



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Missouri Application #3960MO-1



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	48
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	38
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Articulating Comprehensive, Coherent Reform Agenda. Missouri's reform agenda covers the four required areas described in the ARRA. The state's articulated goals are closely aligned to these four areas. Although Missouri's reform agenda has received numerous letters of support from a broad group of stakeholders, the lack of strong union endorsement is a cause for concern. The proposed activities listed in the application fall into four categories: great teachers and leaders, standards and assessments, data to support instruction and turning around low achieving schools. In selected criterion areas, i.e. Great Teachers/Great Leaders and Turning Around Low Performing, there is an absence of adequate detail to make a qualitative judgment about what is being proposed or the potential impact. The primary emphasis of Missouri's RttT application is focused on human capital development and building infrastructure. The state seeks to allocate the largest portion of the RttT resources to two priority areas: establishing regional service centers to provide technical assistance to local schools and LEAs and providing 21st century technology infrastructure and bandwidth. Included in the plan are targets for improving student achievement and turning around the lowest performing schools which are not judged to be ambitious. The plan falls short in not including LEAs as full partners in design and implementation of major RttT plan components. The overall global level of the application does not provide sufficient detail to indicate that there would be sufficient impact resulting from the level of RttT resources requested. Securing LEA Commitment. Missouri has submitted evidence responsive to all elements of this criterion. LEAs are committed to participating in the states reform agenda as evidenced by the following: • 513 (91.4 %) of the LEAs have signed on with full endorsement to the RttT application • Endorsement signatures were received from superintendents and local school board chairs from all participating LEAs • Where applicable, local collective bargaining union leaders have also endorsed the application. Letters of support have been received from union leadership in districts where there are not recognized collective bargaining units. Out of a total of 561 LEAs, 513 are committed to implementing all 16 portions of the Plan criteria presented in the Preliminary Scope of Work. The Missouri MOU is substantially identical to the model framework included in the RttT application packet and the terms and conditions stated therein. In certain cases language to ensure the preservation of current collective bargaining agreements has been added. Missouri, has described in its Preliminary Scope of Work, the reform initiatives that will be undertaken by the state and LEAs should this application be funded. Missouri has 34 charter schools currently operating in the state, but the application does not make clear how these schools would participate in the RttT reform agenda. Translating LEA Participation into Statewide Impact. LEAs committed to participating in the state's reform agenda range in size and demographics. Their collective populations incorporate 99.4% of the state's school children. Ninety-eight percent of the state's low income students are enrolled in these LEAs. Among the participating LEAs there is a wide range both in terms

of in geographic spread and size. The state plans to allocate RttT grant funds for reform implementation to the 48 non participating LEAs. (Aiii)The application should provide a rationale and justification for allocating resources to these LEAs given that they are unwilling to sign on to any significant portion of the RttT reform activities. Missouri's scores on national measures are average and performance on state measures has improved only slightly in some content areas. The state has projected a set of achievement goals in accordance with the specified categories requested:

- Increase the per cent of all students scoring proficient and above in communications arts, science and math by 7% with each administration of NAEP
- Increase the percent of all students scoring proficient or above on the statewide assessments in accordance with the state targets for AYP
- Increase by 5% annually the per cent of children scoring proficient on a research-based kindergarten readiness assessment as measured by the Missouri Comprehensive data System
- Increase the performance of subgroups scoring proficient and above in communications arts, science and math by 7% with each administration of NAEP
- Increase the percent of all subgroups scoring proficient or above on the statewide assessments as defined by the AYP targets

The state's goals for improving high school graduation rates are:

- Increase high school graduation rates by 2% annually as measured by the Annual School Performance Report
- Increase by 7% annually the percent of minority and female students graduating from high school with a concentration in STEM related coursework as measured by the Missouri Comprehensive Data System
- Increase by 5% annually the percent of students graduating from high school with a concentration in STEM course work.

The state should confirm the accuracy of the above performance targets as its commitment to improved student achievement. Clarification is needed to understand the specific timeframe the state is projecting to reach the 100% target for AYP proficiency and above as well as annual targets for the total student population and individual subgroups. The student achievement goals seem modest, particularly when one looks at the achievement gap. Student achievement targets which are substantially more aggressive than what is presented in the current application accompanied by bold strategic actions must be undertaken to address this disparity. Additional information is needed to clarify:

- A set of performance targets based on data from state assessments for all students and subgroups
- A rationale for selection of the 7% growth target established for subgroups based on NAEP and an explanation of how the state's RttT investments will be directed to closing the achievement gap
- A more detailed description indicating the sufficiency of the resources allocated and that are likely to yield high impact on the projected performance measures.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	20
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	13
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Ensuring the Capacity to Implement. The application addresses the 5 criteria in this section including the formation of implementation teams, constructive and intervention support for LEAs, effective and efficient operations and processes, and use of RttT grant funds and sustainability. The organizational structure described is based on the concepts of decentralized service support and team formation drawing on existing personnel, a minimal number new hires and contractual services. The delivery of support services to LEAs will be carried out through the creation of a statewide network of Regional Education Service for Leadership and Training Centers (RESLTs Centers). These centers will be the primary vehicle responsible for implementation of the state's reform agenda in the goal areas outlined. The state already has in place systems to address fiscal monitoring and data reporting for the RttT grant. Existing state and federal resources have been aligned or realigned to support the 4 ARRA assurance areas. Many of the project budgets do not provide adequate justification for several large expenditure areas. While questions of fiscal sustainability are minimized under the state's reform strategy, there are several critical components that will need ongoing sustainability, therefore, requiring advance planning for future investment. Other areas that are not fully addressed in the application include: alignment between initiatives and outcomes, clearly articulated performance goals for all implementation activities, an overall evaluation strategy that will measure results of the RttT

investment, and data-driven project management and monitoring processes. Using Broad Stakeholder Support. The state has received strong support for its RttT application. One hundred fifty-nine letters of endorsement were received from a cross section of stakeholders including teachers, principals and their related statewide educational associations. Where applicable, local collective bargaining union leaders have endorsed the application. Letters of support have, also, been received from union leadership in districts where there are not recognized collective bargaining units. The state teacher's association is on record acknowledging its members participation in the RttT application development process and indicating support of selected concepts. At the same time, the association has expressed lack of support for specific elements of the "Great Teachers and Leaders" section. The state does not address how it will effectively garner widespread teacher support for its reform agenda. Additional strengths, related to the endorsement of the state's RttT application and actions of support involving a broad group of the state's citizens is evidenced by the following: • A statewide stakeholder forum which included nearly 300 participants from the education, community and business organization • A series of webinars which drew 700 participants • A web-based survey exploring potential reform issues • Outreach to other non educational state agencies to identify ideas for collaboration • Formation of subcommittees in each of the 4 assurance areas The application does not address how the significant outreach generated during the design/development stage will be leveraged to sustain momentum and support for implementation.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	13
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Making Progress in Each Reform Area. The state has a number of key policies in place that create a strong context and foundation for moving forward with the RttT assurance areas. Missouri has been a national leader in the competency based standards movement to ensure universal proficiency. The state has successfully implemented a statewide longitudinal data system with unique student identifiers and which became operational 2 years ago. Additionally, Missouri has been at the forefront of recruiting and retaining great teachers through its reciprocal certification program and Leadership Academy. In the area of intervention directed to the lowest performing schools, Missouri has established a comprehensive accreditation system with rigorous standards and procedures. The state has also been active in facilitating the development professional development support for LEAs and schools. The state's response to this criteria is limited primarily to program descriptions. The application does not provide specific impact data as evidence to substantiate its progress. The section below addresses the progress made in the specific area of student achievement. **Improving Student Outcomes.** Relative to students nationwide, Missouri students have performed slightly better. Within the state, the progress of all students and subgroups has proceeded consistently over time in most grade levels and content areas, e.g. student performance in reading at 4th grade based on NAEP scale scores improved overall by 6% between 2003 and 2009. Progress toward AYP targets increased by 21 points between 2003 and 2009, black student performance on AYP improved based on statewide assessments by close to 18 points. The state attributes these growth patterns to consistent efforts to improve standards, assessments data analysis and instructional practices. More recent activities emanating from the state's historical work in these areas have focused on the delineation of grade level and end of course expectations along with assessment refinements. By contrast, Missouri has historically experienced challenges in closing achievement gaps between subgroups. The gap between the performance of Missouri's white students as compared to the performance of minority subgroups is alarming. Based on the state targets for AYP using the state assessments, in 2003 in Communication Arts, 33.75% of white students scored proficient and above while black students scored 12% (a differential of 21.75%). Similarly, in 2009 white students scored proficient and above at the rate of 56.6% while blacks scored at the rate of 29.7 % (an increasingly differential gap increase of 26.9 %). A number of initiatives have been launched by the state to deal with this challenge area. Missouri's acknowledges its shortcomings in not being able to adequately address the root causes

associated with achievement gap closure. The graduation rates have changed only minimally since 2003. The state attributes this holding steady pattern to several program initiatives: The Missouri Options Program, the A+ Schools Program and the creation of model schools for drop out prevention program. These program descriptions do not provide sufficient analysis or data to attribute a cause and effect relationship between the resources invested and any resulting impact.

Total	125	81
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Developing and adopting common standards. Missouri was one of the early participants in the New Standards Project that led a multi-state national consortium during the 1980's focused on competency based definitions of what students should know and be able to do. This prior experience gives the state a strong foundation to launch an ambitious reform agenda utilizing RtT funding. The state's application provides adequate documentation that it meets the specified criterion under this section. • The state has executed a MOU demonstrating its commitment to jointly develop and adopt a common set of core standards. • In addition to Missouri 47 band 3 territories have joined the Common Core Standards Initiative sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governor's Association. • A copy of the MOU, a list of participating states and territories and a copy of draft standards dated September 2009 are included in the application appendices. • The Common Core Standards will be internationally benchmarked. To ensure that the standards prepare students to be globally competitive, the development team used a number of sources. In addition, the development team looked to the standards of a number of individual countries and provinces to inform the content, structure and language of the standards, Adopting standards. Description of a plan for Missouri State Board adoption of Common Core Standards consistent with the RtT required time frame and the state's legal process has been provided. In accordance with the legal authority granted in 160.514.RSMo, the Missouri State Board of Education has set a timeline for action on the standards no later than August 2, 2010.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Missouri's application includes documentation pertaining to the specified criterion under this section. The state has executed a MOU with the Balanced Assessment Consortium demonstrating its commitment to jointly develop a battery of common high quality summative assessments that align with the Common Core Standards as part of a state consortium comprised of 36 states. A copy of the MOU along with a list of participating states is included in the application appendices. Additionally, Missouri is playing an organizational leadership role, and working with Wisconsin and Nebraska along with 17 other states to develop formative and interim/benchmark assessments.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	15
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application describes a number of major initiatives and activities that will be undertaken both at the state and local levels to move the state's adopted content standards and aligned assessments towards further implementation across the state. • Repurposing, restructuring and significant financial investment in a decentralized regional support service for schools and districts • Adoption of common</p>		

core standards by August 2010 and alignment of the new standards to existing state assessments and other state standards, e.g., Early Childhood Learning Standards, Career and College Ready Standards, Work Force Standards, etc. • Development and implementation of formative, interim and benchmark assessments accompanied by aligned instructional and assessment materials • Development of model curriculum standards • Design and deployment of high quality grade level and subject specific professional development through regional service centers and on line mechanisms • Update high school graduation requirements to include dual credit, internships, and STEM opportunities. Overall the application presents a detailed plan complete with performance measures intended to communicate anticipated impact. The plan falls short, however, in recognizing and communicating the critical role of educators at the local level in ensuring that the standards and assessments take hold on the ground and in classrooms. The state should articulate more directly how LEAs and local educators will be involved across the board as partners in RttT funded initiatives.

Total	70	65
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	22
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state has made substantial progress in creating a longitudinal data system that includes the 2007 America COMPETES Act requirements. The state currently complies with 11 of the requirements and will complete the 12th element by June 2010.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	2
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The primary strategy that will be advanced to ensure broad based access to the state's data system is building technological infrastructure for schools located in rural areas. In Missouri , 97% of state's land is classified as rural and 30% of the state's overall population lives in small rural communities that are scattered across the state where there is limited access to technology or outside support resources. This is an important constituency that in order to participate in the state's reform agenda will need access to data. The state through a partnership with the departments of transportation and administration, has already advanced significant work in this area through an initiative entitled MoBroadbandNow. The state proposes to use the largest share (\$272,552,000) of its RttT allocation to complete the "last mile" of this statewide technology infrastructure. While the state has articulated a strong rationale for the need and potential benefits of this endeavor, the application raises the following concerns: • The information provided largely addresses the accessibility and use of data to the state's rural population but does not address in any significant way the needs or services for 70% of the population that live in urban and suburban areas • The budget request for such a sizeable amount of funding for this initiative seems disproportionate compared to the other compelling components of the state's reform agenda • The application does not address long term sustainability requirements beyond 2013-14 • The relationship between the proposed technology initiative, improved instruction and projected student achievement goals is only vaguely aligned • The application is vague in responding to the specifications of this criterion, namely the inclusion, at a minimum, of specific goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	11
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The Missouri Comprehensive Data System Project will grant easy access to a broad group of stakeholders. The system was developed through a collaborative planning process involving pre-K -12 educators, higher education and representatives of workforce agencies. The unique feature of this system is that its data elements will consolidate and allow comparability of data within the P-20		

system, as well as, analyses of data from other agencies. Currently, LEAs using a variety of vendors for their local student management needs. The Data System Project will achieve significant efficiencies in administration, expense reduction, access, information and standardization. All elements of the state's plans in this area seem responsive to clearly identified state needs and are well organized. Clarification is needed on the Rapid-Time Data System as a key feature of the Comprehensive Data System project. Support participating LEAs. The Missouri Data Team model will be refined and expanded statewide as the primary method the state proposes to use in the provision of professional development related to this criterion. Benchmarks include having certified data teams in every district by 2011 and in every school by 2012. Additionally, evidence will be required that teachers and administrators have used the Data Team findings. The formation of data teams is consistent with best practices for using and applying data for continuous improvement. The application provides only minimal information describing expectations associated with the roll out of this reform element. More details are needed which address data team composition and selection, performance measures specifically tied to this effort and how the state will monitor for effectiveness. The application lacks specificity in addressing the essence of this criterion—namely, instructional improvement and using realted data for continuous improvement. The application, also, does not adequately address how the full range of constituents intended in this criterion will be serviced through ongoing job-embedded professional development. Missouri will host a data base accessible to researchers both in and outside the state. Two key strategies will be the foci for leveraging interest and activity within the research community: • Mini grants of up to \$25,000 as a means to encourage investigation and evaluation of specific improvement issues • Support of partnerships among schools and research consortia and LEAs to improve educational outcomes. The state does not provide an action plan for work that will be undertaken in this area. More explicit information is needed describing how the state will interface with the various consortia, the process by which important research topics will be identified, and how products produced by the researchers will be vetted and communicated. The application does not attend sufficiently to the overall role and function of research and evaluation, neither in the application narrative or the assignment of fiscal resources. The chart of key activities and performance measures presented in the RttT application do not adequately align with this criterion.

