



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2

### Louisiana Application #3120LA10



**A. State Success Factors**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	43	43	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13	13	

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

The State has articulated a comprehensive reform agenda. It has very clearly summarized how it will address each of the RTT components and has given indications in this summary on where to find more detailed information in the proposal. The State has also made it clear that many of the reforms have not only begun in earnest prior to this proposal, but that the work will also continue beyond the funding cycle. There is a commitment to reform with or without the federal dollars. There is a firm belief that the RTT dollars will accelerate the process and allow the State to assist the districts in a better, more service oriented way. The signatures of the Governor, the Chief State School Officer, President of the State Board of Education, and the Attorney General all appear on the application assurances page indicating state level support. The state teacher association (AFT affiliate) wholeheartedly supports the work in the proposal and acknowledges in a letter of support that the union was at the planning table as an active member. As per information included in the application, the national AFT president, recently, in a public speech, used this state as an example of how the union and the administration can work together on behalf of the educators and the students to achieve reform through collaborative planning. The majority of the district affiliates have signed the MOU. A letter of support from the NEA state affiliate was not included. Several of the districts represented by NEA did not sign the MOU. In the majority of school districts, the board members voted either unanimously or with only 1 dissenting vote. There was only one district where there was a 5-4 vote to participate. In spite of some dissension, the union support as well as the school board support is very strong. There is even a letter of support from a state board of education member who was absent from the meeting when the vote was taken to support the submission of the proposal. The LADOE invited districts to participate in the LA Education Reform Plan, and 59 of 70 indicated interest. The DOE then sent 10 questions so districts would further consider all of the commitments. In response, 28 of the 70 districts, along with 65 of the 68 charters, signed MOU's agreeing to every element of the reform. The State has been very diligent in making sure that the LEA's fully understand all of the reforms and the requirements which go beyond the RTT initiatives. There is still an opportunity for a participant to opt out prior to the start of funding once they read the final scope of work which will not be available until after the State would be notified of the opportunity for RTT funds. While this is yet another confirmation of full participation, it also leaves the question of how successful this implementation could be if a substantial number of districts chose to opt out. It is a possibility, but not a probability, according to the information contained in this proposal, as only 3 boards amended the MOU to have an opt out clause. The State intends to open reform activities to other districts who have not fully committed at this time by using state dollars. This will increase the numbers of districts, schools, teachers and administrators involved in reform from the beginning. It is the intention of the State to continue to involve all districts at a deeper level once the success of the first tier of participating districts has been seen to be successful. The State fully intends to have this be a

comprehensive statewide reform of education implemented in all districts for all students. The State has committed to achieving all goals by 2016 rather than by the end of the grant period, but it has a very detailed process for support and follow through. Student achievement is one of the cornerstones of the plan. Although the State speaks directly to closing the gap regardless of race or class, it does not deal with English Language Learners in any detail. Special Education and early childhood students are addressed.

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

Information given during the presentation clarified that approximately 2/3 of the teacher association members are supportive of the reform plans.

<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	9	9

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

The issue of capacity building has been addressed at a deep, sustainable level as evidenced by budget decisions, support for the state as it restructures, and the 'on the ground' support for the districts and schools. The State is taking an 'education audit' of its work and determining how it can be improved. The State has enlisted one of the internationally known experts in delivery from the UK. This shows a high level of concern for the success of the restructuring and the shift in focus from monitoring to supporting districts. The issue of budget compliance and monitoring along with tracking and reporting to the federal government has also been addressed. The LADOE has already begun restructuring to a service delivery model. The State will continue to review positions that open as a result of attrition and determine if these fit into the new focus and structure of the agency. Each one will either be refined or eliminated with the dollars saved going to reform related support. When successful, the Reform Team works itself out of a job. Dr Michael Fullan has begun piloting change support at the district/school level. He will continue with the participating districts/schools and will also add the State Reform Teams. The selection of Dr. Fullan, who is widely known as the expert on change theory, indicates an awareness on the part of the State that those in the transition at the State level will need support to be able to successfully move to the new way of delivering service, and those at the district/school level will also need support as they focus on becoming effective teaching and learning institutions which have high achieving students as a result of teachers and leaders using data to assess progress and make the best instructional decisions based on the adopted standards and monitored by ongoing, targeted assessment. The knowledge gained from this change process support will inform and benefit others within the State as well as across the nation. The State has included a broad array of partners in its planning process and as intended participants, as evidenced by many letters of not only support, but also of commitment from not for profits, businesses, chambers of commerce, professional educators association, union, elected officials, foundations, charter school associations, civil rights groups, community groups, etc. The only group that seems to be missing is a parent organization/association. While the institutions of higher education have indicated support for the process, their intention to revamp their structures and provide the level of involvement necessary for transformation is not well substantiated. The budget is clearly summarized. At 314 million over 4 years, the cost is less than \$1,000 per participating student. State budget streams are already being aligned to the new reform agenda. The MOU's go to 2 years beyond the RTT funding, again showing a long term commitment to change. The State will substantially reduce its indirect cost from the approved rate of 14.6% to only 4% which will target more dollars to direct services. This is another indication of dedication and focus which is commendable, especially during these economic times.

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

While the proposed structural changes of the LADOE are clear, there is not a detailed professional development plan or process included which addresses the upgrading of skills for the current/continuing LADOE employees as was included for the district and school levels.

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

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

The State has made significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps over the past several years as evidenced by the information included about the work of the Recovery School District and the progress of its charter schools, in terms of process and in the improvement of academic achievement. The State realizes that while there has been progress, this progress has not been great enough nor is it happening soon enough. Rather than micromanaging reform, the State will set targets against performance goals and align all resources to provide support in the field so that LEA's deliver results for students. It is the intent of this realignment to support the schools so they can concentrate on teaching and learning. Having effective teachers lead by effective administrators is one of the first steps in the plan.

<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>118</b>
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	18	18	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

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

The State is participating in (and has a signed Memorandum of Agreement with) the Common Core Standards Consortium (Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices). This is a group which has 48 states and 3 territories as members. The September 2009 draft of the College and Career Ready Standards is available. International Benchmarking has been included in the development. The international benchmarking has only included English speaking countries. A focus on learners with differing needs--special education, English Language Learners, those from other cultural groups, gifted and talented, slow learners is discussed, but not at a level that will assist educators. By August 2, 2010 the State will adopt the common standards. The State has articulated a plan which will continue progress to the full adoption and use of the standards. Within one month of the release of the standards the vendor under contract, West Ed, will crosswalk these standards with the current state standards, plan for transition, make recommendations for adjustments to the current testing blueprints, determine additional standards specific for the State (approx 15%) and develop standards for pre-K and also science and social studies. The State has an aggressive time line, goes beyond the reading and math, and has an early childhood commitment. While this process is happening (between July 2010 and January 2011, an RFP will be out for the development, printing and distribution of the handbooks, posters and other multimedia. Between May 2010 and April 2014, a comprehensive, job embedded professional development program which includes modeling of best practices will be conducted in coordination with the professional development for using data to inform instruction.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The State is a member of a consortium with 16 states and the District of Columbia. It has a signed Memorandum of Agreement. This consortia will develop and then implement common high quality assessments aligned with the common core standards. In addition, the State will make sure the results are available to educators within two weeks of administration to inform decision making for students and to support effective evaluation of teachers and schools. The tests will be scaled to show annual student growth. The State will extend the assessment to science and social studies. Then prekindergarten measures which will be developmentally appropriate will be implemented. The State is also a member of another consortium led by Achieve which has 26 states and the District of Columbia as members. It will develop and implement summative assessments. The State has not indicated that either group has a specific focus on linguistic and culturally appropriate assessment for English Language Learners, culturally different students, special education students, or those who are both gifted and talented or slow learners. The State is a member of 2 consortia and therefore has a large number of state partners. The State has articulated ways in which it will go beyond the basic requirements by adding subject areas and by adding early childhood. It is also committed to a quick turnaround of results for use in instruction and also in evaluation.

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The State has outlined 7 key activities and a time line for implementation. The activities include not only summative assessment, but also formative assessment. End of course assessments are also included. There is a provision for getting assurance for the Board of Regents to incorporate new standards and curriculum into pre- service programs. Again, the commitment of the universities is not as strong as many of the other partner activities for example in the language used..For example, the obtain assurance from the Board of Regents...is a 6 month process ending in 2010; then, attain approval from curriculum committees to change the curriculum begins in 2011 ( a full year later) and ends by 2012 (another year)...and then implement changes to teacher preparation curriculum...the end date is ongoing. It is the only action without a firm end date.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	

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

While the State writes that its longitudinal data system fully implements all of the criteria in the 12 elements, and that the Data Quality Campaign, 2009 states that it is one of eleven states to have all 10 Essential Elements, the descriptions under elements 1, 3, and 4 do not match that statement. The unique statewide student identifier is in process. Right now, generated IDs are used in the majority of the data systems. Attachment of the IDs to all student data is the next step. It is unclear as to when this will be fully functional, but it appears to be soon from the description. The elements related to higher education are not fully implemented, and there is no data provided to explain how or when they will be. The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems is in conversation stage, but, to date is not functional. The same is true for student level information at transition stages which students transition successfully to post secondary including those who need remedial. It is unclear whether #8, the teacher identifier system, is fully implemented because there is insufficient information to know which part of #1, the student identifier, is not fully implemented. The State has been very focused on creating all of the elements for a longitudinal data system fully implementable. The focus now needs to be on higher education.

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

There are 3rd party verifications of the State's ability to use data and measure education progress. Blum, 2009 ranks the State 2nd among 50 in how education progress is measured. Anderson, 2009 states that it is one of two states that have the ability to reliably link student performance to individual teachers and leaders. Editorial Projects in Ed Research Center, 2009 states that this State demonstrates the power of data to drive decisions and improve instruction. The Value Added Model demonstrates the capacity to link student performance data to teacher effectiveness. The State has a track record for accessing and using State and local data to inform and engage educators. The RTT funds will build upon this foundation and expand the capabilities.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12	12
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The State has been using data to inform educators and to improve instruction. This section outlines key activities with action and time lines. It not only incorporates the data planning, but also addresses the professional development needed to ensure that the information will be understood and used appropriately for instructional decision making, evaluation of educators, hiring, compensation, tenure decisions, etc. The State will pilot components of the system and make adjustments based on the pilot before launching the system in all participating LEA's. There is also a provision for maintenance support which will be critical to the success of the system. The plan to use data to improve instruction is very comprehensive and builds upon the current success. It also specifically addresses the P-20 issue of getting timely data exchanged. The State did not include information that the data will be available to researchers.

Total	47	35	35
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	19	19	

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

The State offers (through legislation) preparation programs through colleges and universities as well as non traditional providers. The State has identified 3 alternative teacher preparation programs. Not all of them require the granting of a Masters degree. The State offers 4 pathways to attain educational leadership certification and three alternative routes. A report, Value-Added Assessment of Teacher Preparation in LA: ..., outlines the effectiveness of several of the certification programs and addresses in detail the successes of the alternative certification preparation programs. There is a website that is a statewide tool for matching teachers and leaders to areas of shortage. Additional programs have been started based on newly identified shortage areas; for example a school turnaround specialist program is a newer need that now has a program. The Recovery School District monitors, evaluates and identifies areas of teacher and principal shortage and prepares educators to fill these shortage areas. It has built a successful, national talent pipeline. This successful, accessible best practice will be scaled to be used statewide. The State is very serious about having as many routes as possible to obtain effective teachers and leaders for the schools. The state has a variety of quality programs in use and a process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of shortages which are currently being used in one district and will be expanded to the others through RTT dollars. It was not evident that the need to prepare teachers (and principals who support them) for working with those students for whom English is not the first language and/or are from other cultural groups is being addressed.

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

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

The State has embraced this component and already has begun the planning of some parts while it has other parts in the pilot stage for a very comprehensive system to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. The State's process includes measuring individual student growth, complete transparency with the process that is being designed with educator input, annual evaluations of all staff, teachers and administrators which is based primarily on student achievement with the results to inform the internal and external constituents. The system has individual numbers for each student and each educator so that the progress can be easily tracked, over time and through content. Tenure would no longer be a passive process. Evidence of student achievement will be the predominant evaluating factor for teachers and administrators. The human capital data available to everyone will change and evaluation will be continuous. The current policies and statutes are supportive of the new performance evaluation system. This may be the first state to implement a performance driven teacher and administrator evaluation system. The State has already shown capacity to make changes by reliably linking student performance to all individual teachers in tested grades and subjects. The curriculum verification and reporting portal is a web based system, currently being piloted, through which every K-9 teacher can log on and view aggregate value added data and individual student summative assessment results for every student they teach. By 2011 the system will include a measure for principals based on the academic achievement of students in their school. By spring of 2012, every school leader and their supervisors will have access to a value added result for their school. An assessment will be designed in the non tested areas and grade levels that will be linked to the standards. Educators will be involved in the development of the assessments. The new system for annual evaluation of teachers will affect all probationary, tenured, and non tenured teachers. Ineffective tenured or non tenured teachers and principals can be fired for incompetence. The new system will first be piloted in one LEA and several charters. Once feedback is gathered and adjustments are made, it will be rolled out to all participating LEAs. The State will contract with a vendor to build a tenure notification system for administrators with timelines, data, processes so that the new focus for evaluations is easier to manage and can be used for key HR decision making. The high level of support from one of the two union groups strengthens the probability of this component being implemented.

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

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

The State will create a strong supply and equitable distribution of effective teachers and administrators to ensure that students in high poverty and or high minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals. The Model Staffing Initiative will use the Centralized Staffing Services. This system was initially used in the Recovery School District. Also used was the Human Capital Talent Pipeline. The State will begin by using consultants to develop its own capacity to monitor vacancies and place equitably.

