MOU in place with an experienced vendor in the field. The evaluations are being developed with stakeholder and educator input. The teacher evaluation system will contain multiple measures including student achievement data, classroom observations, artifacts, student work, and reflection. While the State currently does not have a concrete plan in place, it has given some thought on how achievement data could be incorporated into the evaluations of teachers in non-tested subjects and grades. The proposed systems are designed to provide feedback to those who are being evaluated as well as to school leadership and districts. The progress the State has made on the principal evaluations is less clear, although they will include such measures as school progress on achievement and job embedded performance activities. Principals will need to develop an Action Plan to address the needs of the school for which they are responsible. The State plans to pilot both evaluations in years 2 and 3 of the grant with full implementation well before the end of the grant. Points have been deducted for the State's lag in implementing the evaluations for administrators. While the State is moving forward in developing its evaluation system and has expressed its commitment to use their evaluations to inform decisions regarding developing, compensation, promoting, retaining, granting tenure and dismissing educators, it did not present a coherent action plan on using evaluations for personnel decisions.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Kansas provided an analysis of its current equitable distribution of teachers in high poverty and high minority school based on its ESEA equitable distribution plan. The application provides a thoughtful, holistic approach to address staffing inequities centered around four overarching goals: -- improving the data reporting to better identify inequities; -- improving the system of human capital including analyzing district hiring practices and considering financial incentives for hard to staff schools; -- providing professional development to teachers to give the skills they need to teach in hard to staff schools; and -- improving working conditions. The applicant focused the discussion largely on the equitable distribution of teachers; very little was devoted to principals. While Kansas indicated it has a surplus of principals, it did not discuss whether it conducted analyses of inequities in administrator staffing or what strategies it was employing to ensure that high poverty or minority schools were led by effective principals. The State provided compelling evidence that it will be facing serious shortages in the STEM-related fields within the next six years. In order to stem these shortages, the State is being proactive by taking action now to prepare a cadre of math and science teachers through a partnership with the University of Kansas. The goal of the program is to prepare 100 new math and science

teachers per year. The program includes an induction component to support novice teachers to help with the retention of its graduates.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	9
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 One of the strengths of Kansas' application is its strong connection between the elementary/secondary and postsecondary data systems. While the State currently does not link student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals and link back to where they were prepared, it had laid the groundwork to move in this direction. The application provided evidence that the leadership of both the KSBE and the KBOR are committed to joint accountability. The deduction in points reflects Kansas' current stage in the process of linking their systems and the fact that the applicant did not address how it will publically report these data. . The State has a well articulated plan to link systems, but it may not be far enough along to fully meet the Race to the Top requirements in a timely manner. While the State did not address new credentialing options it is undertaking several innovative initiatives to expand and improve its teacher preparation programs. Kansas is involved in a consortium of states with similar teacher recruitment and retention issues to transform pre-service education and early careers supports for teachers. One of the consortium's first activities was to refine the stages of educator development: Pre-practitioner, novice practitioner, developing practitioner, and experienced practitioner. What it promising about this model is that teachers move through these stages based on their demonstrations of competency—not the years of service that many professional development models uses for beginning teachers. The State is also piloting a residency program at Emporia State University where seniors spend their entire senior year in field-based programs. Finally, the State is integrating the standards discussed in Section B into pre-service learning so that beginning teachers will graduate with the understanding of what students should know.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	16
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 The State will partner with a professional development organization to strengthen professional development supports that ensures that teachers engage in effective professional development every day and that it is collaborative and data-driven. A vendor will support the professional development activities related to Race to the Top such as helping teachers transition to the new standards and providing the tools teachers need to understand how to use data to improve classroom instruction. The application did not provide a great amount of detail on supports for administrators. The State will be providing support through the School Administration Manager Program, but few details were provided about how it will support principals, when it will be implemented, or how it would be evaluated.

Total	138	86
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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:
 The State did not provide the legislative and regulatory citations giving it the authority to intervene directly in LEAs and schools.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The State provided its method for identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools. It detailed the components of its transformational, turnaround, and restart models. The State has made some changes to its models to bring them into alignment with the Race to the Top requirements. For example, the transformational model used in the past did not require the removal of the principal; the model detailed in the application does. However, the State does not have a proven record of implementing these reforms as detailed in the notice. The State has used three of the four models in the past and has a state system of support to assist LEAs and schools with their turnaround efforts.

Total	50	37
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percentage of the State's revenues dedicated to education increased from 59 percent in FY 2008 to 65 percent in 2009. The State's school finance formula does not include adjustments for high poverty LEAs or schools. However, the formula does make adjustments for certain student populations such as bilingual and at-risk students, so there is some attempt at equalizing funding for high-need districts.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	14
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The State does not put a cap on the number of charter schools that are authorized to operate; full points were awarded for this criterion. Charter schools are held to the same standards for student achievement and accountability that other schools must meet. There is no renewal period, but charter schools can be closed for failure to meet academic requirements. However, most charters have been closed due to financial considerations or low enrollment and not academic performance. Because of the lack of a renewal process and school closures based on performance, it does not appear that the State conducts rigorous reviews of its charter schools based on academic achievement. The State did not provide sufficient evidence on equitable funding for charter schools, therefore no points were awarded for this criterion. The State does not provide additional funds to charters for facilities. Points were withheld since the State did not provide evidence that it operated innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: As evidence of other significant reform conditions, Kansas pointed to its increased funding for education since 2005. A legislative audit found that a 1% increase in performance was associated with .83% increase in spending which has led the State to make significant investments in education. The State believes this increased funding has contributed to the steady growth in student performance in both reading and mathematics.</p>		
Total	55	27

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments:

Kansas focused on STEM throughout its application beginning with improved standards to addressing teacher shortages in a STEM-related field. However, the State's application does not reach the standards of a high quality plan related to STEM. The State did not demonstrate a high degree of support from the STEM community. Its major initiative designed to prepare more math and science teachers does not appear that it will expand the pipeline enough to fill the shortage areas the State is projecting.

Total	15	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Kansas presented a thoughtful, well articulated plan on its four-tiered approach to systemic and sustained reform that aligns with the Race to the Top principles and goals. Kansas has undertaken authentic reforms in each of the four key areas and appears to have the infrastructure and capacity to immediately begin implementing the Race to the Top elements. The application presents a strong connection and collaboration between the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) emphasizing the State's commitment to P-20 education and joint responsibility for implementing reforms. The State has secured widespread buy-in from participating LEAs and stakeholder groups including teachers, administrators, and higher education, and community members. The State has already laid a strong foundation on which to build the Race to the Top reforms including developing new standards and assessments and a statewide longitudinal data system. Throughout its plan the State demonstrated its commitment to strengthening its educator workforce through improved pre-service preparation, stronger supports in the classroom, improved evaluation, and job-embedded, coordinated professional development.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	352
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