Total	47	35
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application indicates in the narrative that providers other than institutions of higher education may serve as designated alternative pathway providers, however, in Appendix 17 the supporting evidence is unclear on the specific authority given to the State Board of Education which allows or encourages entities other than higher education institutions to serve as providers. According to the list presented in (D)(1)(i) there are only higher education providers. Based on the evidence submitted there is more variety in alternative certification offerings rather than authorized providers. Evidence substantiates that the state has complied in including at least 4 out of 5 elements listed in the definition of alternate routes to certification. There are 12 alternative pathways for teachers offered at colleges or universities including 2 collaborations with Teach For America. Currently there are 716 participants enrolled at these institutions. Over 50% of these enrollees attend the University of Central Missouri. The application does not address the large disproportional enrollment at this single provider institution. Missouri does not have alternative preparation programs for principals in operation. Shortages and vacancies of educators are tracked through a centralized reporting system. Districts report their information through a Core Data System followed by the state's compilation of the data and a follow up report which indicates teachers not appropriately certified and areas of critical shortages by subject, position and location. The state has utilized 2 strategies to address the critical shortage of personnel through its Transition to Teaching Program and 2 tuition reimbursement programs focused on special

education teachers and guidance counselors. By its own admission the Missouri's efforts to date in responding to LEA needs for educational personnel in critical shortage areas has been substantially inadequate. Plans for more assertive initiatives to recruit and employ and retain highly qualified educators are presented in (D) (3).

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	36
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	15

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Measuring student growth. The state will build on past efforts to establish a longitudinal data system that provides student achievement data to individual teachers. Measures to be included to determine student growth include: state assessments, and as appropriate, other local measures provided they are rigorous and comparable. The proposed system will include test info for both mandated state tested grades and non-tested grades. The state also collects data on attendance and mobility. While the state data system contains multiple measures that provide important information to LEAs and educators, the application does not clearly identify which of these measures will serve as the core data collection used for determining student growth that will be linked to teacher and principal effectiveness and reported to the public. In order to make the system fair and creditable, providing assurances of comparability, validity and reliability will be required for all measures included. Further elaboration is needed on the specific measures that will be included in the data core for the purposes intended by this criterion. Developing evaluation systems. The state does not currently require LEAs to include student growth as part of teacher or principal evaluation. The state will complete development of a model evaluation system and plans on rolling out a pilot by summer for application in 5% of the LEAs by summer 2010. This model is currently underdevelopment as a cooperative endeavor between several national organizations and university researchers. As part of the development process, the model is being informed by input from by educator practitioners, educational associations and higher education institutions. LEAs will be required to use the model system or design a comparable one. The State Department of Education plans to work with key stakeholder groups to develop a model assessment system for principals. The application includes broad goals and a general time frame for the two areas of educator performance assessments but does not articulate a specific plan of action for launching this work or bringing it to scale. Further elaboration along these lines including benchmarks aligned clearly with performance standards would ensure the proposed plans would achieve the intended results and generate the needed acceptance within the educational community. Conducting annual evaluations. Teacher and principal evaluations will be conducted for teachers at least annually with interim observations. For teachers there will be 4 differential classifications and depending on the specific designations observations will be conducted more frequently. Similarly, the evaluation process for principals will occur at least annually and will be accompanied by a rubric that will differentiate performance by 4 classifications. Using evaluations to inform key decisions. The application includes a high level description of the state's efforts to advance the use of teacher and principal evaluations. The current features of the state's strategy include: • An annual data collection, analysis and reporting process on various categories of teacher statuses, e.g., number of new hires, the number of teachers who exit during probation • Encouragement of LEAs to develop a 4 tiered classification system for the purpose of awarding differentiated recognitions and rewards. The application does not effectively address effectively the specified sub-criteria listed in this section. Information is needed which directly aligns to the Performance Measures listed for (D) (4) (iv) a-d. The state should include a more detailed scope of work that describes timelines, specific activities and responsible parties. The response to this criterion should include both teachers and principals. The state should also develop strategies in collaboration with local school educators and representatives of local collective bargaining units.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Ensuring equitable distribution in high poverty and minority schools. Performance goals advanced by the state are ambitious: • An increase in the percentage of teachers in high need schools who are highly effective from 5 to 75% • Reducing the percentage of teachers in high need schools who are ineffective from 70 to 35% • An increase in the percentage of principals in high need schools who are effective from 5-75% Missouri is proposing several key strategies have been outlined to ensure more equitable distributions of educators. These strategies build on existing programs and launch new initiatives including: • Incentives through tuition scholarships and • Pioneering new uses of technology • Establishing partnerships with institutions of higher education • Identification of teacher and preparation programs with proven records of success • Continuation and expansion of specialized in depth training models, e.g. Virginia's School Turnaround Program In this area, one of the most critical reform areas identified by the state, the strategies presented seem substantially vague, under resourced and underdeveloped. In reviewing the state's proposed organizational and management structure along with the budget, neither human nor fiscal capacity satisfactorily aligns with neither the state's proposed activities nor performance measures. Further the plan proposed is inadequately informed by detailed reviews of prior program effectiveness or data tied to performance expectations. The state's application gives only minimal attention to the need for a robust principal talent pool. Given the projections for a 70% increase in the number of effective principals working in high need schools, this is deemed to be especially important since there is not currently an alternative certification program in place for principals. While it is clear that LEAs would stand to benefit substantially from the proposed initiatives, the application does not address how LEAs have been involved in creation of this reform plan element. Ensuring equitable distribution in hard to staff subjects and specialty areas. As noted in referencing the "Quality Counts" report, Missouri's ranking is 48 among the 50 states in the area of "teacher expertise". The state's proposed strategies in this area include: • Development of new compensation models and incentives for teachers such as stipends, loan forgiveness and university credit. • Additional alternative route programs that include early classroom practice, mentoring and induction programs and emphasize teaching hard to staff subjects • Expansion of teacher preparation programs with providers other than colleges and universities • Incentives at the LEA to provide higher pay to master teachers in shortage areas In an earlier section, reference is made to the process by which the state collects data on critical need teaching shortages but no statewide data is included as evidence. Based on this information, it would be expected that the state's reform agenda would lay out an aggressive set of bold actions tied to performance targets by critical shortage subjects and geographic specificity. What was presented is not adequate in this regard. While each of the strategies outlined would appear to have merit based on best practices, more substantial information and effort is required that articulates goals, objectives, performance measures, timelines and assignment of personnel responsible for each of the major initiatives.

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

In 2010-2011, in collaboration with key stakeholders, Missouri will create a rating system tied to teacher preparation programs based on the effectiveness of their graduates as measured in part by growth in student achievement. In the opening paragraph (D) (4) the language speaks to all educator preparation efforts. In section (D) (4) (I) the application speaks only to teacher effectiveness but does not include principals. The state also intends to expand partnerships with business and industry to provide additional reliable alternative pathways into teaching. It would be expected that such providers would also be expected to participate in the same rating system to determine the effectiveness of their graduates. By the year 2013-2014, the state is committed to publicly report on 100% of teacher and principal preparation programs in the state for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth of their graduate's students. In its response to this section, the state focuses largely on

existing programs. The application offers a few general ideas that the state intends to initiate to ensure these programs adhere to a specific set of effectiveness criteria in order to maintain their approval status with the state. Given the current lack of an in state alternative preparation program for principals and the fact that higher education institutions are the only providers currently offering teacher traditional and alternative preparation, the state will need to be aggressive in launching new high quality partnerships in order to change the status quo. Simply, maintaining an open market place is not likely enough to produce the kind of operational programs necessary to achieve success in this area. The state should provide a more detailed action plan for expanding successful preparation and credentialing options.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	9
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: Implementation of this criterion will be carried out largely by the restructured regional service centers along with support provided by the state department of education and other agencies. Key activities include: • Grant incentives to encourage LEAs to offer common planning time and other collaborative structures for teachers and school leaders • Alignment of fiscal resources to professional development activities that have demonstrated impact on student achievement. • Establishment of master coaches out of the regional centers to provide technical assistance to local districts. Evaluation of services provided will include: • Regular district based needs assessments • Data collection on the extent and quality of professional development services provided and the impact of such services on classroom practice and student achievement • Discussion forums focused on best practices. The state's response to this criterion is underdeveloped. The strategies presented are vague and lack detail with respect to collaborative identification of needs identified by LEAs and educators, lessons learned, and action plans comparable to other sections. Performance measures while optional are not included.</p>		
Total	138	75

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: According to Missouri's application, authority for intervening directly in low performing schools is granted to the State Board of Education primarily through the school district accreditation process. Pursuant to the specific authorities granted, the State Board has adopted the Missouri School Improvement Programs. This program outlines a detailed process for the accreditation of schools throughout the state including the state's responsibility to intervene and restructure persistently low achieving schools. Documentation should be provided to indicate that the accreditation authority granted to the Missouri State Board of Education "to intervene in low performing schools" is consistent with the definition of "persistently low student achievement" as prescribed in the RttT application notice.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	15
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	10
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: Identifying the persistently lowest achieving schools. The state has recently revised its definition of lowest achieving schools and is now utilizing this definition to implement a detailed ranking system based on ESEA required assessment data in language/arts and mathematics covering a 3 year period. From this ranked list, 5% of the schools with the lowest combined percent proficient or above will be designated for the purpose of this criterion. Further analyses will be conducted and additional data sources may be considered as determined by the state board of education to ensure equity and</p>		

fairness while also allowing for recognition of progress which potentially could be masked by strict adherence to test data. Turning around the persistently lowest achieving schools As evidenced in this section, Missouri has had a long standing tradition of working in school improvement at the local level. Over the years the state has employed a variety of strategies to turn around low performing schools. The application describes 7 interventions and approaches that have been operative in the past focused on low performance. This listing includes important lessons learned as a result of these interventions. Two key strategies are included in the state's RtT application: • Development of a statewide network of support through newly established regional service centers (RESLTs) • Initiation of a state Turnaround model to train teachers and school leaders Required evidence for (E)(2) does not address the following: • The total number of persistently low achieving schools (The Missouri School Improvement Program references 59 districts not individual schools) • Clarification on whether the programs listed overlap in their list of identified schools • Specific results of the program interventions based on the predetermined measures • Breakdown of the number of schools that will implement specific turnaround models by 2014 • How lessons learned from existing interventions will be applied to the in state Turnaround Model and RESLTs Over all performance measures are weak for this criterion and do not include documentation of specific need nor monitoring for effectiveness (e.g. value added evaluations of the RESLTs). The application indicates that an evaluation design is under development for the Turnaround Model. Further, the 2 strategies identified seemed to be substantially under developed as compared to the associated project budget requests (53.5 million) and the dramatic changes that are required to close the state's achievement gap. Plans for sustainability of key plan elements are only minimally addressed, e.g. the "braided" system of support for early learners.

Total	50	20
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percentage of total revenues available to support elementary, secondary and public higher education for FY 2009 was 4.3% greater than the total revenues available in FY 2008. Fiscal equity is addressed through a weighting formula assigned to LEAs that have a certain concentration of students who qualify for free and reduced price lunches. The state's funding formula (foundation aid) also includes in its calculation a student measure that takes into account other high need areas, i.e. Special Education students and Limited English Proficient students. School districts that have less local wealth get more state aid. The application narrative does not address Criterion (F)(1)ii-- how fiscal resources are distributed equitably within LEAs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Using the Reviewer Guidance described under (F) (1)(i) the state is assigned low points for this criterion. Missouri has 2334 total traditional buildings in operation (2000-2010). For the 2009-2010 school year, there are 33 approved charters with 47 campuses in operation. Charter schools represent approximately 2% of the total public school buildings in the state. In accordance with the Reviewers Guidance for this criterion, applying 5% (116) to the total schools in the state would translate into a "low" cap calculation on the number of charter schools. Missouri's charter school law is restrictive in that it limits the establishment of charter schools to locales with populations greater than 350,000 residents. Only 2 LEAs meet this criteria namely, Kansas City 33 School District and St. Louis City School District. Students enrolled in the Kansas City charter schools represent 30.95% of the overall student population during 2009-2010. Students enrolled in St. Louis charter schools represent 26.08% of the overall student population during 2009-2010. There is no cap on the number of charter schools</p>		

that may operate in these two urban areas. The geographic restriction for charter operations imposed by state law, has the effect of establishing a low cap on the opportunities for more charter school operations. Charter School Standard Application provides detailed guidance regarding how charter authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close schools. Additionally, clear expectations are set forth in these documents pertaining to student achievement as a key factor in determining charter school reauthorization or renewal as well as ensuring that charter school student enrollments are similar to local district populations. The application indicates that designated authorizers will have taken action to close 5 charter schools over the period 2004-2005 through-2008-2009. Allowable charter school sponsors in addition to LEAs and school boards include: 4 yr and 2 year public higher education institutions, and mayors of a city not within a county. In Missouri, one charter is sponsored by an LEA and 33 one by universities or colleges. Missouri state law outlines provides general direction regarding how charter authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close schools. Additionally, with funding from the private sector and in collaboration with representatives of the charter school community, the state has developed a set of more detailed model procedures to guide sponsors in the work they do to approve, authorize, monitor and close charter schools. These procedures have received full endorsement of the State Board of Education. The Model Documents lay out clear expectations pertaining to student achievement as a key factor in determining charter school reauthorization and give priority to applicants that propose a school oriented to high risk students or re-entry of drop outs. Several important concerns suggest the need for further explanation and justification from Missouri pertaining to Plan criterion F (2): 1)The percentage of "at risk" students currently enrolled in the states 33 charter schools and the numbers of schools and students that participate in the statewide system of assesements, 2)The option given to charter schools to participate in the statewide assessment,if applicablé, and 3)Expectations regarding use and encouragement by charter sponsors related to the benchmark/formative assessments that are under development as part of Missouri's participation in the MOSAIC Consortium. Allowing at risk or alternative sponsors to determine performance standards which do not conform to those at a minimum required by traditional schools is judged to problematic. There needs to be an assurance that flexible timeframe permission allowed to charter schools for achieving performance standards aligns with the ambitious targets for overall student achievement set forth in the state's reform agenda. Based on the application narrative, Missouri's charter schools receive equitable funding similar to traditional public schools along with a commensurate share of local, state and Federal revenues. Substantiation of this provision, referenced as Chapter 160.415 Section 2 (1-2) should be provided. Missouri does not provide facilities assistance for any public schools including charter schools. The state therefore does not impose facility related requirements that are stricter than traditional public schools. There are no statutory provisions or rules that would prohibit Missouri from creating innovative autonomous schools. The state does not have a track record in this area. In the RttT application/Section E #5 of the Scope of Work, the state sets forth a willingness to pursue changes in state law create expansion and development both of charter and innovative schools. Additionally, in the application narrative (F)(2)v of the RttT application, the state expresses a willingness of the state to establish conditions and assistance to LEAs in the creation of innovative autonomous schools. The ideas presented are described at a general level and seem substantially underdeveloped. Aside from an expression of general intent, noticeably absent are specific goals and performance measures, budgetary or personnel resources assigned to this area.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state's application presents only general information on its intent to create new models of innovation. It does not effectively address this criterion from the perspective of specific legislative or policy actions. There is no evidence of how the reference past innovations have impacted student achievement or resulted in other important outcomes.</p>		
Total	55	22

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Emphasis regarding STEM is included throughout the state's proposal ranging from identification of teaching shortages in critical subject areas to emphasis on math and science in the common core standards and aligned assessments to inclusion of STEM focused activities embedded in the state's 3 tiered intervention structure. The RtT application builds on prior STEM program initiatives that are firmly established through existing partnerships and the use of funding from state, federal and private sources. To the extent that additional STEM enhancements can be effectively achieved they are largely dependent on the strength of the overall application as well as specific plan components. In many instances, the states proposed activities as presented are considerably underdeveloped thus raising a concern about overall impact on projected outcomes in addition to STEM specific elements.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The application fully conforms to the requirements specified both in the narrative and evidence provided in the Appendices.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	298