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

The State will link student growth to teachers and then to preparation institutions. There may be some difficulty going to scale with this until the issue of data sharing among the colleges/universities is resolved. The system will rate out of state teacher preparation programs. This will raise the bar on instate programs and will assist with national recruitment decisions. The State will examine the possibility of other 'special' groups including gifted and English Language Learners when looking at teacher preparation programs and the areas served.

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

The State has a very comprehensive support system planned for teachers and administrators with high quality, relevant, job embedded professional development that uses student data to inform practice. It will also include coaching. This system was used successfully with the Recovery School District. The State has outlined 10 supports to ensure successful capacity building so that data is used well and that a school wide culture of continuous improvement is built. The Teaching Improvement Cycle will shift the focus and resources away from traditional professional development to professional learning that addresses the specific ways adults learn best. The professional development will be evaluated with substantive measures that consider impact on teacher effectiveness and student achievement. There will be formative and summative questions to help guide educators in this process with a logic model included. The issue of how time needed for job embedded, ongoing professional development will be created has not been adequately addressed. The State has thought through this section in a very meaningful way and has included a detailed time line for proposed activities. The only portion of the coaching and training that is not evident is the incorporation of specific information on instruction, assessment, and strategies for working with those students who are linguistically, culturally, or need to learn differently.

<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	5	5	

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

The State has had very successful experience with this in the Recovery School District. What is proposed here is a scale up of the process and progress. Legislation has been passed to give the state power to remove local control from schools which are not making academic gains. While the State has the authority to intervene directly in schools, it does not have the authority with districts.

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

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

The State began this process aggressively in 1999 and has had success that has been documented by national sources which is included in the proposal. The State can intervene in schools. There is a detailed process on how to identify the lowest achieving schools, and then there are specific strategies from which to choose that have been piloted through the Recovery District.

Total	50	45	45
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**F. General**

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

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

While the total State revenues decreased between FY 2008 and FY 2009, State funding used to support education increased in total dollars and in percentage, from 43.71% in FY2008 to 48.08 in FY 2009. The State's funding formula applies an equity factor based on the wealth of the LEA. Recent legislation requires that LEA's spend money generated by each categorical be spent specifically on those students who generated the funds.

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

There is no cap on the number of charter schools that can be approved. There are 3 funding formulas for charter schools. The law ensures that the schools receive their appropriate amount state and local funding and that it be equitable funding compared to traditional public schools. Charters have increased from 15 in 2005-2006 to 77 in 2009-2010. Only 2 have closed in the last 5 years. State law requires that a charter serve an at risk student population that is similar to that of the local school district. Minimal academic performance standards have been adopted for charter renewals. There will also be a span of approval for renewals from 3 to 10 years dependent on their academic performance. Charters receive their fair share of federal dollars and are included on all mailings from the State as traditional schools. The Charter School law does provide for building funds, but this provision is currently unfunded. The State has fully supported charter schools and has high expectations for their success. According to an Education Week commentary included in the Appendix of the proposal, 60% of the students in New Orleans attend Charter Schools. Charter Schools provide significantly better results than traditional public schools in 15 of 16 indicators in the State according a 2009 CREDO Report. The State has a provision for traditional LEAs to establish innovative, autonomous schools such as magnets, academies, project-based learning schools, lab schools, STEM schools, and university lab schools. There is no evidence given in the proposal that the innovative schools truly meet the criteria for being autonomous. The State can also sponsor special schools to serve the academic, artistic, and creative needs of students. It is not possible to assess the success of these schools as the proposal does not specify any student or educator results from these new settings. The High School Redesign initiative focuses on high school reform including increasing graduation rates. The RSD schools, where applied increased graduation rates from 50% to 80% which shows this as a successful innovative initiative.

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

In addition to the nationally acclaimed Recovery School District, the State has an impressive 5 year record with Charter Schools as evidenced by the number of schools, the number of students served, and the quality (academic achievement is higher at charters- which are serving at risk students- than traditional schools according to information presented). The State has a statute granting pay incentives to National Board Certified teachers, counselors, psychologists and social workers. It also has one where it is piloting

the Teacher Advancement Program with substantial positive results. The success of the aggressive recruiting practices are seen with the Recovery School Districts ability to garner 6,000 qualified applicants for 142 teaching vacancies. The High Poverty High Achieving School Initiative shows strong academic results even when 65% of the students are enrolled in the free lunch program. This group will study the results and determine ways the process can be replicated in other schools. The exact numbers are not available within the proposal. Alternative Certification Programs are established. The High School Redesign Program which is used in the Recovery School District has increased the graduation rate from 50% to 81%. As stated previously, this State has already begun many of the initiatives and will use the RTT dollars to bring it to scale.

Total	55	51	51
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

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

**Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The State has opened a school which focuses on this priority. It also has indicated that this priority is addressed in several districts which have innovative schools which focus on these areas. Professional development through the Math Science Partnership (MSP) provides an ongoing national model which is recognized for increasing achievement of low income, minority and special education students at a higher rate than their counterparts. There has also been a summer program for middle and high school science and math teachers to work with scientists or engineers where they learn what is happening in the field and then see how to make the content of their courses more relevant. The number of AP courses will be increased and girls will be targeted. The State has recognized that all of what has happened to date, while good, is not a comprehensive system of focus on STEM. To work toward this goal, in December 2009 the partners convened for the first statewide STEM education conference where they established a State STEM initiative with regional STEM hubs throughout the state. These regional hubs will fit into the overall plan for on the ground, near the districts support, that can work in a way similar to the new deployment planned for the state and regional offices of education.

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

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

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The budget has been clearly summarized and justified. There is a commitment that the work will continue with non RTT funds for at least 2 years after the federal funding. At that point in time, all components will have reached scale and been capacity built into the new system with a reform focus. Throughout the proposal, the State has clearly indicated how all 4 of the priorities will drive the focus of the reforms. It is also clear that this State has already begun to implement many of the reform initiatives with documented success. The RTT funds will accelerate this process and move all students to higher achievement at a much quicker pace. While the State does, in a few places, mention students who are English Language Learners, those with special learning needs (gifted, special education, slow learners, those from other cultural, linguistic and/or social backgrounds, etc.) there is not an overt, detailed plan incorporated as to how teachers and administrators will be better equipped to serve these students and ensure their learning is

accelerated at the same rate as other students. It is also not clear that the standards will address their unique learning needs, the new assessments of the above mentioned students will be valid and reliable for each of their groups, or that the teacher and administrator certification and university systems will address these populations. The State does have a clear focus on improving early childhood education and making sure that there is a seamless connection between prekindergarten and the K-12 grade levels regarding standards and assessment.

Total			0	0
Grand Total	500	457	457	



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## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Louisiana Application #3120LA

### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	51	51	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	42	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	4	4	

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

(i) The reform agenda is broad in its scope and covers all the required areas. The plan is comprehensive and coherent. It builds on work started after the reorganization of the education system post Katrina. The application addresses the four foci of RTT. (ii) The requisite signatures have been obtained- all superintendents and school boards, 80% of teachers unions. Each participating LEA agrees to implement all parts of the plan and to align other funds. The Scope-of-work agreement meets the requirements & is provided in Appendix A4. However the districts have been told that they can opt out prior to the submission of the final scope-of-work agreement is signed without consequences to the LEA. (iii) 68% of LEAs are participating. This is 47% of the state's students, 58% of minority students, and 51% of students in poverty. The statewide impact is low. The hope is that nonparticipating LEAs will adopt best practices learned through RTT. No evidence is provided that peer pressure will compel nonparticipating LEAs to change. No evidence was given to support the idea of nonparticipating LEAs making a shift on their own. The goals are not ambitious. The 2016 achievement targets that are articulated in the application do not set a high bar for the students, e.g. move the 4 year graduation rate from 67% to 78%.

<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	30	26	26	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	16	16	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10	10	

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

It's not clear that the Department of Education has the capacity to carry out this agenda. The state has a system of regional education service centers in place that can be used to support LEAs in implementing the reform plan. A reform team will be put in place to assist LEAs. Each priority goal has an Initiative team in the Department of Education. The initiative teams are supported by the Superintendent's Delivery Unit, which is designed after the work of Sir Michael Barber, who has provided direct support in their planning. The state has secured the support of a broad base of stakeholders. Michael Fullan will assist LEAs in developing the capacity to implement & sustain reform. He will begin work in April 2010. The state presented a chart that gives the overview of the transformed LADOE. The reorganization seems appropriate to support a shift to support the LEAs. It is not clear how the state will cause this shift to happen. No detail was given about how the SEA will develop or hire employees with the new skills need to carry out the work of the reorganized SEA.

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

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

(i)(ii)The state provided evidence of increasing student achievement in reading and math. It demonstrated a commitment to increase the graduation rate. However students have shown increases in their NAEP scores, but they are still below the national average and the state's graduation rate target is low-78% by 2016. Further the RSD schools and charter performed better than the state average, but growth for the rest of the state seemed low in many places. (See the Comparison Charts for the RSD & the state.) The NAEP and LEAP scores in some grades show a reduction in the gap for African American students, but not Hispanic students. The average scale score on the NAEP for students with disabilities has shown an increase.

<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

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

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

(i)(ii) LA is a member of the Common Core Standards Initiative and will adopt new standards by August 12, 2010. The Common Core Standards Initiative is a consortium of 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia. The Initiative is coordinated by the National Governors Association and the Council for Chief State School Officers. The standards that are being developed will be internationally benchmarked. A copy of the draft standards is attached to the proposal.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

(i)(ii) LA is a member of the Achieve Assessment Consortium. To date, the consortium is comprised of 27 states. This project will contain both formative and summative assessments that are aligned with the state standards, which are developed in line with the Common Core Standards. The state will retool EAGLE, the online assessment system, to be used for diagnostic functions for the four core areas. They will develop a common communication plan to ensure that the standards and assessment systems are understood in LEAs and by the public. Detail of the development, implementation, communication, and training plans was provided in the B Appendices.

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

The application contains the legal process for adopting standards in Appendix B6. The application contains a key activities timeline that delineates the entire process for developing, adopting, and implementing the new standards. The system of support for educators and the public is included in that process.

Total	70	70	70	
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	18	18	

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

The state data system does not meet all 12 elements in America COMPETES. Evidence is provided in the chart articulating how the state meets 9 of the elements. Missing are elements 1, 3, and 4. These three elements are in progress. The state detailed a reasonable schedule to link several different data systems to provide information that is useful to a variety of stakeholders. They are planning to develop a P-20 data system that links elementary & secondary data to college and career readiness. The data is student achievement data as well as data for management information systems. They also include data to measure student growth against teacher/principal preparation programs.

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

Louisiana's LDS currently informs school, district, and state performance as it relates to student achievement and college-readiness. The state plans to link these data to the state's Instructional Improvement System. The state has a plan to expand this system to provide data that is accessible to and useful for schools, LEAs, higher education, researchers, and parents. They are adding several components to the system-- Value-Added Teacher Preparation Program Assessment Model (TPPAM), Value-Added Assessment Initiative for Schools and Teachers, Human Capital Information System (HCIS), and Annual Student Progress Report. Details about several of these systems can be found in the C Appendices. A detailed activity timeline is contained in this section. It has ambitious, but reasonable goals.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12	12	
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**(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

(i) Participating LEAs have agreed to implement an IIS that includes benchmarking and formative assessments, though they retain the option of purchasing one from a pre-qualified (by LDOE) vendor. 16 schools are piloting the Curriculum Verification and Reporting Portal. In the next phase it will be piloted in 15 LEAs and rolled out full scale beginning August 2011-July 2012. (ii) The LDOE will provide training for personnel in the LEAs on the use of the various data systems. The trainers will train others in their own LEA. The anticipated number of trainers is 1:7. (iii) Making data available to researchers was not addressed.

Total	47	35	35	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	20	20	

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

(i) The state has the authority to authorize & monitor alternative routes to certification.(7pts) (ii) Alternative routes are currently in use. The DOE is engaged with the New Teacher Project, Teach For America, and New Leaders for New Schools. Their programs meet the five criteria for alternative certification. A chart was provided in this section to elaborate on the state policy. The alternative programs are selective in who they accept as candidates. The state monitors the performance of programs. It noted two cases of programs that are currently undergoing improvements due to weak performance.(7pts) (iii)The state has a process to monitor, evaluate, and identify areas of teacher and principal shortages. The primary route is TEACH Louisiana, a statewide website. The state has funded expanding options in shortage areas. Nothing was said about working with English Language Learners though great care was taken to address early childhood and special education. The RSD has been successful in this area. The plan is to scale the model they have used. I did not see any evidence that this could be successful statewide. (6pts) Evidence was provided of alternate route completers.

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

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

(i) LA is in the process of developing a model to calculate value-added impact for every grade that is tested. In 2009 LA created a Curriculum Verification and Reporting Portal, which is a web-based system that gives teachers access to aggregate value-added data and individual student summative assessment results by teacher. By spring 2012 school leaders will have access to value-added data for their schools. (ii) LA will establish a Comprehensive Performance Management System (CPMS) to evaluate teachers, support staff, and principals. The system will include training activities, rubrics, and norming activities. 50% of the effectiveness measures will be student achievement data. The process is being developed with teacher and principal input. A map of the CPMS is included in this section. (iii) Participating LEAs will be required to conduct annual reviews. (iv) The CPMS model included evaluation, feedback, professional development as well as a process to decide rewards and dismissal. D(2)goals along with the activity/timeline chart set out the intent to use the evaluation process in performance decisions.

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

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

(i) The RSD hosts the Human Capital Talent Pipeline to screen for teachers for assignment across the state. Data was provided to show that the pipeline approach has been successful. The SEA will support principals through its Model Staffing Initiative. The project is based on lessons learned from the RSD. A diagram of the process is provided in this section and in Appendix D4. Participating LEAs will lose RTT money if they do not distribute effective teachers and principals equitably. No mention was made of what will happen with nonparticipating LEAs who fail to meet this element. (ii) The state has a system to determine shortages. It is partnered with TFA and TNTP to increase the pool of effective teachers. The centralized staffing system will identify effective teachers that are available by region. The LADOE will

provide consulting support to LEAs in need of assistance in filling shortages in the hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. Louisiana provides money to LEAs to use for incentives to recruit and retain teachers. Details about the initiative is provided in Appendix D, LA TAP Overview. The state is working with preparation programs to support student who enter these areas and commit to stay for a given period of time. The activities and timeline are detailed in a chart in this section.

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

(i) Through the Teacher Preparation Program Assessment Model (TTPAM), Louisiana links student performance to individual teachers and the programs that prepared them to determine their value-added rating based on their graduates' impact on student learning. This process has been in effect since 2006. The data are publicly reported. The model only covers programs in the state. The state plans to expand TTPAM to include out of state preparation programs. The state initiated a Teacher Preparation Accountability System (TPAS). This system identifies the performance levels of preparation programs. Using this system, LADOE is working with preparation programs to improve their work. The application provided an example of how a program in need of improvement responded in an affirmative way. The LADOE will create a similar set of systems for principals. Plans are underway to develop supports for leaders beyond the preparation programs in higher education. Examples of proposed programs Louisiana Leadership Academy and Middle Leaders Program. The LADOE plans to learn from the successful programs and share the lessons with struggling programs. A chart with specific activities and a timeline was provided in this section.

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

(i) The state has the infrastructure in place to support teachers and principals with data. It admits that it has not been successful with professional development. They have hired Michael Fullan and his team to work with districts to develop the capacity in LEAs. The state is encouraging teachers and principals to use the Teaching Improvement Cycle. The state plans to require schools to restructure the day to increase the amount of job-embedded professional development and instructional coaching provided to teachers and leaders. No mention is made of how this will actually happen. (8pts) (ii) The state plans to shift the focus of its evaluation of supports to outcomes vs. satisfaction. The application mentioned asking a different kind of question, but it does not mention how it will collect the data post the activity. Passage of time will be required to measure outcomes. (7pts)

<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	5	5	

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

RSD was created in 2003 for the purpose of turning around underperforming schools. It does not takeover districts. Underperforming schools are transferred from the LEA to the RSD for a minimum of 5 years.

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

(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>			
(i) LA has a system for identifying underperforming schools. Schools are given a performance score. (ii) Chronically underperforming schools are transferred from the LEA to the RSD. The RSD has a record of turning around underperforming schools. Achievement growth has been dramatic. The RSD is open to use of the 4 models. The LADOE is encouraging LEAs to apply to use the RSD approach with underperforming schools so that the RSD is not the only entity providing support to underperforming schools. This process is in a pilot phase.			
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>

**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	10	10	10	

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

(i) The state increased its funding. (Funds provided to education from FY 2008 were 43.71 percent and shifted to 48.08 percent in FY 2009.) (ii) The state uses the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP), which applies an equity factor within the calculation that considers the wealth of each LEA and distributes the funding in an inverse proportion to the LEA's wealth such that poorer school districts receive a greater percentage in-state funding and wealthier schools districts receive a smaller percentage in-state funding. The law governing the calculation was provided in Appendix F1, MFP Calculation.

<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	40	31	37	
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

(i) There is no cap. The law allows for 5 types of charters. Data was provided on the number of each type of charter school. (8pts) (ii) The charter school law gives priority to charters that will support at-risk students. Student achievement data is one of the factors in letting and renewing a charter. (8pts) (iii) Charter schools receive equitable funding. The Allocation chart is provided in Appendix F3a, Local and State LEA Per Child Cost Allocations Chart. (8pts) (iv) The charter school law gives charter schools a priority in using vacant buildings in an LEA, but it does not provide sufficient funding at this time.(5pts) (v) LA encourages LEAs to open schools with innovative themes and approaches, but nothing is said about what the autonomies are. The application states that they do have ooen enrollment schools.(2pts)

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

F(2)v During the presentation the autonomies available to innovative, autonomous public schools were clarified. (8pts)

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	5	5	5	
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**(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The state has a variety of initiatives to support reform, e.g pay incentives for NBPTS certification; high school redesign, and high-poverty-high-performing schools initiative.

<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>52</b>	
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

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

**Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

STEM is mentioned at the end of the proposal. It was not apparent how pervasive the commitment was. STEM didn't appear throughout the proposal.

<b>Total</b>	15	0	0	
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**Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No	No	

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The state plan has the support of 68% of LEAs, which does not touch a significant student population. Effecting 51% of the student population in a state that is at the low end of student performance is an insufficient goal. There are many good ideas in the plan. Evidence was not provided that the SEA understands the depth of change that is needed within the department. The RSD provides a good model. A different knowledge and skill set will be needed to become closer to the ways of working in similar ways to the RSD. The targets for student achievement were low.

<b>Total</b>		0	0	
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<b>Grand Total</b>	500	428	434	
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2

### Louisiana Application #3120LA3



**A. State Success Factors**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	54	56	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	38	38	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	11	13	[REDACTED]

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

Louisiana in breathtaking fashion presents a "comprehensive and coherent reform agenda, and clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide" [(A)(1)(i)]. With force and clarity, Louisiana makes the four required RTTT elements their own. Not only does the state frame the four RTTT elements in language pertinent to its on-going reforms, the proposal repeatedly provides narrative explanations, evidence and charts for how the nine major goals of "Louisiana's Education Reform Plan" map with RTTT's priorities. Louisiana presents a compelling theory of change regarding the level of LEA commitment for the RTTT process [(A)(1)(ii)]. Ultimately, Louisiana secured 93 of 138 LEAs (67.4 percent) as "Participating LEAs," reaching nearly 48 percent of all schools in the state, 47 percent of all K-12 students, and 58 percent and 51 percent, respectively, of minority and low-incomes students. Among charter schools, nearly 100 percent (65 out of 68) are Participating LEAs. Stated differently, in terms of RTTT's national purpose and mission, the initiative in Louisiana would immediately affect nearly half of the state's public school enrollment. (The review addresses below whether this proportion is adequate for the RTTT competition.) Critically important, Louisiana provides strong evidence that the Participating LEAs and schools are deeply committed to comprehensive, even aggressive, reforms to improve student growth. The state did not simply ask LEAs to sign the MOU; instead, the LEAs had to convince the state through a two-step process (letter of intent and interview) that they were ready to pursue major change. Evidence of the commitment is the nearly 100 percent success at having the three essential signatories in each LEA (or relevant leaders in the charter schools) sign the MOUs: superintendents and school board presidents are at 100 percent; the more challenging category of union presidents came in at a relatively strong 78 percent (backed by endorsements from the AFT nationally about the strength of Louisiana's RTTT process). In sum, the evidence suggests that the resulting group of LEAs are ready to be a critical mass of actively reforming districts, which will provide Louisiana the ability to spark, if not force, similar reforms in the remaining non-participating districts. Louisiana directly tackles the question of whether or not its current proportion of Participating LEAs would "translate LEA participation into statewide impact" [(A)(1)(iii)]. In one of the proposal's best sequences, Louisiana explains the RTTT process as the pivotal second phase in a three-phase reform effort. Phase one has been the comprehensive work on standards, assessments, accountability, teacher and leader quality, and school turnaround that has been underway the past decade, and dramatically intensified since Katrina struck. In that phase, reform was primarily limited to the schools in the Recovery School District (RSD) and statewide efforts. RTTT, as the second phase, would push comprehensive reform out to nearly half of the state. Because of the rigorous selection process for Participating LEAs, Louisiana believes it is highly likely that the changes would be widely lauded and impossible for other LEAs to ignore. Louisiana, fortunately, will not leave the expansion of comprehensive reform after RTTT to chance. In phase three, the state will

move all LEAs in the state to adopt best practice elements of the Louisiana Education Reform Plan through three interrelated levers: (1) competitive seed grants for "non-Participating LEAs" to adopt practices proven successful through RTTT; (2) extensive information sharing across the state and through formal education structures and networks about what worked best through RTTT; and (3) anticipated market pressure on other LEAs to change when the student growth rates in Participating LEAs are promulgated around the state. Simply put, Louisiana's plan is sophisticated: it promotes change through a triumvirate of incentive grants, information sharing, and market mechanisms and pressure.

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

Louisiana moved into the middle of the high range on "translating LEA participation into statewide impact" [(A)(1)(iii)] based on the state team's presentation to reviewers. The state clarified the proposal's argument that statewide impact will be bolstered by two major mechanisms: 1) key reforms central to RTTT--most notably the new assessment and data management systems--will be applied across the state to all LEAs; and, 2) the state is realigning current funding to advance RTTT priorities in all LEAs. These two mechanisms will give greater impetus to the levers noted in the Tier 1 review, thereby helping to encourage non-Participating LEAs to adopt RTTT reforms.

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

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

Louisiana presents an excellent theory of change for "building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans" [(A)(2)(i)]. The state's plan is grounded in a coherent approach to building a "performance culture system" from the Louisiana Department of Education right through to classrooms across the state. The proposal outlines that performance management capacity, and change management capacity, must be strong at the state level, the regional level, in LEAs and in individual schools. The state wins kudos for discussing the importance of ensuring impact all the way to the classroom level. Indeed, to quote the proposal, "Change comes best when support—technical and otherwise—is as close to the LEAs [and schools] as possible." This recognition comes from several years of intense experience with RSD. Thus, Louisiana models its RTTT implementation plan around four elements to ensure classroom level effects: (1) sustained leadership and accountability at every level of the system; (2) a small list of measurable goals for each major priority; (3) evaluation of activities as to their impact on student achievement and their ability to drive best practices to scale; and (4) simple and formal tools and processes that are "built and owned by LEAs" to take reforms beyond pilots. These points may be considered "textbook" requirements for educational change in this new century; fortunately, it is a textbook that Louisiana is acting out, not just reading or reviewing. Louisiana bolsters its theory of change with a definite structure for RTTT. Roles and responsibilities are delineated with clarity, starting with a leading "Reform Team" and moving through Regional Education Service Centers, LEAs, and Professional Learning Networks (superintendents, principals, and teachers). At each point in the structure, performance based goals and tasks are listed. The intention, as has been the case with RSD, is to hold groups and individuals accountable for their performance against goals and tasks—those that succeed are placed in key roles; those that do not are replaced. Louisiana is very smart to "lock in" its capacity for change at the state, district and school levels through the help of two internationally renowned experts. First, as a way to make sure performance management succeeds, Louisiana recently turned to the talents of Sir Michael Barber to create the Superintendent's Delivery Unit, which is solely intended to ensure that the state department of education is punctual in achieving priority goals. As has proven vital in other organizational transformations, SDU is designed to ensure that performance management does not become overrun by daily and weekly demands and crises. Second, looking closer to the implementation challenges at the ground-level, Louisiana is wise to draw on the superior work of Dr. Michael Fullan's team, who will guide creation of "District Capacity Teams," "Principal Learning Networks," and "School Leadership Teams." Louisiana's handling of the budget is first-rate. The budget summary and overall narrative is clear and ties neatly into

the major RTTT goals. The subsequent project organization continues the clear presentation with understandable line-items and narrative. Staying true to the unifying goal of the proposal—to improve student growth by ensuring all students have good teachers, who in turn have good leaders—Louisiana breaks the overall RTTT request into dollar value per student. While funding will not be applied as such, it underscores the state's overall pledge to measure impact at the student level. Another budgetary strength is that Louisiana actively aligns other Federal and state educational funding with the RTTT process. It is obvious that the state sees RTTT as a central structure in its educational future, not as a stand-alone project. Lastly, Louisiana explains well how it will continue RTTT work after the grant expires, which is especially important since the state will apply many RTTT funds to personnel. The state has concluded that it can repurpose 62 personnel over the life of the grant, and, based on typical attrition rates, have the ability to allocate another 160 new open positions over four years. The budget appendix makes the case for sustainability even stronger by indicating that the RTTT proposal is structured so that by year four only \$13.4 million of the grant will be for recurring costs. Louisiana is confident it can cover that amount in subsequent years. Regarding the criteria "using broad stakeholder support" [(A)(2)(ii)], Louisiana has a good explanation for how it will keep all key constituents and power bases across the state informed during the RTTT process. The plans for the "within system" constituents (educators and others working at the state, regional, LEA or school levels) are strong—in large part because over half will be directly involved in the reforms. The only negative comment in this section relates to lack of detail as to how the Reform Team will pull all the "other critical stakeholders" together so that the state can maximize their interest and resources. The proposal provides a good delineation of these various stakeholders (i.e., business, higher education, community agencies, non profits), as well as the resources they can provide (i.e., communications, research, funding, political will, expertise). Unfortunately, in each case only one or two sentences are offered on how that resource will be tapped.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	19	19