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Missouri Application #3960MO-2

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	37
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	27
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1)(i) Missouri has set forth a comprehensive agenda that articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in ARRA and for improving student outcomes statewide. Their responses to the criteria are also consistent with the four areas of Race to the Top (RTTT) application. While Missouri presents a path to achieving its goals in several areas of the application, overall, the fail to present clear results-driven plans and a credible path for achieving their goals. Missouri presented an aggressive and comprehensive set of goals that cover each of the assurance areas of RTTT. Missouri is committed to improving the effectiveness of teachers and principals, implementing an effective longitudinal data system, improving the evaluation of teachers and principals and tying these evaluations to student growth and achievement, and is very supportive of innovations in education, such as charter schools. It is very clear that Missouri plans to use RTTT to stimulate improvements across its K-12 educational system in the state, including building the capacity of its Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), LEAs, and teacher and principal preparation programs across the State. Missouri indicated that DESE is under new leadership, and that the agency is dedicated to overcoming past challenges and positioning itself to be a resource to help LEAs improve and drive student achievement in their schools. In the past, DESE focused on ensuring schools were compliant with State laws, rules, and policies; it will focus on student achievement in the future. (A)(1)(ii) Missouri has presented a list that shows that 513 or 561 LEAs in the State have signed a preliminary MOU to participate in the State's Race to the Top Initiative. This represents 91% of all LEAs in Missouri, as well as 886,637 K-12 students (99%) and 368,063 students in poverty (97%). It's not clear how involved LEAs were in the development of the plans presented in this application and attached letters of support present mixed levels of support among teachers in the state. Additionally, there is a provision in the MOU that enable LEAs who have collective bargaining agreements in place to default to using those to define certain levels of participation among LEAs in the State's plan. As a result, it is not clear if LEAs are committing to one State Plan or a State Plan that has many movable and changeable elements. Points were withdrawn as a result. (A)(1)(ii)(a) The terms and conditions of Missouri's MOU are very clear and definitely present a strong commitment to the State's plan and to reforming/improving the State's schools in general. (A)(1)(ii)(b) Missouri provides a very detailed Scope of Work (SOW) that requires LEAs to implement the State's entire Race to the Top Plans. The SOW shows that Missouri plans to vigorously pursue reform with or without RTTT funding. They have really taken the focus areas of RTTT and translated them into a compelling set of reforms for Missouri schools, teachers, principals, support agencies, and children. (A)(1)(ii)(c) Missouri presents an LEA participation chart that list all 513 superintendents, all 513 school board presidents, and all 189 teachers union leaders in the State as supportive of the State's RTTT Plan. It's important to note that not all school districts in Missouri have teachers unions, so the 189 is

the full number of teachers union in the State. Missouri's application reflects tremendous leadership support for a plan that would usher in sweeping reforms to K-12 education and teacher and principal preparation in the State. (A)(1)(iii) Again, Missouri presents an LEA participation chart that list all 513 superintendents, all 513 school board presidents, and all 189 teachers union leaders in the State as supportive of the State's RTTT Plan. It's important to note that not all school districts in Missouri have teachers unions, so the 189 is the full number of teachers union in the State. Missouri's application reflects tremendous leadership support for a plan that would usher in sweeping reforms to K-12 education and teacher and principal preparation in the State. However, the letter of support from the Missouri State Teacher's Association raises many doubts about the level of commitment teacher's unions have for the plan. The letter indicates that it was signed with "strong reservations because we we are being asked to support the state plan that we have not been given an opportunity to read...in addition, it is not clear as to how our support can be withdrawn once the final version of the state plan is written and implementation begins." As a result of this contradiction, points were withheld. Missouri recognizes that student performance on its state assessment and the NAEP are average and have only demonstrated slight improvement since 2003. Missouri provides data tables that show slight growth on the NAEP among its 8th graders in math but inconsistent performance among its 4th graders in reading and steadily declining performance among its 8th graders in reading. Likewise, on its state assessment, the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient in communication arts and mathematics has remained relatively constant in grades 3 to 8 since 2006. Missouri's new goal for student performance is to place in the top 10% of states nationwide on measures of national and statewide student assessments. (A)(1)(iii)(a) Missouri has set ambitious goals for improving the achievement of students across all subgroups. The State is dedicated to improving the percent of students scoring at or above in communication arts, science, and mathematics by 7% annually. Considering how few students are scoring at proficient and above levels reading and math in Missouri and the fact that Missouri says its Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is focusing on capacity building and changing its service model as well, a 7% annual increase might be possible, but a 4-5% annual growth rate is more realistic. (A)(1)(iii)(b) The percent of students scoring at or above proficient among all subgroups has improved significantly in Missouri since 2003. In 2003, only 12% of Black students, 21% of Hispanic students, 34% of white students, and 42% of Asian students were scoring at or above proficient in communication arts. These percentages have increased to 30% for Black students, 28% for Hispanic students, 57% for white students, and 62% for Asian students. Improvement among black students grew at faster rate than white and Asian students between 2003 and 2009. Missouri doesn't present a goal for reducing the achievement gap. However, it's goal of moving all students forward by 7% annually is appropriate for its state because the achievement of all subgroups has been historically low, and all "boats must be lifted." Missouri is right to focus on moving all students forward in its state rather than reducing gaps, at this time. (A)(1)(iii)(c) Missouri is projecting that graduation rates for all students will increase by 2% annually. It doesn't, however, stress a graduation goal by subgroup of students. Missouri's graduation goal is not ambitious enough. Considering that Missouri experienced a declining graduation rate among Asian, Black, Freed and Reduced Lunch, and Limited English Proficient subgroups, a more aggressive goal with appropriate interventions is needed. (A)(1)(iii)(d) Missouri has set several college enrollment goals for graduating students in the State. Missouri's goals are to increase the number of high school students graduating high school with an associate's degree by 5% annually, increase the percentage of minority, special education and English Language Learners (ELL) enrolling in college by 5% annually, and that these students will complete two years of college within three years of graduating from high school.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	27
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(2)(i)(a) Missouri's Race to the Top (RT3) Plan outlines a very clear leadership framework with dedicated team members. Through RTTT, Missouri plans to establish an RT3 Implementation Team with a dedicated leader (project manager) and four other positions that provide leadership in the areas of Standards and Assessment, Data Improvement, Great Teachers/Leaders, and School Improvement. The application provides detailed descriptions of responsibilities each of these positions will carry, and shares a list of other members of the implementation team that are already positions at Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Missouri is focused on hiring less staff than more, and instead focusing realigning the entire organization around the four elements of RTTT. The budget identifies resources that DESE plans to use for this purpose. However, there is no impact data with regard to (A)(2)(i)(b) DESE's new vision for its role in education in Missouri is to be a support organization that assists LEAs with addressing the needs of students. If funded, DESE will begin the process of establishing regional service and training centers that will work directly with LEAs to improve instruction and student learning in all schools, and provide concentrated assistance to low performing schools. DESE will also begin realigning its team around the four elements of RTTT; it is projecting this process will begin in 2010 and conclude in 2014. In the new organizational design, DESE will focus on providing districts support, creating incentives for LEAs to use and implement in their schools/districts (e.g., funding and resources, public reporting and transparency, and regulatory and procedural changes, if necessary). DESE will also focus on building its own organizational and systemic capacity to be a significant resource to schools, families, and children in Missouri. The central responsibilities of the "new" DESE and decentralized nature of services will give Missouri the opportunity to get to know its schools better, learn and share best practices across the state, and develop a deeper understanding for how community dynamics and changes might affect school/school reform strategies, policies, and outcomes. (A)(2)(i)(c) Missouri plans to use its existing grants management system and team. The system will be expanded to accommodate the requirements of RTTT. Using a system that works rather than building a new one demonstrates how Missouri is focusing its attention and resource plans on "getting better" – getting better schools, a better state agency, and better outcomes for teachers and students. It also demonstrates DESE's commitment to reorganizing to best meet the needs of schools. (A)(2)(i)(d) As stated previously, Missouri plans to completely reorganize its Department of Elementary and Secondary Education around the core elements of Race to the Top, as they see the elements as the right foci for their state right now. As a result of its plans to realign an entire state agency around RT3 coupled with a very large number of participating LEAs, Missouri's budget request is very large - \$743,451,964 over four years. That breaks down to \$839 per student served by the 513 participating LEAs. It also breaks down to an average of \$335,341 per school and \$1,449,224 per participating LEA. Missouri says it plans to sub-grant \$354,325,000 directly to its 513 participating LEAs to assist them with developing and implementing their RT3 Plans. Missouri also stated that it plans to build its regional centers by using contracted personnel at the outset, which is primarily the reason why there is \$350,718,000 listed in the budget for contractual expenses. Missouri intends to use contracted personnel to assist with capacity building, realigning DESE around the four elements of RT3, and providing services and support to LEAs. Personnel costs are amazingly very low, with Missouri expecting to spend just \$424,647 on salaries over the four years of the grant. The budget appears to be very large, but it is not a bad budget considering that Missouri is intending to transform its entire K-12 education system in the state. A feasibility study would help clarify if tackling so many LEA transformations over a four year grant period is too much radical change, particularly when the state's education agency will undergo changes as well. The situation, if not execute appropriately and with great precision and attention to detail and relationships, could easily disintegrate into disorganized chaos. Missouri should proceed with caution and consider spending more time thinking through the scale at which it is capable of tackling reform across the State. (A)(2)(i)(e) Missouri did not adequately respond to this selection criterion. Missouri did not provide an explanation for how it would use its fiscal or political resources to continue, after the period of funding has ended, the reforms that it has underway. Missouri did speak about human capital, saying that the State plans to focus on identifying and developing quality team members, but looking to existing positions first.

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

30

10

(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	2
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(3)(i) Missouri highlighted a few initiatives it has engaged in over the last several years, but they did not clearly demonstrate how they made progress in all four areas of reform. Missouri mentions its development and implementation of its Missouri Student Information System two years ago as an example, along with DESE's sponsorship of the Missouri Professional Learning Communities project, which is a three year process model for improving schools. However, nothing significant was mentioned under Great Teachers and Leaders or Standards and Assessments. (A)(3)(ii) Missouri's data tables on student achievement on the NAEP and its state ESEA assessment show inconsistent performance year-to-year on the state test, limited growth on the NAEP, and very little narrowing of the achievement gap between student subgroups. As a result, Missouri is receiving low points.</p>		
Total	125	74

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(1)(i) Missouri is a member of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI), which is focused on developing rigorous, internationally benchmarked standards in reading and mathematics that ensure students are prepared for post secondary education and careers after high school. CCSSI was brought together by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association (which also established Achieve), and includes 48 participating states. Missouri has signed an MOU indicating their commitment to adopt at least 85% of the CCSSI when they are ready. (B)(1)(ii) Missouri presented a clear road map in its application for adopting the Common Core State Standards during the summer. Missouri presented a very detailed timeline that has the Commissioner of Education recommending the standards for adoption to the State Board of Education no later than August 2010. High points were awarded as a result.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(2) Missouri is participating in Consortia for both summative and formative assessments. Missouri is a "committed and active" participant in the Balanced Assessment Consortium, which included 36 states as of January 2010. This Consortium is focused on developing and adopting a summative assessment that measures CCSSI. An MOU acknowledging Missouri's participation and commitment is available in the Appendix. Missouri is also a member of the MOSAIC Consortium, which includes 20 states who are working together to create formative assessments that align with the Common Core State Standards.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	17
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(3) Missouri shares an exceptionally detailed plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build towards college and career readiness by the time students graduate from high school. Missouri's support plan entails adopting</p>		

Common Core State Standards and Assessments, developing curriculum frameworks that are consistent with the rigor of CCSSI, design and disseminate grade specific professional development to educators that are aligned with CCSSI and the assessments, and strengthening the state's high school graduation requirements to require more rigorous courses, including study in STEM. Missouri lays out a detailed action plan for each action step mentioned, including what will get done, by when, and by whom.

Total	70	67
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	22
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C)(1) Missouri has completed implementing 11 of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act into its longitudinal data system.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2) Missouri answers this question in (C)(3). The presented a very solid plan for ensuring data from a longitudinal student data system is available statewide. To build its system, Missouri brought together agencies that are responsible for preschool education through college, along with business, nonprofit, and other leaders, to define an approach to, need for, and use of data. Missouri's plan offers specific activities that will be conducted, along with a timeline and the names of the departments or agencies responsible for implementation, oversight or monitoring.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3)(i) Missouri doesn't discuss how it will acquire, adopt, and use a local instructional improvement system. Instead, they wrote about something almost completely unrelated. As a result, all points for this sub-criterion were withheld. (C)(3)(ii) Missouri has created the Missouri Rapid-Time Data System, which provides a link between a student's achievement reports and real-time practice of the teacher in the classroom. Missouri is planning for a pilot testing with Districts I July 2010. (C)(3)(iii) Missouri does plan to make data available to researchers. Additionally, Missouri plans to provide mini-grants of up to \$25,000 to encourage researchers to focus on things they might normally overlook, and provide what they've learned to the general public.		
Total	47	39

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	12
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D)(1)(i) Missouri has state laws and regulations that enable the State Board of Education to issue licenses to teachers using several routes to certification, including certification through non-higher education entities. A State law passed in 2008 enables the American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence, a nonprofit organization, to issue certifications to teachers in different subject areas at the middle and high school level. LEAs and teacher candidates are also able to jointly pursue temporary certification that enables the teacher to teach for two years (three years, with an extension).		