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

As conveyed in the proposal, Louisiana is working comprehensively to "demonstrate significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps" in student learning [(A)(3)]. The state is in a solid place regarding each of the four reform areas RTTT emphasizes [(A)(3)(i)]. Louisiana instituted a standards-based state accountability model in 1999. The model's assessment system has been recognized by several independent agencies and reviewers as nationally significant. The state also has done a good job of creating tools to support standards and assessments at all levels of the educational system. Most notable for the RTTT proposal going forward may be the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, which provides best practices for teaching standards, and EAGLE (Enhanced Assessment of Grade-Level Expectations), an online formative assessment tool. In particular, Louisiana intends to build on the foundation of EAGLE as it advances its statewide assessment system. Louisiana has moved on multiple fronts to incorporate "value-added" data plans and systems into assessment processes. The state was one of the first to link student achievement data to teacher preparation programs, which has enabled efforts to improve programs by applying evidence of any changes in student results. Based on the teacher preparation model, Louisiana will be developing a statewide value-added assessment model for teachers and schools. In terms of human capital (teachers and leaders), Louisiana definitely has acted on the premise that, to quote the proposal, "teachers are the most important factor in a student's education." The state has been at the forefront nationally in offering alternative pathways into the profession, most notably in the RSD through the influx of Teach for America and New Teacher Project. Together, these two organizations place over 500 new teachers annually across the state. New leadership has been identified and developed through the Louisiana School Turnaround Specialist Program, which since 2007 has been building a cadre of high-potential school leaders to turnaround chronically underperforming schools. The fourth reform priority—school turnarounds—may well be Louisiana's educational hallmark since Katrina. In 2003, the RSD was established by the Louisiana Legislature to actuate the stance that "school districts with persistently low-

performing schools would lose their right to operate those schools." RSD schools are now found by independent research to be out-performing comparable schools not in the RSD fold. From all evidence in the proposal, Louisiana is making good progress at "improving student outcomes" [(A)(3)(ii)]. Student achievement has been increasing on NAEP in reading at the fourth grade level and in math. According to the proposal, Louisiana is one of seven states that consistently outpaced the nation in improvement in NAEP math scores between 1992 and 2005 (EPE Research Center). Student achievement has also shown annual growth on the state's criterion referenced, ESEA-compliant LEAP tests. Notably, RSD results on LEAP typically surpassed state average increases, even though RSD has a higher proportion of low-income and minority students than non-RSD schools. This is important to the RTTT proposal, since much of the proposed work draws on the lessons from RSD. In terms of the achievement gap, the proposal provides solid evidence that Louisiana is decreasing the gap on both NAEP and LEAP. According to the Education Trust (2009), Louisiana is the only state in which the gap between African-Americans and white students has narrowed significantly in both 4th grade reading and 8th grade math. Louisiana's high school graduation rate is low, but is increasing. Between 2001 and 2009, the graduation rate rose from 61.3 percent to 66.6 percent. For all the reform work underway in the state, the overall low level, and the slow improvement rate, is disturbing. The likely explanation is that the intensive reforms are still too young to have mitigated the deep-set academic and social problems that typically cause high school failure. Louisiana is clear, however, on its commitment to raising the high school graduation rate as one of its primary performance measures for RTTT.

Total	125	103	105	
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	40	36	36	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	18	18	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	18	18	

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

Louisiana scores strongly on the criterion for "participating in consortium developing high quality standards" [(B)(1)(i)]. The state is part of the NGA/CCSSO initiative to develop common core standards, joining 48 states and three territories in the effort. Louisiana will have four representatives on different K-12 working groups. The proposal makes clear that the state is prepared to implement a high quality plan for the adoption and rollout of the resulting standards [(B)(1)(ii)]. Once released, Louisiana will begin a multi-year effort (clearly delineated in the proposal) to align the new standards with current standards, make modifications to formative and summative assessments, identify additional standards unique to Louisiana (up to 15 percent maximum), produce and disseminate communication materials, and institute professional development at regional, LEA and school levels. Louisiana is wise to bring outside experts into the process through WestEd and to have the effort involve key stakeholders through specific revision and content committees. A plus for Louisiana is that, based on its existing Grade Level Expectations, it is well poised to support common core standards through proven methods for developing and disseminating professional development for curricular materials and assessments.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	10	8	8	
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Louisiana already is well down the path to core standards that fit "hand-in-glove" with high-quality assessments. "Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments" [(B)(2)] clearly has been a top priority for Louisiana for nearly a decade. Under the RTTT initiative, the state will be part of two

consortia (i.e., BESE and Achieve) that will bring together 16 states and 26 states, respectively, to develop and support implementation of rigorous assessments tied to the new common core standards. Louisiana has at least two big advantages for maximizing the value of new student assessments: the foundation of its existing assessment system and EAGLE, its online data reporting and analysis system for educators. Echoing nearly all parts of the proposal, this section conveys strong plans for how Louisiana will participate in the two consortia and bring the results "back home." Unfortunately, the proposal is surprisingly light on how Louisiana will ensure that the assessments are rigorous and match the state's strong early work on value-added measures and data systems.

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

Louisiana presents exceptional plans for "supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments" [(B)(3)]. First off, the state espouses vital understanding of the limits of standards and assessments: "Louisiana has learned that high quality standards and assessment alone are not enough to raise student achievement by significant levels." From experience, Louisiana knows that student performance improves only if standards and assessments are aligned with a coherent curriculum and strong professional development. With this awareness in hand, Louisiana outlines an excellent plan for ensuring that standards and assessments are linked to curriculum and backed-up by job-embedded, ongoing professional development. Overall, Louisiana has a five-part comprehensive plan for ensuring that the transition to standards and assessments is well supported. The five parts underscore the sophistication of Louisiana's understanding of educational systems, organizational change, and the need to efficiently come at a problem from several related vantage points. The five range from implementing standards and assessments aligned with college and career readiness expectations; to aligning the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum with the new standards and assessments; to providing professional learning for teachers that focuses on both content knowledge and pedagogical skills; and, expanding the AP program to increase rigor in the curriculum in a tangible way. Most important in this section of the proposal may well be Louisiana's attention to implementation at the LEA and school level that provides "tactile experiences in using the new standards through various professional learning methods" and the state's formal "Teaching Improvement Cycle." The value here, as is later illuminated in Section D, is that the state has robust systems to ensure that far-reaching state policies lead to improved practices by principals and teachers, and ultimately to improvements in student learning. Lastly, this section starts a pattern that carries through the rest of the proposal of providing an excellent Key Activities/Timeline, which delineates each key activity and the related evidence, action and start-end dates. Moreover, the planning chart is followed by specific listing of responsible parties—by name and title. With this chart, Louisiana demonstrates vital attention to planning for careful and effective use of RTTT funds.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>	
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	

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

Louisiana reports that its "longitudinal data system (LDS) fulfills and fully implements all criteria identified in the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act" [(C)(1)]. However, based on the accompanying table in the proposal, Louisiana does not provide evidence that it has achieved America COMPETES elements 1, 3 and 4. As a result, the state is awarded 18 points for achieving nine of the elements.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Pervading the entire proposal, and especially this section, is Louisiana's explicit commitment to "accessing and using state data" [(C)(2)]. The state demonstrates repeatedly that it has a strong belief in having high quality data on students, teachers, principals and their performance at the heart of all important decision making. Louisiana has put a strong stake in the ground around value-added data systems and assessment models. As noted earlier in the review, the state is applying the value-added methodology to teacher preparation program assessments and soon will do the same for evaluations of schools and teachers. Essential to extensive use of data regarding students and personnel, Louisiana is building a "Human Capital Information System (HCIS)." The new system will facilitate key decision makers' use of the wide array of data and information on certifications, value-added effects, teacher evaluations, placement records, promotion records and compensation data. Louisiana also intends to soften the hard edges and complexity of data access and availability by producing an "Annual Student Progress Report," which will let parents, teachers and schools leaders know if a student is on-track or at-risk. Louisiana is to be commended for making sure that its robust data system works for the individuals most essential to student learning—parents, teachers and schools leaders. Louisiana again provides an excellent Key Activities/Timeline chart listing visibly the what, how, when and who of the work plan.

**(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction**

18

12

17



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

"Using data to improve instruction" [(C)(3)] is the penultimate measure of the merits of any data system. Louisiana is exceptional throughout the proposal at providing theories of action, and real plans (i.e., Key Activity/Timeline charts), for how the particular reform priority will influence instruction and student learning. This pattern holds strongly as the state addresses ways that its robust data system will improve instruction. The state has a thoughtful guiding principle in this section: "Ensuring effective teachers in every classroom requires both data about teachers and data for teachers." Louisiana acknowledges that its current LDS does not yet provide the data necessary to inform instruction on a weekly or monthly basis. The state is spot-on to recognize that one of the biggest barriers to data-based decision making by front-line educators is the difficulty of data analysis—either due to lack of time or knowledge. Fortunately, the state has in place an excellent on-line mechanism, EAGLE, that will be modified and expanded in user-friendly ways to help teachers and principals have the analysis they need to make timely, formative decisions. Similarly, Louisiana has strong plans for updating its Human Capital Information System to provide teachers with frequently-updated effectiveness information, which will be critical for allowing them to identify areas of instructional weaknesses and opportunities for professional development. [(C)(3)(i)] Louisiana knows from experience—with RSD and its High Performance High Poverty (HPPH) schools—that coaching and professional development is essential to establishing a professional culture rooted in data analysis. As a result, besides the updates to EAGLE, Louisiana plans to provide job-embedded professional development on how to make best use of data systems and their reports. One coach also will be provided to sets of seven schools to provide front-line guidance and training. [(C)(3)(ii)]. Lastly, for all the notable aspects of this section, it is surprising that Louisiana gives short shrift to the criteria about making data available to researchers. [(C)(3)(iii)]. For sure, the new data systems will be invaluable to researchers, but the state does not explain in reasonable detail how the system would be made available in a coordinated and efficient way to those most able to independently probe the short and long-term effects of reform in Louisiana. Louisiana would be wise to use the data system as an incentive to bring higher education resources together in a formal research and evaluation consortium, which would address the questions and issues most relevant to school reform.

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

Based on the state team's presentation to the reviewers, Louisiana moved into the top of the high range for the criterion, "using data to improve instruction" [(C)(3)]. The state team clarified that researchers will have formal and coordinated access to the new data systems through several avenues: the statewide higher education consortium, work on standards cross-referencing, and work on teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Total	47	34	39
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	12	18	

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

Louisiana evidences a clear-cut commitment in the proposal to "providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals" [(D)(1)]. The state provides an understandable outline of the legal, statutory and regulatory provisions for regular and alternative routes to certification. The proposal also does a good job of listing relevant preparation programs, the types of degrees offered, the number of "completers," whether or not they are traditional or non-traditional providers, and the various degree/certification requirements. Unfortunately, Louisiana did not explain with precision how well it addresses the five-point definition RTTT advocates for alternative approaches to certification. The state cites important contributions to its teacher and principal labor force by such entities as Teacher for America, the New Teacher Project and New Leaders for New Schools, but it does not explain how significant these options are to the overall educator labor supply (i.e., definition item 1). Similarly, the proposal does not indicate the degree to which the programs are selective, or the extent of school-based experiences and ongoing support they provide for teachers (i.e., definition items 2 and 3). The proposal also does not indicate the extent of flexibility the programs provide around coursework or the differences in what the programs award candidates upon completion (i.e., definition items 4 and 5). The proposal raises up educational leadership programs explicitly, but again leaves key aspects of the RTTT criteria untouched by any explanation. [(D)(1)(i)(ii)]. Louisiana presents a sound system for monitoring and addressing areas of teacher and principal shortage [(D)(1)(iii)]. The "TEACH Louisiana" website reportedly has functioned well as a statewide tool for helping monitor potential personnel gaps and matching teachers and leaders to areas of shortage. The Louisiana Department of Education also conducts targeted recruiting and placement services. For instance, it launched special turnaround leader programs at local universities when the supply of such expertise proved lacking. RSD gives high priority to managing teacher and principal shortages. The system has evolved to the point that last year a pool of 13,000 applicants was culled to 764 top prospects for openings in high-poverty, high-minority schools. Based on this success, the state will bring the RSD model statewide.

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

Louisiana moved into the middle of the high range for the criterion, "providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals" [(D)(1)]. The state team clarified in its presentation that the proposal does address the required RTTT definitions for alternative pathways. Most notable is that 50 percent of the alternative paths are not connected to higher education--allowing for great flexibility for talented individuals wanting to become teachers and principals.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51	51
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13	13
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	9	9
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24	24

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

Louisiana argues that it is a national leader in "improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance" [(D)(2)]. The proposal backs up the state's lofty claim with significant evidence. As seen

before, this section presents an excellent Key Activities/Timeline plan, in this case outlining actions, timing and roles and responsibilities for nine key activities to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. Louisiana goes beyond the RTTT requirement that "significant" weight be placed on student achievement in performance review and instead requires that student achievement be the "predominant" evaluation factor. Louisiana's Education Reform Plan, the basis of the RTTT proposal, links student achievement to all individual teachers in tested grades and subjects. Going forward, the state intends to make this connection all that more secure with its new standards-based accountability system and expanded use of value-added measurement models. [(D)(2)(i)]. The central mechanism for connecting standards, assessments, and student growth to teacher and principal performance will be the new Comprehensive Performance Management System (CPMS). Remarkably robust, CPMS is designed to evaluate teachers, leaders and staff with 50 percent of the emphasis on value-added (i.e., student growth) student achievement data and the other 50 percent from other academic achievement factors (e.g., observations, 360 degree feedback, performance rubrics). Most impressive is that CPMS works as a continuous improvement feedback model, with key points in the cycle including selection of new teachers, setting teachers' student growth goals and plans, determining teachers' developmental needs through formative evaluations, providing developmental support, completing summative evaluation, and giving rewards or implementing consequences. Incorporating a sophisticated hierarchical model, the CPMS incorporates the individual teacher level and the school-wide level, thereby aligning teacher plans and review with the larger performance objectives and continuous improvement cycle for the teacher's school. Administrators, principals and teachers will participate in design sessions to give input on evaluation tools, training options and reporting processes. [(D)(2)(ii)]. Louisiana will incorporate annual evaluations in a well paced fashion. In using CPMS, Participating LEAs will be required to conduct annual evaluations for teachers and provide feedback within 48 hours; formative evaluations will require 24-hour turnaround. The effort will start with a pilot in one LEA and several charter schools, allowing for teacher and principal feedback on ways to improve the annual evaluations before going to all Participating LEAs. [(D)(2)(iii)]. The ultimate measure of CPMS will be its value to key decisions [(D)(2)(iv)]. A forte of the system is that it will require teachers and administrators to align professional development to areas of weakness as identified in the review process. The interventions are intended to be prompt, as evidenced by the stiff requirement that formative evaluations be reported within 24 hours of being conducted. In terms of compensation, promotion and retention, all Participating LEAs have agreed to the bold step to have all human capital decisions linked to student outcomes. Louisiana has begun to tackle the tough question of a performance-based compensation system through a statewide commission funded by a competitive grant from the NGA. Not shying away from yet another tough issue, Louisiana is addressing tenure through CPMS, shifting the decision on the awarding of tenure from a passive to active mode—that is, no longer will tenure be awarded solely because of time in the job. Lastly, Louisiana is taking an aggressive stance on removing ineffective teachers and principals. Participating LEAs have agreed to act annually on the results of CPMS and remove ineffective teachers. Giving the plan teeth, principals will be evaluated based on the number of effective teachers (per CPMS) in their building. Administrators will transition to performance-based contracts as part of the process.

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

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

Louisiana scores exceptionally well with its plans for "ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals" [(D)(3)]. A top priority for Louisiana is placing highly effective teachers and leaders in all schools, but especially high-poverty and high-minority schools. The state has an impressively comprehensive plan built around three well selected components: redefining educator evaluation to remove ineffective teachers; creating a talent pipeline; and providing intensive human resource management

assistance through "Centralized Staffing Services." The first of these components ties this criterion back to the CPMS teacher improvement and evaluation system. The other two correctly promote mechanisms necessary to land the best talent possible in minority and low-income schools. A big challenge, which Louisiana is taking on here, is the common failing of LEAs to know how to hire and place high-quality candidates. Repeating the proposal's pattern of coherent action models, Louisiana has a well constructed Human Capital Talent Pipeline that will be guide the new work. [(D)(3)(i)]. In terms of hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas [(D)(3)(ii)], Louisiana has laid out a series of coordinated actions that aptly tie back to other parts of the larger reform plan. The elements are presented with good specifics in the Key Activities/Timeline for this criteria area. Again, Louisiana shows excellent care in the planning process for their proposed RTTT funding.

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

Louisiana may well be setting the pace nationally in "improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs" [(D)(4)]. The proposal indicates that Louisiana is the only state in the nation that uses value-added data to evaluate the effectiveness of its teacher preparation programs [(D)(4)(i)]. Not only has the state gathered the data, it is holding education schools accountable. For instance, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette recently froze admissions to an underperforming non-Masters alternative certification program until improvements could be made. With RTTT funding, Louisiana is making the smart move to build out the teacher preparation accountability system and to create a similar accountability system for leader preparation programs. In terms of expanding preparation and credentialing options that are performing well, Louisiana presents a creative mix of approaches. [(D)(4)(ii)]. For teacher programs, the state will provide financial incentives to reward programs (and their graduates) that rate highly in the accountability system. The state also will coordinate with three universities to pilot one year full-time teaching residences in order to test a promising alternative certification model. For leaders, the state will design a new leadership academy that will be based in multiple sites in the state, identify the most effective current programs for expansion, develop programs to bring along promising mid-level leaders, and fund high potential current leaders in high-poverty, high minority schools to attend nationally recognized leadership training. Astutely, Louisiana proposes to use RTTT to galvanize the entire higher education community behind the state's reform plans. In particular, it will work with schools of education to align their curriculum and programs with the core elements of the RTTT reform. This will be a challenge, but an essential one to tackle. Overall, this section is grounded in a tight and well prepared Key Activities/Timeline Plan, which also lists roles and responsibilities. Once again, the Louisiana work plan is definite and traceable.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	14	17	
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**(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

All through this proposal Louisiana has given careful attention in its concepts, theories of action, and Key Activities/Timeline plans to "providing effective support to teachers and principals" [(D)(5)(i)(ii)]. With refreshing frankness, Louisiana highlights in this section that providing effective support to teachers and principals is a big challenge, and one that the state historically has struggled to do well. Echoing concepts and actions outlined earlier, this section describes in more depth the important partnership with Dr. Michael Fullan's team to implement the District Capacity Building process in Participating LEAs. The great strength of the process is that it will build systems and structure to assist teacher and principals with the several RTTT reforms. Understanding that one approach will not succeed, the process is multi-fold: job-embedded professional development, technical assistance, individualized professional development plans, Turnaround Specialist Program, and principal effectiveness laboratories. A key organizing concept for the work will be what has been referred to throughout the proposal as the Teacher Improvement Cycle. Complimenting the performance management system of CPMS, the Teacher Improvement Cycle maps teacher actions through four points: knowing the standards, planning instruction, analyzing results (student work and assessments), and modifying practices to address student needs. Once again, Louisiana is showing exceptional attention

to organizing complex work by using thoughtful, well-tested concepts. The state closes this section with another well organized, specific Key Activities/Timeline chart, in this case organized around seven major actions. The main reason that Louisiana does not earn full points in this section is that principals do not receive the level of attention necessary in an aggressive school focused reform.

**(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)**

Louisiana moved into the middle of the high range for the criterion, "providing effective support to teachers and principals" [(D)(5)]. The state team clarified in its presentation that the proposal outlines a solid system of supports and interventions for principals. The score is still not perfect, however, because the plans still fall short of the depth given to teachers.

Total	138	112	121
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	10	5	5	

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

Louisiana has set the pace nationally for "intervening in the lowest-achieving schools" [(E)(1)]. The state has full authority to intervene at the school level, albeit not at the LEA level. The lead example of Louisiana's intervention capacity is the Recovery School District (RSD). Created by the Louisiana Legislature in 2003, RSD is the nationally known, state-run unit dedicated to dramatically improving schools identified as persistently low performing. "RSD New Orleans" is the most visible example, with 37 RSD charter schools and 33 RSD run schools (i.e., turnaround schools). In addition, RSD has taken over the authority of some schools in Baton Rouge and Shreveport. The state receives partial points in this section since its intervention authority is for schools only, not both schools and LEAs.

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

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

Louisiana has a clear record of "identifying its persistently lowest-achieving schools" [(E)(1)(i)]. Since 1999, the state has been aggressively identifying weak performing schools, using a multi-factor system to rate schools in its "School Performance Scores" system (SPS). Each school is scored annually, with academic achievement accounting for 70 in high schools and 90 in elementary schools. The application of SPS intensified in 2003 with the establishment of RSD. As of this year, RSD consists of 117 schools (out of nearly 1300 statewide), including 33 RDS run schools, 51 charters and 33 schools heavily controlled by RSD through an MOU with the LEA. Louisiana strongly supports LEAs in turning around these schools and has done so through each of the four models RTTT features [(E)(1)(ii)]. Clearly, the backbone of the turnaround effort will continue to be RSD. The approach, per the proposal, is showing good success. RSD schools, regardless of turnaround model, have shown significant growth in academic achievement. Nearly all RSD schools have seen academic gains that outpace the state's average growth rates. For instance, the 10th grade math proficiency rate has jumped from 22 percent to 40 percent and the senior annual graduation rate from 64 percent to 81 percent (recall that the state average is 66 percent). Not resting on its laurels, Louisiana will advance several new approaches to push turnarounds. The turnarounds will be pursued from multiple angles and intervention points: extending the time schools stay within RSD to secure the rates of improvement and growth; creating a High-Performance Schools Initiative to support LEAs willing to create RSD-like conditions and fully implement one of the four intervention models; continuing to

bring underperforming schools into RSD when LEAs no longer are able to succeed; creating human capital pipelines for struggling schools; and, using RSD as a research and innovation engine. Louisiana has set multi-year targets for the number of schools that annually will be instituting at least one of the four intervention models: Baseline – 118 schools; School Year 2011 – 135 schools; School Year 2012 – 157 schools; School Year 2013 – 175 schools; and, School Year 2014 – 190. In sum, the need for aggressive interventions continues in Louisiana, and RSD is prepared to increase its role and reach, especially with a massive boost from RTTT. It must be noted that this section closes with a Key Activities/Timeline chart that is comparable in organization, clarity and specifics to all that have come before in this proposal.

Total	50	45	45
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**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	10	8	8	

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

Louisiana has exerted great effort to "make education funding a priority" [(F)(1)]. Based on the proposal, the evidence is clear that Louisiana has increased the proportion of the state budget going to K-12 education. Moreover, the total dollars devoted to K-12 education increased even as the state's total budget decreased. [(F)(1)(i)]. Unfortunately, Louisiana did not present clear evidence on the extent to which "the state's policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs, and within LEAs, between high poverty schools and other schools" [(F)(1)(ii)]. Equitable funding appears to be likely, based on the various laws, regulations and mechanisms summarized in the proposal, but no direct statements or examples are provided for equalization effects.

<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	40	27	27	
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Louisiana is among the nation's leaders in "ensuring successful conditions for high performing charter schools and other innovative schools" [(F)(2)]. Nevertheless, the state scores in the mid-range in this section due to specific requirements in the RTTT application for two sub-criterion [(F)(2)(iii) and (F)(2)(v)] that were not adequately addressed in the proposal. On the upside, "Louisiana's charter schools law does not prohibit nor effectively inhibit increasing the number of high performing charter schools in the state. There is no cap on the number of charter schools that may be create in the state" [(F)(2)(i)]. Louisiana has been selective in the awarding of charters: over the past five years, 157 applications have been filed for charter status, but only 77 have been awarded. The state has a rigorous monitoring and review process, with charters required to be fully reviewed every five years. Academic performance is the most important criteria. [(F)(2)(ii)]. Louisiana provides charter schools equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and the receive comparable shares for other local, state and Federal revenues [(F)(2)(iii)]. Funding for facilities is a problem. Charters are given first chance at acquiring unused public schools at nominal fees. However, the current charter school law is unfunded in terms of facility support [(F)(2)(iv)]. Lastly, in addition to charters, Louisiana has provided for innovative, autonomous public schools. The proposal lists nearly 30 examples of such schools across the state [(F)(2)(v)]. However, no evidence is provided in the proposal to show that the RTTT definition for "innovative, autonomous public schools" has been met in areas such as "selecting and replacing staff; implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year; and controlling their budget" (source: Definitions for RTTT Application).

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	5	2	2	
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**(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

In the proposal, Louisiana does a marginal job of "demonstrating other significant reform conditions" [(F)(3)]. Several examples are listed as evidence, but only one was a new example: providing incentive pay for National Board Certified teachers, counselors, psychologists and social workers. Thus, Louisiana's score on this criterion is two points.

Total	55	37	37	
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

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

**Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

No doubt, Louisiana has the multi-sector capacity to pursue a vibrant initiative in STEM. Unfortunately, the proposal does not make that case. As handled in the proposal, STEM would be an added minor element in the RTTT initiative in Louisiana. It does not appear in the body of the proposal as a central element, much less a commonly mentioned element. The section dedicated to STEM reads like a list of activities, without a strategic framework or coherent model. The list of activities is not tied explicitly to the four major reform priorities: standards and assessment; human capital; data systems; and, school turnarounds. The lack of a strategic framework is especially glaring when juxtaposed to the brilliant theories of change and action plans that characterize the rest of the proposal. Thus, as required in the scoring rubric, no points are awarded for Louisiana's STEM proposal.

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

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

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Yes, Louisiana's RTTT proposal meets the "Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform." The proposal is superb. From beginning to end, with only a few missteps, the proposal is exhilarating and inspiring. It is brilliant in concept, theory of change and action, consideration of implementation roles and responsibilities, and recognition of the need for state policy to focus most on fostering, guiding, even forcing, change at the ground level—in the practices of principals and teachers. The proposal is crystal clear on Louisiana's aim with RTTT: "to ensure that every child is taught by an effective teacher and every teacher is supported by an effective leader." The ultimate purpose is stated repeatedly: to dramatically improve the academic growth of all Louisiana students. Louisiana goes further: it backs up strong language with quantitative targets and benchmarks for improving student growth and outcomes over the life of the RTTT grant and several years beyond. Louisiana makes the four required RTTT elements their own. Not only does the state frame the four RTTT elements in language pertinent to its on-going reforms, the proposal provides several diagrams (and narrative explanations) for how the nine major goals of "Louisiana's Education Reform Plan" map with RTTT's priorities. Poignantly, Louisiana's superior presentation and proposed work rises substantially from the efforts to overcome the educational crisis surfaced by Katrina. As noted repeatedly in this review, the state is building strategically on the plans and lessons from the Recovery School District (RSD) and other path-breaking interventions in New Orleans and other parts of the state that were started to revive public education after the Katrina disaster. From the

ashes, a Phoenix may well be rising; spreading its wings to bring comprehensive school reform across Louisiana.