During the two years, teachers with temporary certificates must complete required coursework, state assessment(s), and be assigned a mentor. Additionally, candidates with a Ph.D. in a content field may secure a teaching certificate after completing a "pedagogy test" for the grade level plan to teach. Missouri presently does not have alternative certification routes for principals. Some points were withheld because no alternative routes to certification are available for principals. (D)(1)(ii) Missouri presented several colleges and universities that offer or sponsor alternative routes to teacher certification. One college operates a partnership with Teach for America that began in 2007. The American Board for the Certification Teaching Excellence (ABCTE) can issue licenses independently in several subjects as approved by Missouri's State Board of Education. As of August 2008, there were 74 individuals pursuing certification through ABCTE and 67 candidates enrolled in the college partnership with Teach for America. Missouri also offers the Troops To Teachers program, which provides an opportunity for former military service members to teach in schools and earn teacher certification. Missouri indicates that three candidates completed their certification through this program in 2008-09. Altogether, Missouri listed 14 colleges and universities that offer or sponsor alternative certification programs. As of August 2008, 392 teachers completed their certification through these programs and an additional 716 were enrolled. As stated under the previous criterion, Missouri law also allows LEAs and teacher candidates to jointly pursue temporary certification that enable teachers to teach for two years (three years, with an extension) while they pursue full certification. During the two years, teachers with temporary certificates must complete required coursework, state assessment (s), and be assigned a mentor. Additionally, candidates with a Ph.D. in a content field may secure a teaching certificate after completing a "pedagogy test" for the grade level plan to teach. There were no enrollment or completion numbers provided for individuals enrolled in these programs. Missouri states that all of its alternative certification programs are selective in accepting candidates, provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as mentoring and coaching; significantly limits the amount of coursework or have options to test out of courses; and provide full teacher certification to individuals who complete an alternative certification programs. Evidence of how these criteria are applied in different alternative certification programs is not provided. Also, there are no alternative routes to certification for principals in Missouri. As a result, points were withheld. (D)(1) (iii) Missouri indicates that it monitors, evaluates and identifies areas of principal and teacher shortage through its Core Data System. Missouri says its school districts report educator vacancies and classroom assignments and the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education returns information to districts identifying classes taught by teachers who are "not appropriately certified", along with information that identifies hard to staff subjects, positions, and locations. Missouri's steps communicate a system for identifying, monitoring, and evaluating teacher and principal shortages, but offer very little evidence of what they do prepare teachers and principals to fill these vacancies. In their application, Missouri mentions a Transition to Teaching Program and a scholarship program that prepare teachers in special education and for counseling and guidance positions, but only a brief explanation is offered for one of these programs and no programs for principals are mentioned. As a result, points were withheld.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	35
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	6
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	18

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(2)(i) Missouri has established a clear plan for measuring student growth. Presently, the state maintains data on students using an identification number and links student achievement on the state's summative assessments teachers, schools, and LEAs, and reports this data to LEAs. Missouri is also planning to enhance its system by linking students interim and formative assessment data and other data agreed to with LEAs. For non-tested grades and subjects, Missouri plans to link students' pre-

tests and end-of-course data, results of English language proficiency assessments, "and results on other rigorous and comparable measures" to teachers, schools, and LEAs. Missouri, doesn't, however offer an explanation of student growth that is consistent with the definition provided in the Race to the Top Federal Notice. As a result, points were withheld. (D)(2)(ii) Missouri indicates that it has a "teacher assessment model" under development by a group comprised of the Council of Chief State School Officers, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, and a team of researchers at Stanford University and Washington University in St. Louis. They say that this evaluation system will provide observation feedback to teachers, allow teachers to provide their observations and feedback as well, and link to the Missouri Formative Assessment System so comparisons with student results can be made. This evaluation will also differentiate effectiveness of teachers using the following rating categories: beginning, effective, proficient, and master, and will rate teacher performance in four categories: unsatisfactory, satisfactory, proficient, and excellent. Missouri says its redesign "will be informed" by teachers, educator associations, colleges, and administrative practitioners. Furthermore, Missouri says that it will require LEAs to use the state teacher evaluation system or develop a local system with comparable scope and rigor. Missouri also says it plans to work with stakeholder groups to develop a similar assessment for principals that is based on effectiveness, incorporates student growth measures, and includes multiple rating categories. However, the State's explanation of its plans for evaluating principals is weak in comparison to its explanation of its evaluation system for teachers. Additionally, Missouri does not indicate if student growth will be considered a "significant factor" in the evaluation of teachers and principals or if the state's measure of student growth is consistent with the definition of student growth provide in the Race to the Top Federal Notice. Because the of the clause in its LEA MOU that allows districts who already have collective bargaining agreements in place to default to use existing evaluations, Missouri cannot ensure that the evaluation system it develops will be adopted locally. As a result, points have been withheld. (D)(2)(iii) Missouri states that participating LEAs have agreed to conduct monthly, quarterly, or annual evaluations of teachers and principals depending on their level of experience and demonstrated success. Through the state's evaluation system, teachers and principals will be able to set performance goals, review student performance measures, and set individualized goals for professional development and improvement. Missouri also shares detailed examples of how teachers – but not principals – will be evaluated at each level of effectiveness (e.g., beginning, effective, proficient, and master teacher). Beginning teachers will be evaluated monthly or more frequently if necessary, and will be assigned a master teacher or instructional coach as part of their professional development. Since the application lacks evidence of a high quality and ambitious plan to provide rigorous, transparent, and a fair evaluation system for principals, points were withheld. All teachers will receive "full data" on student achievement and their performance will be based on classroom success, benchmarks, and performance assessments based on standards. Missouri doesn't clarify, however, if these benchmarks and standards are based on students' or teachers' performance). For principals, LEAs will be required to conduct annual evaluations of principals, and ensure that these evaluations are conducted by the Superintendent or his/her designee. These evaluations are to include a review of student performance data, comparison of school data to similar schools in the district and state, and how principals have evaluated differentiated performance among teachers in the school. Based on the results of the evaluation, principals will complete professional development and individual growth plans. Unsuccessful principals will be given time to improve or will be counseled out of the position. Missouri's explanation of its system for principal and teacher evaluation adequately addresses the criterion in RTTT. As a result, no points were withheld. (D)(2)(iv) Missouri demonstrates in the application, how it will use teacher and principal evaluations to inform their development and removal, but don't provide details for how its evaluations will be used to address teacher compensation, promotion, retention or tenure. As a result, points were withheld.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	10
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	7
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	3
(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

(D)(3)(i) Missouri has proposed an array of initiatives that it says will help the State ensure that teachers and principals are equitably distributed to high-poverty/high-minority schools across the state. However, the programs Missouri mentions in its application do not have measurable goals and objectives for how many teachers and school leaders they will recruit and/or help place in high-poverty/high-minority schools. As a result, significant points have been withheld. (D)(3)(ii) Missouri states that it will take a "human capital approach" to recruiting and preparing teachers for hard to staff subject areas such as special education, math, science, and English Language Learners. They also state that they will "incentivize" LEAs by providing resources that enable LEAs to offer higher pay, loan forgiveness, tax credits, and tax free scholarship for professional learning. These are recruitment strategies, which are part of ensuring teachers are available to assume hard-to-staff positions and teach in specialty areas. However, a high quality and ambitious plan for how the State will increase the percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas is not provided. As a result, points have been withheld.

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

(D)(4)(i) Missouri states that it has been working since 2007 to develop a statewide system to measure the effectiveness of all educator preparation programs, using multiple measures that include student growth and achievement. Missouri then says that they "compiled the first set of data in " and mention partnerships with three different institutions, but they do not say what the institutions did exactly. It is not clear why they are mentioned at all. Furthermore, they present a very lean and weak plan for how the State will link student achievement and growth data to the students' teachers and principals and in-state teacher and principal preparation programs. They also don't mention anything about publicly reporting the resulting data for each credentialing program in the state. As a result, significant points were withheld. (D)(4)(ii) Missouri explains what it will take to expand "effective options for aspiring teachers and principals" in the State and shares their commitment to working with teacher recruitment, training and placement entities. However, they don't present a high quality or ambitious plan for expanding preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principles anywhere in the application. As a result, significant points were withheld.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	2
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(5)(i) Missouri mentions that they will provide master teachers/administrators as regional coaches for LEAs and matching funds to LEAs to design instructional delivery systems that allocate planning time and collaboration for teachers and leaders. However, these few statements and two strategies do not represent a high quality plan for how the State, in collaboration with LEAs, will provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning time to teachers and principals that are ongoing and job-embedded. As a result, significant points were withheld. (D)(5)(ii) Missouri's presents a marginally effective plan for measuring, evaluating, and improving the effectiveness of supports that should have been mentioned in (D)(5)(i). While strategies Missouri provides would be good evaluation tools for measuring teacher and principal support initiatives, there is no substantive supports mentioned in (D)(5)(i) to link the tools too. As a result, significant points have been withheld.

Total	138	63
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(E)(1) Missouri does have the authority to intervene in the State's lowest performing schools and LEAs. State law grants the State Board of Education the authority. However, the reasons Missouri provides don't mention low academic achievement as a reason the State could give for intervening in a low performing school. Because of his lack of clarity, some points were withheld.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	17
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	12
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (E)(2)(1) Missouri outlines a 7-step process for identifying low performing schools. Missouri projected the process would be approved in late January 2010. The State ultimately will select its lowest 5% of low performing schools and define them as "persistently low performing schools." Missouri says at its discretion, it may identify other schools that are not in the lowest 5% for intervention as well. (E)(2)(ii) Missouri presents a plan for turning around its lowest performing schools. However, it is not a high quality plan as it is clear from the limited details provided that they Missouri is not as close as it reports, to being ready to turnaround its low performing schools. There are good processes outlined but the process is focused more on what Missouri must do to be in a position to turnaround schools than to begin turning them around any time soon. The application also lacks evidence of a high quality and ambitious plan to support LEAs in turning-around the lowest performing schools.		
Total	50	22

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1)(i) Missouri spent 32.64% of its budget on education in FY2008 and 36.98% in FY2009. This information is backed up by documents available in the appendix. (F)(1)(ii) Missouri uses an equalization aid program where LEAs that are less wealthy get more in state aid than LEAs that are wealthy. Missouri also adds additional aid to schools based on the number of students they serve who are in poverty, have a special need, are at risk or speak English as a Second Language. There is nothing mentioned about similar types of aid programs between schools within an LEA.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (F)(2)(i) Missouri limits charter schools to the Kansas City and St. Louis school districts. However, within these districts, there is no limit to the number of charter schools that can be created. In the 2009 -10 school year, there are 33 charter schools operating on 47 campuses. Charter school students represent 31% of the students in Kansas City and 26% of the total student body in St. Louis. (F)(2)(ii) Charters in St. Louis and Kansas City can be "sponsored" by the school board of a district, a four year public or private university in the county where the district is located, a community college located in the district, or the mayor can request the opportunity to establish a workplace charter school, which is a school that serves families within a particular business district. Charter schools have been closed in Missouri; however, no reasons are given for why they were closed. A handful of charter applications have been denied, and for various reasons. Also, Missouri presents a track record where the majority of charter school applications that have been received have been approved. (F)(2)(iii) Charter schools in Missouri receive the same level of aid as traditional public schools. They receive local, state, and federal funds in the same manner that traditional schools do. (F)(2)(iv) Missouri does not provide facilities funding to charter schools. Charters must use their operating budgets to pay for their facility,		

or they can raise private funds. (F)(2)(v) There are no laws in Missouri that prohibit an LEA from establishing an innovative or autonomous school. Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) stressed a significant interests in helping LEAs establish such schools should they choose to do so. However, there are also no assurances provided that demonstrate how or what LEAs can do to establish autonomous schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (F)(3) Missouri does not adequately answer this question. It states in a 3 1/2 line paragrah that Missouri LEAs operate special education cooperatives, alternative schools and technical programs. However, Missouri does not explain in its application how these programs are reforms or innovations that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or have produced other favorable outcomes. As a result, all points were withheld.		
Total	55	22

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Missouri presents examples of areas where it says it is addressing and supporting STEM education now. They then go on to explain reasons why the State must focus on STEM education; however, they never get to the point of mapping out a plan for offering a rigorous course of study in mathematics, science, engineering and technology; they don't express partnerships they are attempting to create to support students or teachers in STEM; and they don't define how they plan to prepare students for advanced study and careers in STEM fields.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Missouri presented some very solid plans in for reorganizing its Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, adopting standards and assessments, creating regional centers to serve teachers, establishing strong evaluation systems for teachers and principals, strengthening teacher and principal preparation in the state, and providing technical support and curricular materials to educators that are aligned with the new curriculum Missouri is set to adopt. Missouri's application was not as strong on the issue of charter schools and turning around low performing schools. Nevertheless, given where Missouri is - planning to start over and modify its approach - it demonstrated a great deal of promise in this proposal that it has the right plan to succeed.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	287



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Missouri Application #3960MO-3



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	23
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	12
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1)(i): It is clear that MO has a vision, goals, and a theory of action. The reform agenda MO references in its proposal is Thaler's and Sunstein's theory of action and their book, "Nudge." Very simply, "If Missouri's public schools are to be the best choice for our citizens, they must produce the best results." The context for this theory of action includes new leadership at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and a new vision for the next decade: 1. Ensure that Missouri students will rank in the top 10 on national and international measures of accountability; 2. Provide quality, universal early childhood educational opportunities to all three and four-year olds; 3. Recruit, prepare and support effective teachers and leaders; and 4. Create statewide knowledge of and respect for public education through improved departmental efficiency, operational effectiveness and positive relationships with external constituencies. MO sees RTTT and the assurance areas as a vehicle or "credible path" that can be used to implement a reform agenda. This is not a state that has already begun its journey to the top in a meaningful way, but a state ready to use RTTT funds to reorganize and recast itself into a different kind of organization that behaves differently for the purpose of helping LEAs. To that end, if it receives RTTT funding it will restructure itself around the four assurances. It has a plan for a new organizational chart and has captured all of the work it wants to accomplish in a series of projects. MO's receives medium points. The path to achieving some of the goals, the particulars of who will do what when, is presented at a too global level to warrant full points. The proposal would also be stronger if there were an underlying shift in the role assigned to LEAs, who need to become full partners in the process of improving education. (A)(1)(ii): Even though MO indicates that it has support from the LEAs responsible for 99.4% of the students in the state, low points are given here. It is not clear how genuine is the teacher support and issues are raised about the trust that exists between entities. Reform is very hard work even in a climate of mutual respect and trust. MO is what is often called a "right to work state" meaning that teachers in many LEAs do not have collective bargaining. For those districts that do have the right to bargain collectively, MO stated that, in "some local teacher organizations and unions have asked districts to agree to additional language to ensure the preservation of current collective bargaining agreements." This seems perfectly reasonable until a spot check revealed the language in one letter of support. The letter includes the phrases "asked to support the state plan that we have not been given an opportunity to read," and "it is not clear how our support can be withdrawn once the final version of the state plan is written and implementation begins." Some of the letters of support are simply not rigorous endorsements of MO's RTTT proposal. There are at least two issues here: • These passages suggest a break down in trust between the state and teachers from at least some LEAs. • They suggest that the teachers were not partners in the planning. The third point, less important but noteworthy, is that MO did not try to present a clear and complete picture of how much support actually exists for its plan. To categorize a

letter with phrases as damning as those quoted above as a "letter of support," seems hollow. (A)(1)(iii): In keeping with RTTT guidelines MO will send 50 percent of the grant money directly to participating districts. The remaining money will provide support for districts not designated as participating and for statewide systemic efforts. MO intends all LEAs to benefit from the structures and supports it puts in place. There is a strong likelihood that the impact will be statewide since MO intends to bring statewide programs online that will affect everyone. Medium points are awarded for (iii). Not all of the points are earned because the connection between MO's goals, initiatives and targets need to be more tightly drawn. This is further discussed in other sections of this proposal evaluation including (A)(2), (A)(3), and (D)(2). (A)(1)(iii)(a)(b)(c): MO attends to measurement and moved to new end-of-course assessments for some of its high school courses in 2008-2009. It also attends to data, bringing a new data system—Missouri Comprehensive Data System—online in 2007. This is the work MO can point to as foundational to the work it wants to do. It is on this foundation it builds these goals: • It intends to make use of its new system to gather information about children in early childhood programs. • It describes itself as a state with average scores on national tests. It wants to be in the top ten states by 2015. • MO wants to increase its percent of minority and special students that score proficient or better in communication arts, science, and mathematics. For each of these goals it has set very concrete, but not overly ambitious, targets. MO has been making incremental progress and the targets it sets are along the same continuum (i.e., 2% per year... 7% increase each time NAEP is given). These are not "Race to the Top," game changing targets.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(2)(i)(a): It is clear that MO's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has spent time thinking about an organizational structure for this work in order to implement its plan. It established an organizational chart with a project manager and a manager for each of the assurances. It has identified current projects and established potential projects, organized by assurances, which would become the responsibility of each project manager. One example is that the Standards and Assessment Assurance Manager responsibilities include: • Project 2, which includes Standards and Assessment • Project 4, the Model Curriculum Another examples is that the Great Teachers/Leaders Assurance Manager will lead: • Project 10 Teacher Leader Evaluation • Project 11 Improving Teacher Preparation (A)(2)(i)(b) Supporting LEAs DESE teams will be staffed with people currently working within DESE, but "central to the best practices that DESE seeks to employ are those that are associated with a new vision of its role, which involves: • Reorganization to function as a support organization that assists LEAs • Building organizational and systemic capacity (which entails, among other things, disseminating knowledge and best practices) • Creating incentives to ensure LEA-level implementation" (A)(2)(i)(c) Implementing the RTTT grant: MO has an established electronic system to monitor and report on federal grants. It will upgrade this system if it receives RTTT monies. The budget submitted with this proposal is problematic. Some expenditures (creating connectivity, for example) seem excessive and need more justification. There also appear to be inconsistencies between budget expenditures and activity years. (A)(2)(i)(d)(e) MO is reallocating current monies and current staff to align with its RTTT proposal. Additionally, MO's Commissioner has directed that future grants and monies be aligned to RTTT for the life of the RTTT grant. There appear to be very high walls between the DESE and LEAs that DESE says it would like to breach. An important example is that "throughout the life of the grant and beyond" current department staff would be transitioned to decentralized agencies operating out of regional centers. Less than full points are earned for two reasons. Despite DESE's stated goal of changing its relationship to LEAs, there is not enough attention to and value on collaboration with LEAs. For example, DESE had a process that gathered input about its RTTT proposal from many stakeholders, but it did not give a special place at the table to the LEAs who it identifies as partners. The proposal specifically notes the participation of the business community, higher education, and community leaders, but not the K-12 educators who will carry the

bulk of responsibility. A way needs to be found for DESE and LEAs to establish working partnerships wherein each is seen as making valuable contributions. This is a re-occurring theme in the MO proposal. The second reason MO didn't receive full points for (i) is that the budget isn't explained well enough or linked tightly enough to DESE's work plan. (A)(2)(ii): For the reasons explained earlier, it is not clear enough that there is strong support from either teachers or educational leaders. That said, support from the other stakeholders is critical and should be garnered. One last point speaks to the quality or conviction of the support. It is important and good that the various organizations support the RTTT effort, but there is no assurance that the support will translate into any action beyond writing the letter of endorsement. Medium points are awarded for (ii) which speaks to "using broad stakeholder support."

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(3)(i): There is dissonance between the description in the proposal sections of (A)(1)(i) and (A)(3)(i). (A)(1) is written as though the activities are planned while (A)(3) describes the same activities as underway. It is not clear what has happened and what is in the planning stage and so full points are not awarded. Additionally, MO could earn more points in (i) if it went beyond program descriptions and could associate growth or data with these areas. MO has definitely been engaged with the following two assurances over the past few years. 1. Data Systems to Support Instruction MO installed a statewide longitudinal data system in 2007-2008 that is among the most advanced in the nation. RTTT will additionally: • Ensure all stakeholders access • Ensure all stakeholders can utilize P-20 longitudinal data • Enable collaboration to capture and link effective teaching practices to student performance and leadership activities • Provide a database to researchers 2. Standards and Assessments MO has been long at work implementing standards and assessing student progress against those standards. A primary goal is of RTTT is to enable LEAs to improve student performance P-20. This will be accomplished by: • Adopting and implementing the Common Core. • Developing a model curriculum framework based on the Common Core • Instituting two new assessment systems (one formative, one summative) both aligned to the Common Core, and each being developed by consortia of states. With a new Commissioner, MO sees RTTT as a way to progress in those areas where it has not made the kind of progress it would have preferred. 3. Great teachers and leaders: To begin, MO will develop a comprehensive and transparent performance-based evaluation system that incorporates measures of student learning. The system will be used to inform how teachers and principals are prepared, licensed, supported, and distributed. • Implement an updated system to track, measure, and analyze student performance and growth. • Develop a model curriculum framework • Design and disseminate grade/subject specific professional development • Update high school graduation requirements to encourage dual credit, internship, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) credit for all students. 4. Turn Around the Lowest-Performing Schools MO will develop state and LEA capacity to implement four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, and transformation model. (A)(3)(ii)(a): MO's student achievement has increased overall and by subgroup since 2003. However, annual gains are incremental or even non-existent in some subjects; the achievement gaps between subgroups persist; and the graduation rates for some minority groups have actually declined. During this time MO has implemented a variety of programs and initiatives to increase overall achievement and tackle the achievement gap. An area of strength for MO is its Data System. It has been operational for two years and is designed to attach a unique student identification number to each student in accordance with America COMPETES. But, it is not clear that DESE has done more than build and provide the system. It is not clear how this data is systematically turned into information useful to the system. (The use of data teams is discussed later with the intention of making it a broad strategy for the state.) It is not clear how DESE has provided LEAs with the professional development support that would allow teachers and principals to analyze the data for ways to focus and improve instruction, for example. Perhaps these things do happen, but it

is not clear from the proposal that these practices are common and widespread. MO describes a comprehensive data system, it describes honing its standards and assessment system, and it describes best-practice type activities it has sponsored. But it does not describe tight connections among the various components. Take the case of its Professional Learning Communities Project, for example. This involves schools "focused on high expectations for student achievement. Data driven instruction, job-embedded professional development, and collaborative leadership are essential components in the school improvement process." This description includes references to lots of best practices, but it is not possible to tell if it represents deep work or mouthed jargon. To begin, more information is needed about the data teachers use to drive instruction; the skills teachers have in analyzing data; and DESE's contribution to the process. The missing connections and broad-stroke descriptions earn MO 12 of 25 points for this (ii).

Total	125	53
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (B)(1)(i): Full points are awarded here. MO has a long commitment to standards and the measure of standards and is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of standards. It has signed an MOU committing it to the Common Core Standards Initiative. The MO legislature is planning on adopting these standards during August of 2010. (B)(1)(ii): Full points are awarded here. DESE offers the kind of detailed timeline of activities to implement the Common Core standards that illustrates its experience in this area. They are indicative of an organization that knows how complex the task is and how many partners will be needed. The first two items it lists indicate the breadth: • Pre-k activities like "work with early childhood constituencies to align, update, and develop, if necessary, the Early Learning Standards to assure that early learning is aligned to the Common Core K-12 Standards." • Post-secondary activities like "work with Department of Higher Education to align and update the Core Competencies and Standards to the Common Core Career Ready/College Ready Standards."</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (B)(2): MO is participating in developing two different assessment systems (one formative, one summative) both aligned to the Common Core. Each system is being developed by consortia of states that include a significant number of states as defined by the RTTT RFP.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	7
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (B)(3): DESE has developed a detailed and reasonable timeline of activities that involve the key players and cover the appropriate content. Low points are awarded because a key phrase "in collaboration with its participating LEAs" is not attended to well enough. Too often DESE has assigned itself activities like the following: • Deliver high quality professional development • Draft p-12 model curriculum While it expects LEAs to: • Participate in high quality professional development... • Implement p-12 model curriculum... MO was not discounted in (A)(1)(i) for the lack of cooperation with LEAs so it would not be penalized twice for the same trait. It is important that the lack of interest in meaningful partnerships with LEAs be reflected in some score point. While there are subsequent</p>		

charts that assign LEAs a larger role, there continues to be a tone that the DESE is the authority and that the LEAs have little to contribute. MO's approach represents a lost opportunity. There are many other possible tracks that MO could take that would result in the same deliverables, develop capacity in LEAs, and sow the seeds for meaningful and equal partnerships in the future.

Total	70	57
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C)(1): MO has a COMPLETE compliant system, except it is not available to all LEAs or other stakeholders who should have access because of bandwidth. Many stakeholders can't access the system. Full points are awarded as prescribed by the rubric.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2): MO implemented an America COMPETES compliant longitudinal data system two years ago and already has two years of linked student and educator data, putting it ahead of almost every other state. However, because of the rural nature of MO and the availability of internet connectivity or bandwidth about half of the citizens can connect only at slow speeds. Anticipated demand will make the situation worse. This will not support access to MO's data system. If MO receives RTTT funds, it will begin by providing 21st century infrastructure and bandwidth. The budget for this element seems very high and the associated costs are not justified. It is also not clear why there is a two-year gap between creating bandwidth and user access. While connectivity is the first step to access, disconnects between the budget, timeline, and outcomes cause medium points to be awarded.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3)(i)-(ii): The Missouri Comprehensive Data System Project just finished a planning process working with DESE, the early childhood community, the Missouri Department of Higher Education, and workforce agencies and programs statewide. The various agencies have their own data systems, but the systems are not integrated. RTTT will allow the integration of systems and enhancement of MO's Show-Me Portal. Specifically it intends to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand its longitudinal data system and data warehouse, and • Refine the Show-Me Portal. The proposal states, "The Rapid-Time Data system allows DESE and the RESLT's Centers to provide targeted, differentiated, and immediate support to schools based upon changing needs in performance by students and teachers." In general, LEA teams will be trained in state protocol, monitored by state teams, and participate in DESE Data Expositions. Better would have been professional development aimed at ensuring LEAs could, independently, determine their own priorities, based on their own analysis of available data. • One example: For most of the first 18 months of the project, DESE is engaged in significant intellectual work related to developing and incorporating data from its new formative and interim benchmark assessment systems while the LEAs are tasked with "continue to incorporate key PK-20 elements to evaluate services being provided..." • Another example: When LEAs do play a role, as when the Data Team Model is expanded to put a Data Team in every district by the summer of 2011, LEAs step into a state-designed, state-controlled system. This continued pervasive top-down approach does not reflect conditions or best practices likely to result in deep changes in practice. MO receives 6 of 12 possible points for (i) and (ii). (C)(3)(iii): MO's database will be open to researchers and MO will go so far as to offer mini-grant of up to \$25,000 to analyze and improve MO's model for evaluating student performance, educator performance, and educator preparation institutions. This is the kind of innovative thinking intended to be funded with RTTT and MO earns full points for this element.		

Total	47	39
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D)(1): MO has multiple pathways by which teachers enter the field, including that it recognizes teaching certificates from any of the other 49 states. It also allows teachers with an active license to add additional areas of certification through testing or coursework. There are no alternative pathways available for principals and so MO earns half of the possible points.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	21
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	3
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	7
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (D)(2)(i): Medium points are awarded because MO already has unique student identifiers and there are no legal obstacles to linking educator assessments and student achievement. It is in the process of developing a plan to do this work. However the definition of student growth it includes in its proposal is inconsistent with the one provided in the RTTT proposal. This is a lynch-pin concept that holds together too many aspects of the RTTT and prevents MO from earning full points. (D)(2)(ii): Medium points—one half—of the points are awarded. The missing element is principals. MO is one of the few states with a climate that allows robust evaluations. It has a data system that could support the effort. For all of these reasons, it is well positioned to begin work in this area. But, for some reason it does not make a serious effort to include principal evaluations as it retools its system. DESE has determined that the measures to be used in establishing student growth will include, but not be limited to 1) student scores on state assessments and 2) locally developed and agreed upon measures of learning. DESE will provide to LEAs a new statewide model based on the work of CCSSO and others. DESE will require participating LEAs to adopt this model or to adopt locally designed tools with comparable elements and similar rigor. (D)(2)(iii) DESE will require that participating LEAs evaluate their teachers on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis, depending on the educators experience and level of success with students. Each of the evaluations would meet the conditions outlined in RTTT, except it is not completely clear what the role of student achievement and student growth will play in the evaluation process. MO's describes its reform efforts as designed to ensure that only highly-effective teachers, as earned through evaluation, are eligible for job protection and other rewards. MO will require that LEAs track and report teachers' evaluation results as well as other pertinent data like the number of new hirers, the number of teachers leaving the district, the number of teachers considered for tenure and the number and percentage of teachers who receive tenure. Low points are earned because of unanswered questions about student achievement and because principals are not included in the process. (D)(2)(iv): MO's approach, in broadest strokes, is to provide a way to house data, require LEAs to collect the data, and then to encourage LEAs to use the data to develop 4-tiered systems to rank educators and to differentiate rewards based on the ranks. Incentives might include expanded roles like coaches, fellowships, additional time for development and study. Salary, the most obvious compensation, does not seem to be mentioned. While professional development and support are mentioned in other areas of the proposal, it is not specifically developed in this section. For example, there is no systematic mentoring program for new teachers or formal peer mentoring program for struggling teachers or principals. In short, there is not enough discussion about what will happen when</p>		

the data suggests an educator needs support. There is no clarification about the LEA's role or DESE' role in providing support or building skills. MO has set targets of 100% by the end of 2014 for "participating and qualifying" LEAs. While the reader is reminded of the total number of participating LEAs, it is not obvious what percentage of LEAs will be "participating." Because of the unanswered questions and lack of specific guidance or models from DESE, low points are awarded for (iv).

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 (D)(3)(i): In addition to extending recruiting practices for hard to staff content areas, MO will incentivize (provide funds) LEAs to provide higher pay and other types of financial rewards to teachers and principal who work in high-needs schools. It will expand access by pioneering uses of technology. It sees technology as a tool to help LEAs extend the reach of their most effective teachers. It also is willing to let LEAs adjust staffing allocation to assign larger numbers of students to more effective teachers. Low points are given because some of the solutions – such as increasing the class size of effective teachers – do not align with the spirit of RTTT's rewarding effective teachers. Additionally, the plans are so broad and vague they do not cut a clear path from the current situation to an equitable distribution. (D)(3)(ii): It will incentivize the creation of more preparation programs, especially those that include early childhood programs, mentoring and induction programs, and hard-to-staff programs. This is a partial solution to the problem that will be hard to sustain, particularly given MO's per pupil expenditure and medium points are awarded. (5 of 10 pts.)

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	14
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 (D)(4): In 1999 MO implemented MoSTEP, which is a 7-year review process of all education preparation program compliance with certification requirements, assurance that candidates complete a basic skills test, subject-specific competencies and eleven teaching standards. This system, along with the recent linkages between student data and preparation programs, will provide high quality information that will be used in making decisions. Using this data, MO will stop certifying plans that met only minimum requirements and certify only those programs that offer proven teacher and principal programs. They will certify program based on the "entity's ability to develop, enhance, and document their candidates' content knowledge; develop the necessary pedagogy; provide series of real, relevant, and rigorous quality internship experiences; and contribute to gains in students' achievement through the work of their graduates."

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	10
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 (D)(5)(i): State law currently requires that new teachers receive 1 year of mentoring, which is provided by LEAs. Currently, MO believes the quality is uneven. DESE has developed mentoring standards and now offers a statewide program. There is also a System of Support rubric and a State Advisory Team to monitor overall effectiveness. As part of its RTTT plan, LEAs must expand their provision of effective mentoring. Partial points are awarded because DESE mandates that LEAs increase mentoring, imposes guidelines, and establishes an Advisory Team to monitor effectiveness. This is another example of DESE failing to step away from "compliance" and into "partnering" in order to change its fundamental relationship with LEAs. (5 of 10 pts.) (D)(5)(ii) It is not clear to what extent DESE plans to monitor the effectiveness of the State Advisory Team or to make adjustments to its process or approach. For this reason, half of the points are awarded. (5 of 10 pts.)