Total			0	0	
Grand Total		500	393	409	



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2

### Louisiana Application #3120LA-4



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30	30	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	3	3	
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(A)(1) i. The LA agenda summarized covers the 4 basic R2T elements and aligns them with LA's existing reform strategy. (5/5) ii. By setting a 10 point commitment screen LA has adopted a concentration strategy to select LEAs. This is a legitimate approach to ensure that the Federal funds are used with best effect and in places where there is will and motivation and capacity. In practice this means covering nearly all charters and 28 of 70 LEAs. The latter do not cover a majority of the student population- 47%. Nor does it cover the majority of children in poverty. The longer term success of this approach depends on how LA will scale its efforts – see (A) (1) iii below. The commitment from practitioners and school districts is conditioned in a few cases by skepticism about the absence of detailed work plans and there is no clear read in the application of how this commitment was generated. (30/45). iii. LA hopes to scale up R2T by a small seed fund- undefined, information, and a demonstration effect and public and peer pressure. It seems to hope that these plus the goals set in the existing State plan and a passing reference to technical assistance will motivate the other LEAs. This is not sufficient. There will not be any significant and lasting state wide impact as a result of this plan.(3/15) 38/65</p>				
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	8	8	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	6	
<b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(A)(2) i. There is a clear central structure proposed for R2T but less clarity about how LEAs would be supported in the identification of promising and good practice and statewide replication. Attention is focused on the existing regional service centers with no indication of past successes of the "services" offered or the fee for service regime proposed. There is no client focus in these materials and no indication that the LEAs are using these centers now or if they would wish to if the capacity was enhanced. There is a lack of clear leadership and commitment. (8/20) ii. Statements from a range of groups are available- some identical in wording. The teachers and principal coverage is partial but the LFT letter is positive about the good faith the LDOE has shown and the Broad Foundation letter is good. (6/10) 11/30</p>				
<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	

(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15	15	
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(A)(3) i. The State documents a track record of progress in all 4 areas. (5/5) ii. The State reports progress in reducing racial differences in student outcomes but the data on high school completion is less significant- an increase of less than 1% a year for the last 8 years- the only ones with data. There is a one line ambiguous reference to gender trends and no reference to gender or race in high school graduation rates. There is no reference in the section to the connection between data and action. (15/25) 20/30				
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	

## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	18	18	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(1) i. This is clearly documented. (20/20) ii. The proposed adoption process is credible but might lose impetus because of length of implementation- the end date of April 2014 could be truncated to create more focus on completion. (18/20) 38/40				
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(2) Participation is sufficient to meet criteria. (10/10) 10/10				
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(3) The planned steps and key activities show good intent and constitute a feasible program – although again it stretches out into 2014 for the professional development that will be needed to execute effectively. (18/20)				
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>66</b>	

## C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(C)(1) i. LA has 9 data elements. (18/24)				

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
ii. There is no explicit plan to make the data systems available to key parties or partners. (3/5)				
<b>(C)(3) Using data to Improve Instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
i.LA current data system can not inform month by month instruction which limits its use as a formative assessment tool for local authorities and teachers. LA plans to address this by upgrading some of it systems and feeding other data sources into a new Instructional Improvemnet System (IIS). While commendably ambitious it may be beyond the State's capabilities given where they are now in terms of systems, management capacity and leadership. The delivery dates for the IIS reach into 2015 for statewide coverage which is essential for a mobile student and teacher population.Overall the plan is of medium quality (4/6) ii.LA has a good quality straight forward plan to support LEAs which are delivering training in school time and on the job to maxlmize the use of the upgraded system. There are measurable goals for training coverage and system usage which reinforce the plan's strength. (6/6) iii.LA's plan for researcher use and access would have been enhanced by a draft protocol for access and usage and the inclusion of specific activities such as a request for proposals or a convening of interested researchers in the key activities timellne. Overall the quality is very low (0/6)				
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	

#### D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(D)(1) i. LA has a framework of sound alternative pathways for preparing and certifying aspiring teachers and educational leaders - some of which are independent of higher education institutions. There are exams, residency components . It has acted to make sure weakly performing alternatives are improved.It is a medium quality plan (3/7). ii. LA provides data on the throughput of various paths showing almost equal numbers of completers in the traditional and alternative paths for teachers for 2007/08.The data for educational leaders is less detailed but suggest significant use of alternatives (6/7) iii. The shortage identification process is not particularly robust nor systematic. Presumably conscious of the limited scope of its exisiting mechanisms the State proposes to use R2T funds to "significantly grow the current process". There are no specific activities to do so, no timellnes or goals for this Item. (4/7) (13/21)				
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b>				
The officials emphasized the importance of residency programs and alternative pathways for teacher preparation. This moves the plan into the high range.(5/7)				
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10	10	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	16	16	

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

(D)(2) i. The material in this section describes how student growth can be measured at the individual level (4/5)  
ii. The claims of practitioner involvement to date and planned inclusion in future design sessions are good. (10/15)  
iii & iv Goals and key activities are logical but the material is hampered by the absence of student performance data that is consistent with the R2T definition. The time table seems to assume that work on student growth data will run in parallel with the 2009 pilot of the performance model but there is little to give one confidence that the pilot will surface all the implementation and structural issues to allow for effective rollout. More work on the student growth measures should precede large investments in downstream systems like performance evaluation.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	7	7	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5	7	

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

(D)(3) The main actions are to hire a consultant to provide technical assistance, transfer lessons from the recovery district, use the threat of withdrawing R2T funds from LEAs which do not reduce staffing inequities—a low value sanction, and training for principals in basic staffing operations. Singly and collectively they fall short of the criteria. For example there are no annual targets for the distribution of teachers to high need areas and the projected annual targets for effective teachers are based on theoretical modeling rather than any analysis of local needs or of the circumstances for particular subjects. (The goals for effective teacher numbers in the professional development section while not directly comparable are much more modest. And believable.) There are no specific state wide or LEA specific targets and no process for setting targets for LEA shares of effective teachers to high poverty schools for example. Nor for the hard to staff disciplines.

**(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)**

The officials clarified how the State's plan would address the distribution of specialist teachers by increasing supply, using vacancy information and three year stipends to attract and retain individuals. This moves the plan to the top of the medium range (7/10)

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

(D)(4) The proposed actions are logical developments from current good practice but the actual value is constrained by the weakness in the student performance data. That aside the general goals do not seem realistic with arbitrary very large increases in 12 & 24 months. (10/14)

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	
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**(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

(D)(5) i. The actions are based on current industry good practice but the credibility of the plan would have been helped by some illustrative detail on say how induction would be designed and delivered, the peer mentoring arranged and financed and the turn around specialists trained. (8/10)  
ii. There is a stated commitment to evaluation of professional development but little evidence of understanding the challenges involved—establishing causality links between training and outcomes that are to be realized some months

later, for example. The logic model that is to guide the evaluation is weak and poorly specified and does not seem to be based on either a needs analysis or knowledge of the types of training to be offered. (6/10)

Total	138	86	90	
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### E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	10	5	5	
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> E)(1) LA has legal authority to intervene in schools.(5/10)				
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	40	40	40	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> (E)(2) i. The identification of low achieving schools is well established in LA- sufficient to meet the criteria. (5/5) ii. This section is noticeably clearer and more structured than the rest of the narrative. The proposed goals and targets are feasible and credible. (40/40)				
Total	50	45	45	

### F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	10	10	10	
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> (F)(1) On the basis of the material LA complies. (10/10)				
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	40	28	30	
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> (F)(2) LA meets all but two of the priorities. There is no clarity about the availability of funds for facilities although they help with bonds for example.(2/8) Nor is there is clarity about the autonomous quality of innovative schools in F(2)v.(2/8) (32/40)				
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b> The officials clarified the level of autonomy that schools with memoranda of understanding have particularly in regard to budget flexibility and some personnel decisions. This moves the score for F(2)v to 4/8.				
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	5	5	5	
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

(F) (3) LA meets all the priorities. (5/5)

Total	55	43	45	
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

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

**Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

This is not adequately addressed. In the specific section of the competition narrative the State describes three specific activities like AP offerings which highlight STEM issues and the support statements include some credible commitments from Industry leaders- see the Exxon letter for example. But there are few other references to STEM in the body of the plan and there does not seem to be a strong press for integrating rigorous STEM content across the curriculum or for lifting the participation of females in STEM fields even though the State's Maths and Science Partnership has addressed minority participation. Overall STEM is still an "add on" item in the LA reform package- rather than a domain covered by a high quality plan.

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No	No	

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

There are a few parts of this plan that are well designed and well organized - notably Section E. But it does not cover a significant number of students in poverty in the State. Other parts of the plan are hampered by the lack of clear leadership and assigned responsibility. Some parts lack annual goals even when they are essential to the strategy. Others are dependent on consultants' work that is not even conceptualized- see (D)(3). The efficacy of the strategy for the State as a whole- especially the 53% of students not covered in this phase depends on a coherent scaling up mechanism. There is none beyond peer pressure and the prospect of some unspecified technical assistance. The parts of the plan are not aligned reflecting the leadership. The Memorandum of Understanding also allows LEAs to opt out of parts of the scope of work. This makes the proposal uneven, unbalanced and piece meal. I judge that it fails to meet a reasonable test of "comprehensive and coherent".

Total		0	0	
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Grand Total	500	343	349	
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2

### Louisiana Application #3120LA-5



**A. State Success Factors**

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

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

A.1.i The applicant has developed a very comprehensive reform agenda by demonstrating not only that it has a firm grasp of all elements that must be present to improve student achievement ("...simultaneously align core resources, conditions, political will, talent and best practices...") but also that it comprehends how much work it will be to carry out such an agenda. Particularly of note is this State's plan to: • share effective practices across all districts in the state whether or not they participated in the grant and then to terminate those practices determined to be ineffective; • reliably measure teachers' effectiveness, tie that to performance as well as to teacher preparation and certification; and • provide parents with school-level data, giving them the tools they need to make wise decisions for their children. This State benefits from having begun to take lessons from the best-performing authorities from around the world, by ranking 2nd in the country for rigorous standards and assessments and by having an existing in-depth database of student performance that includes three years of value-added data for the entire state, enabling them to move quickly ahead to incorporate value-added in a Comprehensive Performance Management System. In this system 50% of teacher evaluations will be based on student results, assuring citizens that not only will only effective teachers be employed but also that the lowest-performing students will be assigned highly effective teachers and leaders. In addition, this State is one of very few that can link teacher and student performance at the classroom level, ranking 2nd in the nation for how it measures education progress. Further, professional learning networks to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement are already being piloted and a Model Staffing Initiative and Human Capital Information System to improve all facets of recruiting, selecting, placing and evaluating school personnel is in the works. Last year, using the State Pipeline, 13,000 applicants were screened and just 764 of them were determined to be highly qualified. A.1.ii This applicant elected not to allow elements of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) to be optional, and instead required that all participating LEA's implement every key activity included in the MOA and also to have them complete a 10-question survey to make sure that they understood the level of commitment necessary to participate in the grant. This State has 67% of its LEA's participating which represents nearly one-half its schools and 58% of its minority students with a majority of the students in the participating districts living in poverty. There was near unanimous support of local school boards with 100% of the LEA superintendents and school board presidents signing the proposals while 78% of the local teacher union leaders did. Included in the Agreement that all participating LEA's signed is that they will develop a detailed action plan to implement the State's identified reforms with the understanding that the State will approve a LEA for funding only if it is convinced the LEA has the capacity to implement its plan in a high quality manner and that the LEA would incur financial penalties if the State finds it not implementing its plan as agreed to. In addition, the LEA's had to agree to post lessons learned and products developed with the use of the RTT funds for others to benefit from and some LEA's voluntarily selected low-achieving

schools to receive turnaround interventions. A.1.iii This applicant has taken steps to translate LEA participation into statewide impact by tying the states' 9 priority goals – set up for the whole state – to the RTT goals thus gaining more interest in and support for the work outlined in the grant. The State's priority goals for all their schools are even more ambitious than those called for by RTT so by reaching even higher for the entire State, the likelihood of Louisiana's participating schools achieving RTT is great. The State knows the current percentages of students in the various categories and has estimated realistic percentage increases to make improvements in each and meet its priority goals which dovetail nicely with the RTT goals. The 9 goals are that Students will: 1. enter Kindergarten ready to learn; 2. be literate by the third grade; 3. enter fourth grade on time; 4. perform at or above grade level in English/Language Arts by 8th grade; 5. perform at or above grade level in math by 8th grade; 6. graduate from high school on time; 7. enroll in post secondary education within two years of graduation; and 8. complete at least one year of college successfully. 9. Goal 9 is that the State will achieve all the above 8 goals regardless of race or class. When student achievement begins to improve in participating schools, welcome scrutiny will result in non-participating schools wanting to become involved and the impact of the RTT being felt statewide. By Louisiana's securing support for RTT from the large number of districts and half the states' students experiencing the effects of the grant, parents in non-participating schools will become aware of what the other half of the students are doing and begin seeking similar activities in the rest of the schools. To encourage broad impact, Louisiana will create a Best Practice Fund where all LEAs can apply for small seed grants to aid in the adoption and scaling of best practices demonstrated in R2T. Also, non-participating districts will be exposed to the additional services Regional Education Service Centers will begin offering. Pointed out is that many suffer from low expectations because they cannot see how things can be different so by proving on a large scale and with the diverse LEA's that all students can improve, educators will be more willing to reform. In addition, the greater gains of the Participating LEA's will force the rest to catch up and the information that will be made available to all will help educators and policy makers understand the key levers that drive improvements in performance.