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

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: E)(1) MO has historically had legal authority to intervene in failing schools and has revised its definitions to align with RTTT. Its rather complicated, comprehensive definition indicates it is familiar clearly defining problems in defensible and measurable ways.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	13
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	3
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	10
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (E)(2)(i): MO is in its first year of implementing a program focused specifically on turning around the lowest achieving schools. It has identified twenty-nine schools in fifteen LEAs. With DESE providing oversight, the Darden/Curry Model is in use and a 2-year coaching process is in place. This model is not in complete alignment with RTTT requirements and MO earn medium points. (E)(2)(ii): MO will support LEAs in their efforts by developing a MO Turnaround Model that provides: • Quick intervention • A tiered system of technical assistance and accountability monitoring • Training and technical assistance to teachers and administrators in the Data System • Individualized professional development and data team training, including STEM expert network • Helping set up a braided system of support for students To manage resources, MO will use a three-tiered approach to provide support. Over the years MO has employed a variety of approaches to help failing schools. It identifies eight of the most promising models and shares both the lessons learned about those models and those models worthy of further study with MO's increased capacity. That MO is reflecting on and applying forward the lessons it has learned, is an excellent example of using data to scale efforts. However, there are concerns about MO's approach to Turnaround Schools that can't be overlooked. First, is how little this element impacts the overall State budget. It is not clear how MO can hope to support ambitious work without investing resources. Second, MO depends on replicating the model it currently uses and yet has little evidence that model is effective. Third, the RTTT RFP is quite specific on types of models that earn full points and its model is not completely compliant. MO earns low points.</p>		
Total	50	23

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1)(i): Even though MO per pupil spending is among the lowest in the country, MO appears to meet all legal requirements related to funding. The state has not cut funding and 2009 allocations exceed 2008 allocations both in terms of real dollars and percent of total revenue. (3 of 5 pts.) F)(1)(ii): MO uses a weighted funding formula that gives extra weight to students who qualify for free and reduced price lunches, leading to more equitable funding. The funding formula held up in the State's Supreme Court in 2009, but no information is provided regarding how money is actually distributed, so less than full points are earned rated to (ii).</p>		

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(2)(i): MO earns partial points (3 of 5 pts.) for allowing charter schools to exist in some LEAs. Although MO does not limit the number or type of charter schools, they limit the location and the governance. Charter schools can only be established in Kansas City 33 School District and in St. Louis School District (cities with population over 350,000). The schools must be run by the school board or by a college or university. With one or two exceptions, all charters are associated with a university. There are concerns about why charter schools are limited to two urban school districts, both of which are high-minority, high-poverty districts. The jaded reader might interpret this as a lack of concern for and willingness to experiment on the most vulnerable students. (F)(2)(ii): MO earns almost full points here (4 of 5 pts.). There is accountability for charter schools with renewal denied for between one and three charter schools every year since school year 2004-2005. However, it is not clear that student achievement is a consideration when a charter is denied or when this might become a consideration. The proposal describes the following changes to increase the accountability of charter schools: • Developing and implementing standards for charter sponsorship; • Developing and implementing a process for evaluating charter school sponsors; • Developing and implement guidelines for charter school sponsors that hold them accountable for closing poor performing charter schools; and • Working toward legislative changes that, generally, will bring more accountability to charter schools. Very troubling is MO's widening achievement gap. It is not possible to tell (and it should be) how charter schools are contributing to the trends discussed in section (A)(1). (F)(2)(iii)-(iv): Charters remain a part of the public school system but operate with a high degree of independence. The student's home district "passes through" each student's state funding using a complicated formula heavily dependent on average attendance at the charter school. Additionally each charter school receives all of its student's entitlement monies. Money related to facilities is not as clearly explained as it might be, but Charters do not receive the same level of support as other public schools. While MO does not receive all of the points, it receives most of them. The concern here is more around adequacy than equity since is the State of MO funds education at very low levels for both regular and charter schools. (8 of 10 pts.) (F)(2)(v): It is legal for LEAs to start their own charter schools, although none have done so. MO will offer funding incentives to encourage this practice. (5 of 5 pts.)</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(3): After reading the proposal and considering how much of the proposal is really plans for the future, based on RTTT, there were no other initiatives, programs, or considerations that hadn't been included and accounted for somewhere in the proposal. It has a history of implementing standards and has built a good data system. These were considered.</p>		
Total	55	23

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>MO is absolutely engaged in activities related to STEM, which it lists in its proposal. But those activities are outside of the RTTT proposal (NSF grants, science camp), rather than a core or integral aspect of its RTTT approach. MO's proposal does not tell a compelling story of a state, strategically engaged in increasing the number of students headed toward careers in STEM fields. Still, the activities are included and MO deserves credit for them.</p>		

Total	15	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The proposal and DESE's work is clearly organized around the four assurances and MO has addressed all four.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	261
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Missouri Application #3960mo-4



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	38
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	23
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1)(i) Missouri received medium points on this sub-section because Missouri met the content expectations asked in the notice. Missouri set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulated its goals for implementing reforms in the four ARRA education reform areas. It provided the reviewer with a clear picture of what Missouri expects to accomplish with its RTTT program. It gave a philosophical foundation for the planned work and a theory of action for how it could be accomplished. It also provided summaries of what the major work in the four education areas described in ARRA would be if the proposal is funded. High points were not given because teacher groups felt that they were not involved in developing the agenda. (A) (1)(ii) Missouri received medium points in this section because the responses in this subsection also were only partially responsive to the expectations of the notice. (A) (1)(ii) (a) Missouri used the U.S. Department of Education's model MOU with a major modification in the Assurances section that stated that the MOU "Will Adhere to the terms and conditions of legally binding negotiated agreements with recognized employee groups." This clause seemed to have the power of nullifying much of the model MOU developed by the U.S. Department of Education. (A) (1)(ii) (b) Missouri's scope-of-work descriptions are detailed and show both the State's and LEA's responsibilities. The State plan covered all areas required in the RTTT and LEAs did not opt out of any expectations. However as noted in (a) negotiated agreements would supersede the MOU agreement. (A) (1)(ii) (c) Missouri had very high participation. MDESE has received a total of 513 signed MOUs, representing 91.4% of the State's LEAs. Every LEA partner has agreed to participate fully in every reform effort, unless it was in conflict with locally negotiated agreements. Among these, 100% were signed by the superintendent, 100% were signed by the president of the local school board and 100% were signed by the teachers' union representative, where applicable. The collective populations incorporate 99.4% of the Missouri K-12 public school students. Very problematic was that the Missouri NEA and Missouri AFT letters noted opposition to some Missouri RTTT expectations. The Missouri letter stated " We do not support: Proposals to abolish tenure without replacing it with substantive due process.... Proposals including pay for performance or merit pay based on student test scores." The AFT Missouri letter had similar statements. (A) (1) (iii)(a) Medium points were given to this section because 91.4% of the LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plan and those LEAs represent 99.4% of the student population. Missouri's plan would have received maximum points, for broad statewide impact, were it not for the assurance clause about negotiated agreements in the MOU. Missouri NAEP scores show generally, increasing student achievement in mathematics at both the 4th and 8th grade during the past seventeen years. The Missouri scores in math have closely mirrored the national averages. Missouri's NAEP scores in reading have generally stayed at the same level but exceeded averages for the nation. (A) (1) (iii)(b) Low points were given to this subsection because Missouri has large

achievement gaps for Hispanic students and especially Black students. Achievement trends are positive for both Hispanics and Blacks but because the achievement trends are even more positive for White students, the achievement gap has widened from 2003 to 2009. Missouri has set challenging goals for closing the achievement gap and notes that considerable of the challenge remains in having students ready to succeed in kindergarten. More information about future interventions would have been appreciated. (A) (1) (iii)(c) Missouri graduation rates for all students have been in the mid 80s and so are considerably above the national average of 70 percent. Missouri graduation rates for Blacks and Hispanics are 73.3% and 79.5 percent. Missouri has a target of increasing graduation rates by 2% each year. They have as a goal to increase by 5% the number of students graduating with STEM related coursework. These goals are challenging but do-able. (A) (1) (iii)(d) Data for determining past increases in college enrollment do not include non-public higher education and so are not completely accurate. Trends show that majority population percentages remain stable while minority enrollment has a small increase in college enrollment. Missouri has set challenging goals for future enrollments.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A) (2)(i) (a) Missouri has an excellent plan for providing strong leadership to the RTTT program. It has a dedicated leadership team built around the priorities in the RTTT proposal. The positions are the Race to the Top Project Manager, the Standards and Assessment Assurance Manager, the Data for Improvement Assurance Manager, the Great Teachers/Leaders Assurance Manager, and the School Improvement Assurance Manager. The five positions report directly to the commissioner. Specific task and responsibilities for each area are indicated in the proposal. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) staff with expertise in the areas of work will serve as staff where and when needed. Proposal was not given perfect points because of the budget concerns noted below. Budget Comments The comments and scores given reflect proposal totals that are three times guidance given by U.S. Department of Education for states similar to Missouri. Instead of the high end \$250 million, Missouri is asking for nearly \$750 million. That given, most expenditures seem appropriate for a \$750 million dollar budget reflecting the usual higher development costs in years two and three and lower in the first and fourth year. One expenditure that should be looked at in great detail is the request in Section C to have the RTTT program pay all \$248 million dollars of broad-band infrastructure costs. It does not appear that they have "thoughtfully coordinated, reallocated or repurposed" other education funds from other sources for the broadband costs. Specific to the budget for section A, there appears to be a mathematical error on the five project manager's budget. The budget shows \$12 million for five consultants for four years. Using Missouri's calculations, the cost for the four years should be \$3 million (\$750,000 per year) and not \$12 million. Local travel in Section A especially for the consultants also is extremely high and needs further consideration. (A)(2)(i)(b) DESE has several strategies for supporting participating LEAs. The strategies are well thought out and seemed viable. The centerpiece idea is the creation of a statewide network of Regional Education Services for Leadership and Training Centers (RESLTs Centers). The RESLTs Centers will offer support to LEAs in improving instruction and student learning in all schools, Concentrated assistance be given to those schools identified as persistently low-performing. These Centers also will provide technical assistance and training, promote best practices and support their replication, and assist LEAs with accountability. DESE intends to develop numerous incentives including higher pay to encourage highly qualified teachers and principals to work in high-need schools (A)(2)(i)(c) The project managers will have responsibility to ensure that MOU agreements are met. They will do this through use of the Electronic Planning, Electronic Grants System (ePeGS) and the current funds disbursement procedures and systems. This is an approach that has been used with other large programs and is a sound approach (A)(2)(i)(d and e) Missouri has a clever and significant approach to meeting the expectations of the this subsection. The Missouri Commissioner of Education plans to reorganize

DESE and all related state and federal funding sources around the four assurance areas in order to sustain the Missouri educational reform plan after the RT3 grant funding has ended. This will allow DESE to coordinate, reallocate and repurpose education funds to better accomplish the planned work in the four assurance areas. DESE also will transition DESE from a single centralized location into a regionally focused department located in regional service centers where technical services may be personalized to address the needs of the region. These permanent change would mean that the four assurance areas would continue to operate even after RTTT funds end. (A)(2)(ii)(a) Medium points were given for this sub-section. Response from LEAs in Missouri was very impressive. A total of 513 out of Missouri's 561 LEAs (including charter school LEAs) (91.4%) agreed to participate. These numbers represent 99.4% of the State's students and 91.5 % of its school buildings. Letters of support were received from some education-related organizations such as the Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri Association of Career and Technical Education, etc. Support was received from charter schools and the Missouri Charter Public School Association. Unfortunately some of the most crucial partners in a successful reform were conditionally supportive such as the Missouri School Board Association or critical of the proposal such as the Missouri NEA and AFT Missouri. Support of teacher groups is crucial if major reform efforts are to be successful. Given the teacher organizations concerns, only half the points are given to this section. (A)(2)(ii) (b) Very impressive was the response from individuals. DESE convened a stakeholder forum on November 23, 2009. Nearly 300 participants, including Governor Nixon; members of the Missouri State Board of Education; legislators; other education-related organizations; higher education (both 2-year and 4-year institutions); teachers; parents, students; and business and industry attended. DESE held numerous webinars with over 700 participants. DESE conducted an on-line statewide survey regarding its Race to the Top work, resulting in nearly 5,000 responses within this one-week timeframe. DESE received a large number of letters of support from a wide array of constituencies, including support from businesses and community organizations. Verifications of all those claims were verified by various appendices to the proposal.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	22
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	17

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(3)(i) Missouri made progress in each of four educational reform areas. Proposal noted numerous initiatives that have been in place in Missouri. Some of the initiatives that have been most successful include: (1) Statewide assessments that include constructed response and performance events, (2) Established expectations for student performance on statewide assessments that are among the highest in the nation, (3) Statewide longitudinal data system with unique student identifiers that became fully operational two years ago, (4) Leadership Academy which provides ongoing professional development opportunities aligned with National Staff Development Council (5) Network of regional professional development centers (RPDCs) that train and assist educators in implementing research-based instructional practices and assessment methods. (A)(3)(ii)(a) Missouri students perform slightly better on NAEP scores than students nationwide. Missouri students have improved over time in mathematics and very slightly in reading. The performance of minority students, students with disabilities, and English Learners has improved, but at a slower pace than that of the total population of students. (A)(3)(ii)(b) Missouri has not decreased achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics. Black achievement gaps are significant. Hispanics achievement gap is much less than for black students. Hispanics do much better than blacks in mathematics and slightly better in reading. The achievement gap for both Blacks and Hispanics is greater in the 8th grade than it was in the 4th grade. (A)(3)(ii)(c) High points were given for this subsection because graduation rates for Missouri are higher for all groups than nationwide averages. The graduation rate in 2009 was 85.1% higher than the national graduation rate of approximately 70 percent. The Black graduation rate was 73.3% and the Hispanic rate was 79.5% The Native American

graduation rate was 86.6 percent. As a trend the graduation rate has remained fairly stable since 2003 with the exception of Hispanic rates that increased from 76.9% to 79.55.

Total	125	80
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(1)(i)(a) Missouri is a member of the Common Core Initiative being led by the Council of Chief State Officers and the National Governors Association for best practices. The standards are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation B (1)(i)(b) Forty-eight states and three territories are participants in the Common Core Initiative. (B)(1)(ii) Missouri, in its proposal, has a timeline for adopting a common set of K-12 standards by August 2, 2010 and for implementing the standards in a well-planned way. It is detailed in the proposal, listing timelines, specific activities and persons responsible for implementation.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(2)(i) Missouri is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality formative assessments aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards through participation in the Multiple Options (for) Student Assessment (and) Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC). Missouri is currently serving as an organizational lead state for the consortium, along with Wisconsin and Nebraska, and is committed to serving as the fiscal agent for the work of the consortium. Twenty states are working on this project. Missouri is also committed to active participation in the development of the common summative assessments with member states of the Balanced Assessment Consortium. Thirty-six states are part of the Balanced Assessment Consortium as of January 14, 2010. The Balanced Assessment consortium of states is focused on developing formative and balanced assessments for evaluating the common core standards It will start by examining principles derived from an examination of successful state systems in the U.S. and high-achieving systems internationally. (B)(2)(ii) Thirty-six states are part of the Balanced Assessment Consortium as of January 14, 2010. The assessment consortium MOSAIC has 20 states that are working collaboratively toward the common goal of implementing formative and interim/benchmark assessments.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B) (3) Missouri has developed an implementation plan that is exemplary and that other states could use as a model because of its thoroughness and clarity. The plan details timelines, implementation activities and person responsible for completing each activity. The implementation plan addresses all of the RTTT requirements and more. The plan included: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; cooperating with the State's institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments including formative and interim assessments; developing and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students. The plan is developed around five</p>		

tasks. They are: (1) Adopt and implement the NGA/CCSSO Common Standards, (2) Fully participate in assessment consortia, (3) Develop model curriculum frameworks consisting of course descriptions, unit outlines, measurable objectives, benchmark assessments and scoring guides, suggested evidence-based instructional strategies, instructional timelines, and a state online instruction support environment (4) Design and disseminate grade/subject specific professional development, (5) Update Missouri high school graduation requirements. Each task has detailed timelines, activities and responsible parties. The Missouri Proposal also has completed the optional performance measures chart that again is exemplary for its detail and clarity. The measures are challenging but do-able.