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

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

A.2.i This State has developed a high-quality overall plan to ensure that it has the capacity to implement what it proposes. Louisiana has been providing strong leadership through its Education Reform Plan, the State Superintendent establishing the 9 Priority Goals and its transforming the State Department of Education from a compliance monitoring bureaucracy into a performance-based and service-oriented support institution. It has developed an elaborate structure designed to ensure delivery on its reform plans, the explanation of which suffers in the transition from power points to paper. The main components of it are:

- I. The reorganization of the State Department that includes:
  - A RTT Reform Team with 4 teams: Outcome Assessment, LEA Capacity Building, Change Management and Best Practices Assessment –all overseen by a RTT Reform Director and designed to help the LEA's be successful in implementing RTT reforms.
  - Initiative Teams comprised of one to three dozen specialized staff members spread out across the Department and the Regional Education Service Centers to provide technical support. Team leaders have a record of results and are responsible for meeting the States' 9 goals.
  - Service Lines that will provide expertise and services to the Initiative Teams in 5 areas – Accountability and Standards and Assessments; Data Systems to Support Instruction; Human Capital; Strategic Research and Analysis and Finance and Administration.
  - The Superintendent's Delivery Unit, the first of its kind to be implemented in an American State Department of Education. Its function is to see to it that:
    - strategic plans to pursue goals can be rigorously challenged;
    - progress is measured regularly enough to facilitate proactive action before plans are off-course;
    - and - the Superintendent is routinely made aware of areas requiring his intervention.
- II. Ensuring extensive and intensive regionally based technical support of two kinds provided by the Regional Education Service Centers:
  - technical support linked to the Initiative Teams to help LEA's meet the nine Priority Goals that will be funded mainly by a fee-for-service model and
  - functional expertise (contracted

teams of content experts such as data system experts) to help Participating LEA's use the infrastructure, tools and processes that will be created through the Reform Plan. III. Providing expert facilitation to assist districts build their capacity. This process will include: - Developing statewide teams of District Capacity Leaders who will be able to sustain and extend capacity gains across all schools; - Creating a prototype capacity-building strategy for 100 schools across multiple districts; and - Developing the capacity of the Department to replicate this process in successive years with LEA's not involved with R2T. Also to emphasize and promote urgency in daily performance, bonuses will be available to reward individuals on the Initiative Teams and LEA Leadership. The State Department's Finance and Administration Service Line has sufficient capacity to provide finance and budget support and the Reform Team Director will be accountable for coordinating and executing the other functions entailed in the grant, e.g., performance tracking and reporting. Participating LEA's will have a direct line to the Reform Director who has the authority to resolve any issues related to the grant. Louisiana has already begun aligning federal and state funding streams to carry out the State's plans and meet its priorities. It has a track record of effectively using these funds through its Recovery School District. Also, the Partnership Agreement requires Participating LEAs to align their funds with R2T initiatives. Further, all state LEA's agreed in writing in 2009 to align regular and stimulus federal dollars to the 4 assurances through consolidated applications and they worked with the State Department to determine the kinds of targeted expenditures that would support best practices and meet the assurances. Reforms funded by R2T are very likely to be continued after the funding period ends as the application that all stakeholders committed to establishes goals to be carried out 2 years beyond funding and they are aware of that. Further all the improvements, support, data and transparency created in carrying out the reforms will make it very difficult not to continue them. A.2.ii The applicant has secured the support of a wide-range of stakeholders including the Louisiana Federation of Teachers who are partnering with the state to design a performance-driven compensation system, receiving national recognition of the cooperation from the AFT national president. Civil Rights groups, Higher Education, Legislative Leadership and non-profits are all on board. LEA's received hundreds of letters of support from city officials, local newspapers and business and community groups. Inexplicably, the State Board of Education is not on record as being in support – only one member of it is.

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

During Tier 2, it was clarified that the State Board is supportive of the R2T proposal.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15	15

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

A 3 i It is difficult to find what else this applicant could have done to make progress in the reform areas. The State: 1. Instituted a standards-based assessment system 21 years ago, assessing grades 4, 8, 10 and 11 as well as a Graduate Exit Exam. 2. Developed End-of-Course tests for high-school students and also assessed student performance in grades 3,5,6,7 and 9. 3. Developed rigorous K-12 content standards not only for math, English, science and social studies but also for foreign languages and the arts. 4. Developed an on-line formative assessment tool for teachers to create their own tests aligned to grade-level expectations and curriculum standards to identify students' academic strengths and weaknesses. 5. Has been nationally recognized for the quality of its efforts. 6. Has instituted a longitudinal data system wherein data is centrally stored and the state can link student and teacher data at the classroom level. 7. Is seeking funding to include P-20 data in a warehouse that would link student data across multiple state agencies informing decisions on a broad array of social and policy issues. 8. Using its data-collection capacity, the State is • linking student achievement data to teacher preparation programs and is able to inform higher education institutions as well as the public about the impact new teachers have on student achievement and target improvements in teacher education; • supporting its Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) developed by the National Institute for Excellence to attract, develop and retain great teachers thus improving student achievement; and • developing a statewide value-added assessment model with state funds that is being

pilot-tested this year and next for use statewide in the 2011-2012 school year. 9. Has been actively focusing on improving educator effectiveness by • supporting alternative certification programs and ensuring equitable distribution of high-quality teachers by providing 500 new teachers each year to low-income and high-minority communities through Teach for America and The New Teacher Project; • supporting the growth and development of teachers throughout their careers, ranking 6th in the country last year for their efforts; • incorporating performance pay as part of the TAP program; • developing a School Turnaround Specialist Program that uses best practices from education and business to strengthen the organizational and instructional leadership skills of currently certified principals and recruits high-potential principals to turn around chronically underperforming schools; and • using ARRA and other federal and state funding in efforts to support this reform area including providing incentives for effective teachers to work in low-performing schools and tuition assistance for teachers to become certified in critical shortage areas. 10. Established in 2003 a state take-over system of persistently low-performing schools allowing this intervention set-up to • pilot and test aggressive methods for improving instruction including creating numerous charter schools which have shown significantly better academic gains, especially for low-income students; • combine data-driven curriculum and instructional reforms with a longer school day and school year; and • use ARRA and other federal and state funding to support these reforms. A.3.ii This applicant has increased its student achievement scores in reading/language arts and math since 1992. From 6% to 33% more students scored at Basic or Above on NAEP reading and math tests in recent years than in 5-8 years before. It was one of 7 states that consistently outpaced the nation in improvement on NAEP scores according to the EPE Research Center. On the state tests, increases ranged from 3 to 19 %. The State's school turnaround effort is credited with much of the recent improvement. On NAEP, from 1998 to 2007, the gap between African American and white students was reduced by 12 points in 4th-grade reading and 11 points in 8th-grade math. Education Trust found that this state is the only state in which the gap between African-American and white students narrowed significantly on both 4th-grade reading and 8th-grade math NAEP tests. The gap between students eligible for the National School Lunch Program and those not eligible was reduced by 5 points in 4th-grade reading from 2003 to 2008. On the state's 8th-grade ELA test, the gap between African-American and white students scoring Basic or Above was reduced by 10 points and on the 8th -grade math, 7 points. The average scale score for students with disabilities increased from 168 in 1998 to 181 in 2007. This applicant did not calculate a cohort graduation rate until 2001 when it discovered that only 61 percent of its students graduated on time and there has been only a modest increase since then. The State is attempting to improve its graduation rate by using ARRA funds to • implement Jobs for America's Graduates with its mentoring process and soft-skill training; • increase literacy and numeracy through its High School Redesign Initiative that includes a grant for the Striving Readers program to support intervention for low-income middle and high-school students; and • expand offerings for students pursuing high-skill, high-demand, high-wage 21st century careers through its Expanded Career and Technical Education Program. It has also established a 9th-Grade Initiative to provide personal attention to students to encourage them to earn on-time promotion to the 10th grade resulting in the 9th-grade drop out rate being cut in half, a 7% reduction in suspensions, increases on the state proficiency tests and a promotion rate gain from 9th- to 10th -grade of 8%.

Total	125	113	113
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

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

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

B.1.i The State has agreed to adopt internationally benchmarked common standards, is a member of a 48-state consortium and has included appendices with all the required legal evidence. B.1 ii The applicant understands and is committed to meeting all the legal requirements necessary to adopt common core standards by August 2, 2010 and already has underway solid plans to implement them. It has contracted with a respected organization to coordinate a standards revision process that will include developing a crosswalk between current standards and the new common core ones, what will need to be done to adjust the state's current formative and summative testing program and that will go beyond the requirements to also develop pre-K, social studies and science standards. It also understands that to implement the standards effectively, professional development will be needed and that is in the planning stages as well.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	10	7	7	
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

B.2 The applicant will join with a consortium of 16 states and the District of Columbia to develop high-quality assessments to measure the common core standards. There will then be a proposal for the RTT Assessment competition grant in 2010 to develop and implement the new standards. The applicant includes a letter to confirm its commitment to participating in a second consortium led by Achieve to develop and implement summative assessments aligned with the new standards. These new assessments will make possible the comparison of results among 26 states and the District of Columbia.

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

B.3 This applicant will support the transition to high-quality assessments and enhanced standards in a variety of ways including: • amending its systems of standards, assessments and accountability to align with college-and career-ready expectations for all students; • re-tooling its online assessments to provide data on growth of mastery of the new standards four times a year in all grades; • aligning all resources – courses, materials, syllabi – and making them available to all districts, schools and educators through an online portal; • recruiting and hiring five regional teams of four content area experts to help teachers in every school; • engaging community stakeholders with demonstrated relevant experience; • adjusting accountability measures to align with college-and career-ready expectations; • attaining approval from university curriculum committees to change curriculum; • providing the infrastructure and technology necessary to support multiple end-of-course tests; • providing AP courses via the State's Virtual School for schools lacking in resources to offer them, seeking legislation that will provide funds for AP test fees for students taking the AP courses and providing training for 400 teachers of pre-AP and AP courses around the state; • supporting accelerated early learning by focusing attention on the learning and development that takes place during the infant-toddler period and by implementing a developmentally appropriate pre-K curriculum that aligns with the core standards; • recruiting test items from NAEP, TIMSS and PISA for the item bank; and • assigning individuals at the state department of education the responsibility for achieving the above. Performance measures were also included.

<b>Total</b>	70	67	67	
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	24	18	18	

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

C.1 The State states that it has in place a longitudinal data system that includes all 12 elements and is one of only 11 states to do so, but the evidence presented does not bear that out.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	5	5	5	
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

C.2 The applicant ranked second among 50 states in how education progress is measured and is one of two states to reliably link student performance to individual teachers and leaders. The data system currently informs school, district and state performance about student achievement and college-readiness. Their plan to expand use of data includes verifying that teacher-student links are accurate prior to being used in various analyses, breaking down results for subgroups and tracking student attendance, achievement, and discipline to inform parents, teachers and school leaders whether or not a student is on track for meeting major milestones for graduation. A Key Activities/Time Line is provided and Responsible Parties have been assigned. Performance measures are also included.

<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	18	12	18	
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**(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

C.3. The State has two programs to provide teachers with on-site support but wants to improve the uniformity and quality of them and upgrade their on-line assessment tool to include a benchmark system aligned with common core standards and their formative assessments. Also planned is a computerized system to chart trajectories of student achievement and recommend specific interventions as well as a networking component to allow teachers to share lesson plans and videos of effective teaching. Teachers will be provided with increased data on their own effectiveness and shown specific opportunities for improvement. Participating LEA's have agreed to provide job-embedded professional development that includes opportunities during the school day for teachers to study the data collected and collaborate on improving their teaching based on the data. Teachers will be trained in all aspects of data use. Also the state DOE will train support leaders at a 1.7 coach-to-school ratio and make them responsible for effective support for teachers. While the applicant has provided realistic plans and goals to increase LEA's use of data to improve instruction, abundant detail and a Key Activities/Timeline, no mention of making data available to researchers was included. Optional Performance Measures were also included.

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

During Tier 2, it was clarified that Louisiana is making data available to researchers.

<b>Total</b>	47	35	41	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

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

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

D.1.i Louisiana has made provisions for alternate routes for teacher and educational leader certification in Title 28 and has embraced programs such as The New Teacher Project and New Leaders for New Schools that are not affiliated with the state's higher education institutions. The Louisiana State Department of Education is also a non-traditional provider. The non-traditional providers have prepared by far most of the Alternate Route Completers and more than all but one university program. In 2007-2008, there was almost an even number of alternate and traditional route completers: 1,136 Alternate Route Completers and 1,286 Traditional Route Completers. Evaluations of the teacher alternate route programs show that they are as effective or more effective as traditional routes and that new teachers trained in them are as effective as veteran teachers. What was not clear was how many recent Louisiana university graduates not from the

Colleges of Education could go directly into teaching or what percentage of successful professional could be hired without taking education courses. D.1.ii Alternate routes in use include ones for Practitioner Teacher, Non-Master's and Master's Degree programs. These programs cover all areas from early interventionist birth to 5 years to grade 12 and include special education – mild and moderate, significant disabilities and hearing and visually impaired. D.1.iii The Louisiana Department of Education monitors vacancies and shortages and assists LEA's with placements through recruiting nationwide and funding expanded programs in high-need areas and specialties. The state's nationwide recruitment includes targeting the most highly regarded certification providers and nationally-recognized alternative certification providers.

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

During Tier 2, assurances were given that high-quality alternative pathways did not have to include university education courses.

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

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

D.2.i What this applicant is doing with value added is impressive and will be used to measure student growth both in the aggregate and to measure individual student progress throughout the year. D.2.ii a) Louisiana's evaluation system will base one-half of its ratings on value-added student achievement data. The other half will include supervisor and external observations and an index that identifies impediments to teacher effectiveness. For teachers to receive an "expert" rating, they must achieve 1.5 years of annual student growth and teachers who manage less than a year's growth will be rated ineffective and receive a "poor" rating. b) Evidence of teacher and principal involvement in the development of their evaluation system is the endorsement of the Louisiana Associations of School Principals, Educators and Professional Educators. Louisiana's commitment to stakeholder involvement was cited by the national AFT president as noted earlier. D.2.iii Louisiana's annual evaluations will include setting individual teacher student growth goals and plans within three weeks of the beginning of the school year; determining teacher needs; ensuring delivery of developmental interventions; tracking student and teacher progress and formally and informally examining performance and providing formative feedback within 24 hours; enforcing safety and discipline policies; giving end-of-year performance evaluation ratings to teachers within 48 hours and using them as a basis for financial and non financial awards, tenure decisions and possible dismissals. D.2. iv a) Teacher and administrator evaluations will be used to align areas of weakness with professional development. When those being evaluated receive feedback, they will be directed online to professional learning activities aligned to their strengths and weaknesses. Networks will be set up to improve educators' ability to use data to improve student performance and to facilitate peer-to-peer networks so that teachers and leaders can learn from others successes. b) The LEA's participating in this grant through their Partnership Agreement have agreed to use the link between student outcomes and educators to inform all human capital decisions – tenure, promotion, additional responsibilities, retention and release – and to shift to performance-based compensation. Teacher effectiveness will be a significant factor in promotions and retention, including during surplusings. c) Tenure would no longer be granted automatically upon eligibility but upon administrators' thoughtful and informed decisions based specifically on student growth. Especially, probationary teachers who are less effective than a first-year teacher will be dismissed and tenure timelines will not be neglected. Principals are not tenured. d) Participating LEA's have agreed that both tenured and non-tenured teachers will receive teacher effectiveness ratings based on their value-added formative and summative assessment data, that both teachers and administrators will be provided with professional development opportunities based on this data and that persistently ineffective teachers will be removed. A

principal measure of principal effectiveness will be the number of effective teachers in their building. Administrators will receive performance contracts that will be grounded in student outcomes and their ability to improve student achievement and tailored to his or her individual building. Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents who have principals reporting to them will be evaluated based on the quality of support provided to the principals, their pre-defined leadership competencies and student achievement data. The Department of Education will support these changes by providing sample contracts and help in address any legal issues. The whole system will be pilot tested, adjusted from the pilot and their data system which informs it and refined within realistic time lines before it is launched. The applicant also includes research sources that have informed their plan.