Total	70	70
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	22
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C)(1) Missouri currently complies with 11 of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act. Missouri will comply with the 12th element by June 2010. It has not completed work on the element dealing with student-level transcript information.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	2
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2) Missouri reported that bandwidth is the biggest problem with using the Missouri Comprehensive Data System. While the system is web-based, it does require 5 meg connections to function and 10 megs to function well. Missouri reports that 187 districts will have that level of connectivity by the end of SY 2011. Even with RTTT funding it would be another three years before all LEAs are connected and trained. While not fully implementable presently, Missouri does have a plan to provide the necessary connectivity, training on use of the system and professional development for its full use. While the plan is of high quality, the means of funding through \$248 million dollars of RTTTT is unrealistic.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3) (i) Notwithstanding issues of state-wide connectivity, Missouri has developed a high-quality plan for design, development, acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness. The plan is implemented through three key activities. They are: (1) Implementation of a state-wide system, (2) Expansion of the longitudinal data system and data warehouse, and (3) Enhance the Show-Me portal. As with other plans, timelines, activities and persons responsible are detailed and well done. (C)(3) (ii) Missouri has a detailed high-quality plan for supporting participating LEAs and schools that are using instructional improvement systems. Missouri recognizes how important professional development is for appropriate and valued use. It intends to "develop a system linking classroom observations to a web-based system enabling educators to collaborate in capturing and identifying effective teaching practices connected to student performance and leadership activities." It intends to expand an existing professional model already in place to all schools. The Missouri Data Team model, already in use by exemplary Missouri districts, will become the State standard. Equipped with common access to data, Missouri will have Certified Data Teams in every district by the summer of 2011, and in every school by the summer of 2012. (C)(3)(iii) Missouri has a high-quality plan for making the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers. Missouri will not only welcome researcher use, but will provide monetary incentives of up to \$25,000 to		

researchers willing to study identified needs. Missouri also will establish a research consortium patterned after the Chicago Consortium of School Research, to work with 28 school districts and the 24 charter schools that surround Kansas City, Missouri. Budget Comments for Section C As noted earlier, the request in Section in this section to have the RTTT program pay all \$248 million dollars of broad-band infrastructure costs is highly questionable. That single request is nearly the equivalent of the total guideline allocation for Missouri. Missouri does not show how those kinds of expenditures are justified in moving forward the intentions of the RTTT program nor does it explain how those expenditures are justifiable in denying RTTT funds to another state.

Total	47	36
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	16
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(1)(i) The Missouri legislature has given the State Board of Education authority that allows alternative routes to certification and for this reason the alternative teacher certification component is awarded high points. The State Board of Education has authority to issue teaching certificates and to approve teacher preparation programs based upon rules that it adopts. It has the flexibility to award certification of teachers prepared at institutions other than IHE. Some of the alternatives the State Board has implemented include: (1) Passing an examination with a minimum score on a standardized test, (2) allowing individuals who hold a doctorate degree in a content field to obtain certification when they pass the pedagogy test for the grade level they desire to teach, (3) working through the American Board of Certification for Teacher Excellence, (4) Passing the appropriate Praxis II test, (5) taking the required courses listed in the Missouri Compendium of Certification Requirements. No alternative programs were described for certifying principals in addition to institutions of higher education and no points were given for the principal component. (D)(1) (iii) Missouri appeared to have a viable plan. The proposal stated that "Missouri uses a centralized reporting system to track annual educator vacancies and trends to ensure an adequate number of effective teachers/principals in schools, especially in hard to staff locations. Districts report educator vacancies and classroom assignments to DESE through the Core Data system. DESE then returns information to districts identifying classes taught by teachers who are not appropriately certificated, as well as identifying hard to staff subjects, positions, and locations". Working through the Transition to Teaching program, Missouri uses that information and two state tuition reimbursement programs to provide scholarship funds for areas of need primarily new special education teachers and candidates who wished to enter the field of school guidance and counseling.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	54
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	26
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(2) (i) High points are given to this section because Missouri has established clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student. As in other parts of the proposal, Missouri had a detail action plan showing timelines, activities and persons responsible. Some of the measures to be used in establishing student growth include: (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA, (2) Other locally developed and agreed upon measures of student learning, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. The</p>		

proposal noted that "State measures already in place include summative assessment for grades 3-8 in mathematics and communication arts; the State also assesses students in grades 5 and 8 in science; and the State has high school End-of-Course exams in Algebra I, English II, and Biology (2008-09), and English I, U.S. history, and government (2009-10). Additional student level measures available currently at the state level include: attendance, discipline and mobility. " Multiple measures are to be used in establishing student growth, for non-tested grades and subjects. Some possibilities include alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other rigorous and comparable measures of student achievement. Student level measures available currently at the state level include: attendance, discipline and mobility. DESE has been "collaborating with higher education regarding development of a classroom/teacher effective model within a school; currently utilizing results of the Missouri Assessment Program, but which will be expanded to use other factors/measures. " An advisory group has been established and is comprised of teacher and administrator organizations, as well as representatives of higher education that will review future materials. Missouri expects that additional materials will be available from the consortiums on assessment that it has joined. (D)(2) (ii) Currently LEAs are not required to measure student growth as part of the evaluation of teachers or principals. LEAs currently do not have to report evaluation results to the State or publicly. However, LEAs will report teacher and principal evaluation beginning the spring of 2011 to the state and public reporting the fall of 2011. High points are given to this sub-section. The proposal has a high-quality plan that will design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor. The proposal has narrative that states: "To ensure that LEAs implement meaningful and rigorous performance evaluations for all teachers, Missouri will provide a new statewide performance assessment model. This model will be informed both by a teacher assessment model under development by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), and a team of researchers at Stanford University and the University of Washington." Standards will be designed to document teacher's skills over four levels (beginning, effective, proficient, and master). The redesign will be informed by practitioners, educator associations, colleges, and administrative practitioners. Classroom practice will be a significant part of the model state evaluation form. The evaluations will be connected to the Missouri Formative Assessment System so that the definition of effective practice is linked specifically to student performance. DESE will require participating LEAs to use these model assessments or to adopt locally-designed tools with comparable elements and a similar level of rigor. All assessments will be designed with collaboration and input from teachers, school boards, and other stakeholders. The evaluation tool will include a rubric that will help evaluators to classify teachers as unsatisfactory, satisfactory, proficient and excellent. As described below, LEAs will be required to report annually on the number and percentage of teachers who earn performance ratings in each category. To ensure that LEAs adopt similarly rigorous evaluations for principals, DESE will work with key stakeholder groups to develop model principal performance assessment systems at the state level, similar to those developed through the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium and other proven models. The models will incorporate measures of student growth and will include mechanisms to provide principals with timely and constructive feedback. Like the model teacher evaluations, principal evaluation tools will be accompanied by a rubric that will help supervisors make determinations of performance as unsatisfactory, satisfactory, proficient and excellent. DESE will require participating LEAs to adopt these models or develop an equally rigorous proven evaluation model. Missouri requires that local models must be developed in collaboration with local leaders and in concert with local agreements. (D) (2) (iii) Maximum points are given to this sub-section because Missouri plan exceeds the requirements of the RTTT notice. It requires more frequent evaluations dependent on the educator's level of experience and demonstrated success with students Different time periods between evaluations are required for beginning teachers & teachers with unacceptable student performance than are teachers on the other end of classification, proficient/master teachers. Participating LEAs will ensure that teacher and principal evaluations are conducted on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. (D)(2) (iv) This section was given high points primarily because of information provided in the chart focused on this subset. Missouri will start with a base of 513 participating LEAs that include 3,260 principals and

70,436 teachers. Missouri has a performance measures chart that show the percentage of evaluations that will use student performance as an important component, to inform decisions regarding— (a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development; (b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities; (c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and (d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures. The chart shows that by the end of the SY 2012-2013, fifty percent or more uses noted in subsections a through d will be underway and 100% by the end of the SY 2013-2014 (except for granting tenure which has a projected 75% use) will have been implemented.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	19
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	12
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(3) (i) Missouri presently complies with the federal requirement of employing highly-qualified teachers in core subjects but does not have a way of identifying highly effective teachers and principals and thus has no information on present distribution of highly-effective teachers and principals. It does have a plan to ensure that in the future, students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. Plan components include: Identify highly-effective teachers and principals, establishing where they are and are not and met the targets for correction noted on the 3,D,i chart, partnering with institutions of higher education in Missouri, providing support to practicing educators in high-poverty and high-minority schools, encouraging LEAs to extend the reach of Missouri's best teachers to more students, and creating disproportionately attractive working conditions in high-need schools. (D)(3) (ii) Teacher expertise is an area of great need in Missouri. The Missouri proposal noted that It currently ranks 48th out of 50 states on the 2010 Quality Counts report. Response to this section was not as rich in content and detail as in some other sections. Strategies planned to improve this situation include: greater use of technology, role redesign, removal of policy barrier. disproportionately attractive working conditions in high-need schools by supplying funding to LEAs to provide higher pay, loan forgiveness, tax credits, or tax-free scholarships for advanced professional learning opportunities, additional alternative route programs that include early classroom practice, mentoring and induction programs, expand alternate teacher preparation programs, and partnerships with business. One incentives currently available is the Missouri Loan Forgiveness Program. Missouri does have ambitious performance measures in D, 3, ii and a detailed implementation plan with timelines, activities and persons responsible.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	11
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(4) (i) Missouri is highly advanced in linking student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State since 2007. Missouri has been working to develop a statewide system to measure the effectiveness of all educator preparation efforts, using multiple measures that include student growth and achievement. Missouri compiled the first set of data linking beginning teachers to student growth and achievement in December 2009. The proposal indicated that Missouri "is now prepared to use this data to achieve several critical goals: (a) rate teacher preparation programs; (b) publicize the ratings; (c) replicate successful programs; (d) assist

unsuccessful programs in improving performance; and (e) drop approval from those programs that consistently fail to meet effectiveness targets." The performance measures chart expects the information to be available to the public at the end of SY 2012-2013. Less information was available for principal preparation programs but the proposal suggested that similar information will be used with principal programs especially those that focus on STEM areas of concerns. (D)(4)(ii) Missouri has a strong plan and commitment to expanding preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice). Missouri's newly revised plan states that only entities that offer proven, effective teacher and/or principal programs will be allowed to continue preparing teachers and principals and to expand. Low-performing programs that fail to improve will lose their status as an approved educator preparation program. Effectiveness will measure "ability to develop, enhance, and document their candidates' content knowledge; develop the necessary pedagogy; provide series of real, relevant, and rigorous quality internship experiences; and contribute to gains in B-12 students' achievement. Missouri also intends to "create and maintain an open marketplace for a diverse range of preparation programs, including those not affiliated with institutions of higher education.... The State will award the same level of certification to these programs as that awarded for completion of traditional preparation programs."

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	15
(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:		
(D)(5) (i) Medium points were awarded this subsection because it did not have the richness of detail and insight that many other subsections of the proposal had. Missouri does have a plan for providing effective support to teachers and principals. It is designed around a system of statewide, regional and local delivery of services. Staff from these agencies will conduct needs assessments with districts on a regular basis. Personnel at DESE and RESLTs Centers, located in different regions of the State, will provide technical assistance on a wide array of areas based on district needs with special attention given to STEM and issues associated with low-performing schools. (D)(5) (ii) High points were given to this subsection because different kinds of evaluative data will be collected monthly on the kinds, amounts and quality of services provided to districts and the impact of those services on changing professional practice and increasing student performance. The quality of the programs will be determine not only on surveys but also on reports on how students performed on various measures such as the Missouri Assessment Program		
Total	138	115

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
(E)(1) Missouri has the authority to intervene in BOTH the State's lowest performing schools and LEAs. Section 161.092 RSMo, is the primary grant of authority to the State Board of Education regarding the supervision of Missouri's public schools. One of the specific powers granted to the SBE is authority to classify the status of public schools of the State as to their academic standing and intervene in and restructure persistently low-achieving schools.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	20
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	15
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
(E)(2)(i) Maximum points are given to the Missouri proposal for its plan to identify persistently lowest-achieving schools, Missouri in its plan has a seven step process that is clear and fair. Two		

considerations are the most important: (1) The school's proficiency rates on state reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, and (2) Their recent progress on those assessments. The State does use additional information to rank schools, such as sample size, to determine if there are specific factors that would exclude individual schools from being included in the list of lowest-achieving schools. (E)(2) (ii) This section did not have sufficient detail on how its plan tied to the four school intervention models and thus received medium points. The Missouri plan has many elements of the turnaround and transformational model but in its plan did not designate specific school model interventions for the schools it is now working with. Medium rather than no points were given because Missouri intends to use the school intervention models noted in the notice in the future even if it did not provide details on how specific information on how the model designation would impact those schools already identified. From descriptions and statements in the proposal, Missouri seems to have not had great success in turning schools around. It has valuable lessons learned but seems to be still seeking viable approaches that would work in Missouri. Medium rather than no points were given because reviewer guidance indicated that "schools may continue or implement the intervention being implemented." In regards to the historic performance, the proposal noted that the State of Missouri first established standards for the classification and accreditation of Missouri's school districts in 1950. Since then, various efforts have been made at both the building and LEA level to improve education in the State. The proposal noted that "More discrete measures of change in performance, collected more frequently than our annual statewide assessment, are needed to assess." Relative to lessons learned, they indicated that: (1) In order to generate change at the building level, there must be systemic change throughout the district. For this reason, building-level improvement efforts will encompass systemic improvement from the local board of education level to the classroom level, (2) Even in the highest-achieving districts, there are individual students and student populations who are not succeeding. (3) Sustained high-quality leadership is a critical element for continued improvement. Missouri has seven schools that are in intervention status and the state claimed it was working around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C). There was no data on what specific interventions they would use or the criteria for success. Instead Missouri indicated it was currently in the first year of implementing a program focused specifically on turning around the lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) in the State. The program involves twenty-nine schools in fifteen LEAs, central office administrators, regional coaches and support teams with State direction and support. This program uses a common training and coaching model. The proposal does have a high-quality plan for future work that has details on timelines, activities and persons responsible. The primary emphasis is on using programs that use data to identify emerging problems and that then use data to determine professional development priorities and solutions. Much of the delivery or professional development and services would be through newly established RESLTs Centers. Strategies in the plan include: "A tiered system of technical assistance and accountability monitoring to drive school improvement in every classroom, grade, sub-group, school and district; Training and technical assistance to building and district-level teachers and administrators in the use of the Missouri Comprehensive Data System; Individualized professional development and data team training for teachers and leaders including a STEM expert network" Attention also will be given to "technical assistance and structure in developing a sound educational foundation for every child through a braided system of integrated services to children and families in early learning programs."