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

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

D.3.i Louisiana has the advantage of being able to leverage lessons learned from its Recovery School District which has already been operating in the state. It has used those lessons to develop specific and appropriate steps needed to tackle the goal of equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals and incorporate all steps simultaneously so that their plan will not fail because it lacks some necessary element. The steps include: • Redefining their evaluation systems by linking half of criteria for effectiveness to value-added student data and then acting on evaluations to terminate chronically ineffective teachers, thus creating demand for effective ones. Also, LEA's accepting that if they continue to inequitably distribute teachers and principals, they will lose RTT funds. • Making more robust their existing national recruiting pipeline using screening and training service partners -- the pipeline that helped recruit 13,000 teachers, nearly 8,100 of them certified and then out of all those, enabling the identification of less than 1,000 high quality ones. • Increasing the number of graduates from identified effective teacher preparation programs who are placed in high-need areas by giving tuition incentives, creating teacher residence programs at universities, partnering with both effective leader preparation programs and struggling schools and staging a local marketing campaign in addition to the State's national one. • Recognizing that some high-need areas often do not know how to hire and place the highest quality candidates and having the State DOE provide intensive support in these areas by using consultants from a nationally recognized provider to help develop the capacity to successfully do so. D.3.ii Louisiana will ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including STEM, special education, foreign language and ELL by first conducting an analysis to determine the extent of the need. It will then use their Model Staffing Initiative to redistribute effective teachers in shortage areas, strengthen the skills of teachers already working in these areas through a Teaching Improvement Cycle and use incentives to keep effective and highly effective teachers already at the school or in the LEA. In addition, the State will increase the number of teachers in these areas graduating from highly performing preparation institutions and intensify their established talent pipeline activities to identify and recruit teachers for these shortage areas. This applicant is aware that currently 95 percent of its teachers are rated effective or highly effective whereas the value-added system they have put into place predicts that 23 % of the teachers are ineffective. Realizing that the path to correcting this inconsistency will not be easy, it is planning to gradually phase in needed changes while gaining support for them.

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

D 4 i Louisiana is the only state using value-added data to evaluate the effectiveness of its teacher preparation programs and has been publicly reporting value-added data since 2006 on all state-approved

public and private universities and private providers. It can currently publically report achievement and growth data on graduates of 22% of its teacher preparation programs. Another example of the efficacy of their efforts is that the President of one university stopped admissions to a non-Master alternative certification program after it was identified as low-performing. Not only is the state currently taking actions to hold teacher preparation programs accountable, it has ambitious plans to expand and improve them. The State will use RTT funds to expand its reporting to include out-of-state university programs that prepare numbers of Louisiana teachers, constantly enhancing its data collection system to identify better practices of other states to improve in-state programs. Further, it will break down its data for grade spans and various sub groups. An analysis of progress to date reveals that some new Louisiana teachers are performing as well or even better than more experienced peers after low-performing preparation programs received intervention and graduates went through redesigned programs. When a preparation program receives a poor rating, a plan will be mapped out to monitor that program, intensive assistance and monitoring of interventions will be put into place and if improvement does not occur, programs will be closed. Louisiana has 5 years experience with its Value-added Teacher Preparation Program Assessment Model and is convinced that the best way to improve teacher preparation is to gather and report data on graduates' impact on student learning and use that data to inform interventions. Consequently, through RTT, that model will be replicated for principal and superintendent preparation. D.4 ii Louisiana has solid plans to increase and redesign currently operating university programs, even budgeting for 240 students to participate in highly effective programs, but there seems to be plans for independent providers only for school leaders including sending 100 high-potential candidates to nationally recognized leadership training. However, there is no mention of expanding credentialing options that could produce effective teachers and principals.

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

D.5.i Given their struggle to implement professional learning supports well, Louisiana is very much aware that providing effective support to teachers and principals is a significant challenge. Therefore, it has enlisted a globally respected expert to begin building on their high-quality infrastructure to ensure that they will successfully build capacity by using data well. Their plan includes providing time supports and intensive and continual technical assistance along with individualized professional development plans for all levels: districts, schools and individual teachers. It also includes fully implementing a Turnaround Specialist Program which will train leaders to take over failing schools (making available tuition subsidies) and a Learning Agenda - a principal effectiveness laboratory that will house key learnings about principals' actions, school practices and policies that lead to improved student achievement in "breakthrough schools".  
 D.5.ii This applicant is aware that in the past the efficacy of evaluations was based mainly on reported teacher satisfaction with them, not on how they impacted student achievement, so this state's plan is to use substantive measures to judge evaluations. They will measure evaluations by not only how they impact teacher effectiveness, school organization and, of course, student achievement, but also if they incorporate all aspects of professional development as well. They will seek to constantly improve them by asking substantive questions about the effect of evaluations on performance and student achievement and making adjustments to ensure optimal results. In short, they will be focused on improving their evaluation processes to the point that they are satisfied that their processes positively impact increased student learning.

Total	138	133	136	
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	5	5	

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

E.1 Louisiana is the only state that has created a separate statewide entity dedicate solely to taking over and turning around the lowest-achieving schools in the state. This entity was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 2003 with the passage of Revised Statute 17:1990 and R.S. 17:10.5. This legislation enables the takeover of individual schools, their employees, their students and funding (rather than having to take over entire districts replete with all their dysfunctions, central office bureaucracies, employees and restrictive collective bargaining agreements). It is unclear whether or not the legislation permits the takeover of entire districts, but the State seemingly feels that taking over districts as a whole is counter productive and that they accomplish much more by concentrating on taking over schools per se.

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

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

E.2.i Louisiana began identifying its persistently lowest achieving schools in 1999 through its Accountability system (authorized in Act 478 of 1997) and the State identifies in non-Title 1 eligible schools. Since that time, the State has consistently lowered the bar for schools to be identified enabling the state to target more low-achieving schools. E.2.ii The applicant through its RSD has used all of the four intervention models plus others. It has intervened with 117 schools out of 1300 and in order to intervene with more, two years ago it began overseeing some local schools' operations rather than taking over their day-to-day operations and removing them from the LEA's. Regardless of which model was used, academic achievement in RSD schools has increased at rates significantly greater that the state average in 75 percent of elementary schools and 66 percent of high schools. The 10th-grade math proficiency rate jumped from 22 percent to 40 percent and the senior annual graduation rate, from 64 percent to 81 percent. Further, the threat of RSD may have influenced 29 schools to improve so that they were no longer susceptible to take over. The number of schools moving out of Academically Unacceptable status is unprecedented in the state.

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>
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**F. General**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	

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

F.funding for facilities (leasing, purchasing or improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition1.i The percentage of total state revenues for education increased from 43.71% in 2008 to 48.08% in 2009. F.1.ii The State applies and equity factor in the funding formula that considers the wealth of each LEA thereby distributing funding in an inverse proportion to the LEA's wealth, i.e., poorer school districts receive a greater percentage of state funding and wealthier districts receive a smaller percentage.

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

F.2.i Louisiana has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools and there is no cap on the number that can be created in the state. The number of charter schools has grown from 17 in 2004-5 to 77 in 2009-10 with 16 more approved for 2010-11. The 77 educate in excess of 30,000 students – more than 4.5 percent of the state's total school population. There are 5 types: • Type 1 of which there are 5 are new start-up charter schools authorized by

a local board. • Type 2 of which there are 11 are new start-ups or conversions authorized by the State Board of Education. • Type 3 of which there are 9 are conversion charters authorized by local boards. • Type 4 of which there are 4 are new start-ups or conversions authorized by the State Board of Education, but operated by local boards. • Type 5 of which there are 48 are charter schools authorized by the State Board of Education and operated by the Recovery School District. They are pre-existing failing public schools. In addition, Louisiana was awarded \$25 million to facilitate the creation of new high-quality charter schools over the next 3 years. F.2.ii Louisiana's approach to the treatment of charter schools is very fair and inclusive yet its law provides a framework that helps to ensure only the most promising proposals are approved for authorization, being that that is a prerequisite for quality. Information required for authorization includes an evaluation of the members of the founding team and of the performance of any other charter schools they may operate with a particular focus on academic performance (the application has an entire section devoted to collecting this information). The charter organizer, whether it be one of Louisiana's 70 local school boards or its Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, determines whether a proposal complies with the law, is valid, complete, financially well-structured and educationally sound. Applications are reviewed and acted upon within 30 days of submission. They undergo a thorough external evaluation wherein the budget, operational and academic plans, staffing management and governance are scrutinized. When applications are denied, it is usually not due to one factor, but to many interrelated ones. All applicants are given detailed feedback so that they may modify their applications and resubmit them in the next cycle. Since 2005-6, 157 applications have been submitted; 64 were approved and 83 were denied (15 were approved prior to 2005-6). Only two charters have closed in the past 5 years, primarily because of financial reasons. Louisiana law (LA R.S. 17:3972) clarifies that the legislative intent in approving charter schools was that all persons with valid ideas and motivation could set them up and that the results would be analyzed, the positive results replicated and any negative results identified and eliminated. Further, the best interests of at-risk pupils would be the overriding consideration. F.2.iii Charter School funding in Louisiana is based on the type of charter school and somewhat differently but on a truly equal basis with traditional public schools, receiving a commensurate share of local, State and Federal revenues and these funds are strictly monitored. F.2.iv While State law provides for funding for facilities (leasing, purchasing or improvements)for charter schools, it does not currently actually fund them. State law also provides for assistance with facilities acquisition and access to public facilities including vacant public school buildings and the ability to share in bonds and mill levies and other supports. F.2.v Louisiana law has made possible the establishment of an amazing array of innovative, autonomous schools. Those created by LEA's include the following: • East Baton Rouge Parish has 13 magnet schools, two autonomous schools and three Type 1 charter schools, educating 46,000 student in 90 schools. • Caddo Parish has nine magnet schools, one lab school and over a dozen academies with a unique focus or theme and a New Technology high school, part of a highly-regarded network of schools created in partnership with the New Technology Foundation. • Lafayette Parish has 8 high school academies that can jumpstart student careers by offering programs in such areas as world language, business and finance, health and engineering. There are also two middle schools with a specific focus, one on environmental science and one on math, science and technology. • Various districts have partnered with universities to create nine lab schools funded by the state to provide opportunities for pre-and in-service teachers and serve as demonstration and educational research centers. Louisiana has also created state-supported, tuition-free schools to serve the academic, artistic and creative needs of its students: the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts for high-ability students admitted on a competitive basis and the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts - a pre-professional arts training center offering secondary students who meet admission requirements intensive instruction in dance, media arts, music, theatre arts, visual arts and creative writing.

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	5	5	5	
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**(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

F 3 Other significant reform conditions in addition to their strong support for Charter Schools include: • Paying stipends to National Board Certified teachers, counselors, psychologists and social workers. • The creation of a High School Redesign initiative with the goal of increasing graduation rates, post-secondary enrollment and long-term career success that has resulted in a graduation rate increase from 50 to 81 percent in the RSD schools where the effort was completely implemented and well supervised. • The implementation of The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), an intensive teacher development,

evaluation, mentoring and monitoring program that brings together in a coherent system many of the elements necessary for successful teaching. The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching awarded Louisiana a grant that enabled the expansion of TAP in nine charter schools. Very effective teachers in TAP schools can earn up to \$5,000 annually based on objective value-added scores and classroom ratings. • A High-Poverty High-Performing Schools Initiative that identifies, studies, honors and learns from schools that have strong academic results despite having 65 percent or more students on free and reduced price lunches so that schools with similar demographics can replicate their successes.

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

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

**Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Louisiana does indeed have a high-quality plan to address STEM. Its DOE together with higher education institutions, research centers, museums and industry representatives convened a statewide STEM conference and agreed to establish a state STEM initiative with regional hubs throughout the state where local resources, energy and ideas could be pooled and stakeholders could work in a collaborative way. AP courses will be expanded to include an engineering course and will particularly emphasize increasing the enrollment of girls, low-income and minority students. In addition, participating LEA's will have STEM-based extra-curricula organizations supported by the HUBS and each school will have at least one STEM club or competitive team with no fees such as eCyberMission. The Louisiana Math Science Partnership provides teachers with math and science professional development to enable them to integrate real-world STEM applications into their daily teaching. It is nationally recognized for its positive impact on student achievement, especially on that of low-income, minority and special education students - doing so at a higher rate than their counterparts. Scientific Work Experience Programs for Teachers wherein teachers work with scientists or engineers to do paid, supervised work in areas relevant to what they are teaching will be expanded. These programs enable teachers to integrate newly acquired knowledge into their classroom teaching and provide opportunities for industry, labor, government, higher education and other groups with cost-effective methods of contributing to systemic reform and promoting STEM.

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

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

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Louisiana's application has comprehensively and coherently addressed all of the requirements to meet this Priority.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	463	472
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