Total	50	30
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
(F)(1) (i) High points were given to this subsection because even with a troubled economy, the State of Missouri has not cut funding to public schools. There was \$2,941,969,738 appropriated for the basic		

formula in FY09 and \$3,004,388,410 in FY10. The percentage of the total revenues used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was 4.34% greater than for FY 2008. For FY 2008, 32.64% were available and in FY 2009, 36.98%. (F)(1) (ii) High points were given to this subsection because Missouri does have policies that lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools Missouri school districts that have a certain concentration of students, qualify for free and reduced price lunches, and receive an extra weighting for those students. The Missouri foundation aid includes in its calculation a student measure that takes into account "the district's percentage of Free or Reduced Lunch eligible students, Special Education students and Limited English Proficient students." School districts that have less local wealth receive more state aid. There was no information about the actual range of funding between the wealthiest LEAs and Poorest LEAs.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	27
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(2) Low points were given to subsection F2i because the Missouri charter school law has geographic and sponsor limitations. The remaining subsections F2ii through F2v were given high points because they provided successful conditions for high-performing charter schools (F)(2) (i) Low points are given to the Missouri proposal on this subsection concerned with charter law because the Missouri charter school law has limits on both geography and sponsors. Missouri's charter school law limits the establishment of charter schools geographically to the Kansas City 33 School District and St. There is no limit to the number of charter schools that may be established within the boundaries of Kansas City and St. Louis City School Districts. However, only the districts and Missouri IHEs may establish charter schools. For the 2008-09 school year, there were 28 approved charters with 41 campuses in operation. One charter was sponsored by the local school district, one charter is sponsored by a community college and the remaining 26 are sponsored by universities and colleges. The total number of traditional buildings in operation was 2,277. Charter schools represented approximately 2% of the total public school buildings in operation during the 2008-09 school year. (F)(2) (ii) Missouri has detailed and stringent procedures and expectations regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools. Missouri has denied charter to some applicants, closed and refused renewal to those that do not meet standards. Missouri gives priority to charter school applicants that propose a school oriented to high-risk students and to the reentry of dropouts into the school system. If an applicant has more than three requests, at least one-third must be targeted to students-at-risk. In 2009, eleven charter school applications were submitted and nine were approved. One existing chartered school was closed down. (F)(2) (iii) Missouri charter schools receive the same per-pupil funding that the student would have earned in the district of residence. (F)(2) (iv) Missouri does not provide facilities assistance for any public schools, including charter schools. Instead facilities are seen as part of general operations paid out of the per-pupil allocation. This means that charter schools are not treated differently from other schools. (F)(2) (v) Missouri has no state laws or rules that would prohibit an LEA from creating an innovative, autonomous school. Missouri intends to offer incentives such as start-up funds to districts that charter schools that meet special needs such as STEM schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	2
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(3) Missouri proposal writers must have misunderstood this question as they put information related only to charter schools. However in other sections concerned with Invitational priorities, Missouri did list several programs that would have been appropriate for this section. The two most significant reforms mentioned were the P-20 and early childhood programs. Two points were given on that basis.

Total	55	38
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments:

Though not as exemplary as some other components of the proposal, the Missouri proposal does meet the STEM priority competitive requirements. The proposal was strong in providing assistance to teachers needing to develop content expertise. The proposal also was strong on continuing and developing State and LEA partnerships with businesses and various IHE entities. The proposal noted numerous special programs focused on STEM concerns that they intend to continue and expand. The proposal in Project 16 does propose a \$5 million dollar for incentive programs that would increase interest of teachers for STEM related areas. There were lesser amounts of attention given to building career tracks, especially for women and minorities.. Because reviewers are required to give all or no points, this proposal will be given 15 points.

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

The Missouri RTTT proposal was exemplary in many ways. In fact some of the early sections could be used by other states as models for writing their RTTT proposal The proposal was especially strong in designing plans of action with clear expectations about timelines, activities and persons responsible. The Missouri proposal does comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success This proposal meets all conditions required for the absolute priority. One exemplary factor for this proposal was its nearly 100% participation by LEAs participation and the complete commitment by all LEAs to successfully implement and achieve all the goals in Missouri's plans. The proposal also had strengths in its emphasis on increasing student achievement, decreasing the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increasing the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The Missouri RTTT proposal is given a yes for meeting the requirements of this section.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	384
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Missouri Application #3960MO-5



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	42
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	2
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The State has set forth a somewhat comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a relatively clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is somewhat consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application. Some highlights are described below. The State has a plan to improve teacher and principal quality by instituting a number of quality initiatives, including but not limited to a new approach to alternate routes. To improve standards and assessments, Missouri will focus on incorporating the Common Core Standards and adopting related assessments. In addition, state has a plan to roll out formative assessments. Applicant has a good plan regarding the improved use of data systems which focuses on extending and integrating data from across the continuum of P-20 institutions, building the technological infrastructure required across the state to ensure all districts can access the system, and facilitating the implementation of evidence-based local improvement systems. Finally, the state intends to transform the capacity of DESE to support school turnaround efforts at the local level. The plan has clear shortcomings in its goals regarding improving teacher effectiveness and requiring the use of student growth data in performance evaluations that will be used to inform important decisions statewide. Moreover, the turnaround plans are not sufficiently ambitious or aggressive. Applicant reports that DESE has received a total of 513 signed MOUs, representing 91.4% of the State's LEAs. Among these, 100% were signed by the superintendent, 100% were signed by the president of the local school board, and 100% were reported to have been signed by the teachers' union representative, where applicable. Applicant does not use standard MOU. One important change is that the union leadership in some districts has asked districts to agree to additional language to ensure the preservation of provisions in current collective bargaining agreements. Although applicant asserts that every LEA partner has agreed to participate fully in every reform effort, the terms and conditions of this MOU do not in fact necessarily reflect strong commitment by all participating LEAs to revising policies that affect educator effectiveness and the use of performance-based assessment. Thus, the justification for the loss of the points in this section is that, because of the additional language in the MOU requires the participating LEA to "adhere to the terms and conditions of legally binding negotiated agreements with recognized employee groups," the applicant does not to a large extent meet the criteria that the "Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans." Put differently, the MOU is structured so that LEAs do not have to implement fully anything that the state pledges in the plan if there is something in a local collective bargaining agreement that would prevent the LEA from doing so. The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans have the potential translate this plan into relatively broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by

student subgroup. The largest districts in the state are included, and participating LEAs educate approximately 99% of students statewide, including approximately 97% of low-income students. The state has set ambitious goals for achievement statewide and has done a good job of benchmarking those goals. The problem is that there is rather clear opposition by the unions to the state's reform intent, and the reform intent of this grant competition, to make bold changes in policies that the state has designed to improve teacher effectiveness. The letters from the state's unions do not endorse bold teacher effectiveness reforms, and the MOU is similarly undermined. (The fact that only 189/513 participating districts are in formal relationships with unions may mitigate the potential impact of union opposition; however, it is not clear what percentage of students are educated in those districts.) If unions are not supportive and do not make changes to collective bargaining agreements that incorporate the state's plans for improving teacher effectiveness, then the potential for this comprehensive plan, which relies on a group of reforms working in concert, to translate into broad impact will not be realized.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(i) The applicant has demonstrated that it has a strong plan to build the capacity to implement as demonstrated by the Race to the Top Management Team. The roles and responsibilities for the individuals on this team have been clearly described. Applicant also does well to describe the roles of an implementation team by initiative. These descriptions are a good demonstration of the applicant's understanding that major state-level leadership needs to be involved in planning, implementation, and oversight. The qualifications of the people staffing these positions are not clear, however. Additionally, the applicant has a relatively strong plan to distribute information about programs that work and do not work; the plan focuses heavily on Regional Education Services for Leadership and Training Centers (RESLTs Centers). Applicant reports that these centers will offer tiered support to LEAs to improve instruction and student learning in all schools, with concentrated assistance given to those schools identified as persistently low-performing. These Centers will provide technical assistance and training, promote best practices and support their replication, and assist LEAs with accountability. DESE will disseminate the findings on best practices that emerge from these systems through the RESLTs Centers, reports, and forums, and make them available on the web. Further, the applicant has a clarity that it should not hire too many positions that it cannot afford after funding runs out. The state's plan to implement also involves reorganizing itself around the four assurance areas to sustain momentum gained through implementation of its plan. Unfortunately, the state's budget is not as carefully designed as it might have been. (ii) Applicant has good support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the many of the statements or actions of support from a variety of actors. Applicant reports that it received letters of support from 159 interested stakeholders, including the Missouri NEA, Missouri AFT, the Missouri School Boards Association, Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri Association of Career and Technical Education. Though as noted above, the strength of these letters is not compelling. Applicant has also received letters of support from the IHEs statewide and from business and community organizations. Support was received from charter schools and the Missouri Charter Public School Association.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(i) The applicant has been making progress to a large extent in some areas and to a smaller extent in others over the past several years. Missouri has been improving its data system and has agreements with 49 states to help with recruitment of highly effective teachers. Although the applicant reports that the state has been working to develop and implement a school turnaround model in 29 of the lowest-performing schools across the state, there is some question as to whether intervening in 29 out of 2400 schools represents an aggressive commitment to make hard choices to improve educational options. (ii) Applicant admits that the graduation rate and student performance on state and national assessments has not changed dramatically since 2003. Applicant claims that any increases are due to improvement efforts focused on standards, assessments, data analysis, and instructional practices. Analysis of NAEP data indicates that the state is doing relatively well in Math and mirroring the gains nationally at both 4th and 8th grade, but not reading. In 4th grade reading, there is a disturbing trend of stagnation in Missouri, while the national average has been gradually creeping up. Moreover, Missouri performance in reading at grade 8 is in decline, overall and by subgroups. Relative to national performance, Missouri is losing the advantage it once held at a steady pace since 2002. Achievement gaps persist with little change.

Total	125	82
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	38
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	18
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) Applicant is working toward jointly developing (along with 48 other states) and adopting a common set of K-12 standards that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation. Applicant provides proof that it has signed the CCSSO and NGA Common Core MOU. (ii) Applicant has a detailed plan that demonstrates its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards within the appropriate time frame and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way. It is noteworthy that the work on the Common Core standards is a recurring agenda items for the Missouri State Board of Education. The only concern is that applicant does not expressly address whether there will be any obstacles to the adoption of these common standards.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State has demonstrated to a large extent its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by its participation in a medium-sized consortium of states for formative assessments (20 states) and a large consortium of states for summative assessments (36 BAC states) that are working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments which are aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	17
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, has to a large extent demonstrated that it has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments tied to these standards. This plan is detailed, replete with timelines that outline the activities required for transitioning and implementing new standards and high-</p>		

quality assessments. It is noteworthy that Missouri is taking an active role in leading the development of high-quality formative assessments. The only concerns are: 1) how effectively the new RESLT Centers will deliver comprehensive and coordinated services to the school districts in support of the State's plan; and 2) if the personnel on staff at DESE have the skills and capacity necessary to implement this plan, as the applicant does not provide evidence of their qualifications.

Total	70	65
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	22
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Missouri has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes eleven out of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. Applicant reports that Missouri will comply with the 12th element by June 2010.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	1
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state's plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders is not particularly well-developed. The applicant points out that many small rural school districts do not have the bandwidth to access the state's comprehensive data system. The state has a plan to support technological infrastructure improvements and would like to apply money from this grant to do so. Once getting the access problems solved, educators at the building level will need to be trained to use the data system. It is unclear why the state has not already made it a priority to use state funding to build out the necessary infrastructure to maximize data use to improve student achievement. Moreover, the state's plan as laid out in the application is not sufficiently aggressive. The plan only has 374/561 districts statewide having access by the end of the 2011-2012 school year.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	9
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant describes a moderately high-quality plan for working in collaboration with its participating LEAs to increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness. In describing this plan, the applicant reports that the enhanced systems to be developed as a part of his grant project will allow: "DESE and the RESLTs Centers to provide targeted, differentiated, and immediate support to schools based upon changing needs in performance by students and teachers. The Show-Me Portal feature of the Missouri Comprehensive Data System will provide appropriate access to and reports of student growth, educator impact on students' performance, effect of educational leader decisions, effectiveness of educator preparation institutions and programs for all stakeholders." However, it is not entirely clear how access to data will necessarily translate into use of such systems to improve educator effectiveness at the building level. (3/6) (ii) To support participating LEAs and schools in using instructional improvement systems, applicant intends to have Certified Data Teams in every district by the summer of 2011 and in every school by the summer of 2012. Applicant reports that these teams, with assistance from RESLTs, will provide technical assistance to schools in the areas of access to data and application of data to decision-making. Applicant does not describe how exactly this structure will lead to better teaching and learning. As such, the broad statements made here do not make a compelling case that the applicant has a strong plan to implement these plans. (2/6)(iii) Applicant has a creative plan to make mini-grants to researchers to focus on critical but potentially overlooked questions, test explicit hypotheses, and deliver findings in an environment that values quick</p>		

response and that is most relevant to the needs of teachers, leaders, and policymakers. In addition, the identification of the value of supporting research consortia, such as the one in Kansas City, conveys an understanding of how research can help improve decision making at the local and state policy levels. The description here does not make is sufficiently clear how the state will support these consortia or will seed additional large scale research efforts. (4/6)

Total	47	32
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	12
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) Applicant reports that there are not significant legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that prevent alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals and that there are routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education. Although applicant states that this is the case, it is not clear that these routes significantly limit the coursework requirements, as is preferred according to the notice in its description of the components of quality alternative certification programs. The evidence that coursework is not significantly limited is that applicant reports that it generally takes two years for alternate route candidates to finish coursework. Moreover, although it is preferred in the notice that alternative certification programs are selective in accepting candidates, applicant does not sufficiently provide evidence that these programs are in fact selective. The alternate routes are not producing a large number of new teachers. In 2008-09, the alternative certification programs produced 392 teachers; there are 70,436 teachers in the participating LEAs. Applicant appears to have a reasonable process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage, but it is not clear that the identification of shortages has led to better preparation of teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	27
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	8
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	6
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) Applicant has a clear plan to establish clear approaches to measuring student growth for each individual student, for both tested and non-tested subjects, as a state-level initiative. Unfortunately, the measure for student growth is not fully consistent with the priorities in the notice. (ii) The applicant reports its intent to design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement. While it is evident that the state will involve teachers and principals in the design of such systems, it is not sufficiently clear that the state will be able to in fact ensure that these systems are adopted. Moreover, the strong thinking that has gone into improving teacher evaluation systems is not as evident in the description of improvements to the principal performance evaluation system. (iii) Applicant describes a good plan to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; however, it is not clear how much of these evaluations will focus on giving teachers and principals feedback on data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools. (iv) Applicant indicates that there are barriers to using these evaluations for making important decisions regarding teacher compensation and tenure. Applicant cites a change in state law that will allow teachers in one major urban district to opt voluntarily to</p>		

relinquish tenure and participate in a pay for performance salary model. Applicant does describe how it will encourage LEAs to use the new educator performance system to rank teachers based on their effectiveness and to use those performance assessments to provide educators at each tier with differentiated recognition and rewards that will be developed by the LEAs, with stakeholder input. The strength of the language in this subsection is particularly weak as to the extent to which the state will require, rather than simply encourage, important reforms at a local level that will enhance educator effectiveness.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant reports that despite not having a focus on teacher effectiveness to date (but rather on teacher qualifications), the state: "has identified several key activities for achieving this goal, including partnering with institutions of higher education in Missouri, providing support to practicing educators in high-poverty and high-minority schools, encouraging LEAs to extend the reach of Missouri's best teachers to more students, and creating disproportionately attractive working conditions in high-need schools." Applicant describes a number of partnerships with universities, philanthropies, and national alternate route providers to help fill hard-to-staff positions particularly in urban settings. The applicant reports on an especially compelling idea of using technology to expand the reach of excellent teachers. Unfortunately, the state unfortunately does not have the technological infrastructure to implement such as solution in a timely manner. Other ideas about how to expand the influence of highly effective teachers to more students will require policy changes, and it is not clear how those changes will be enacted. The applicant does describe an intent to incentivize LEAs to create disproportionately attractive working conditions in high-needs schools by supplying funding to LEAs to provide higher pay and other financial incentives. To address staffing needs in hard-to-staff subjects, applicant similarly refers to the potential of technology, role redesign, and the removal of policy barriers as important strategies. The applicant also notes that non-IHE providers will be encouraged "to partner with business and industry to provide additional reliable alternative pathways into teaching in hard-to-staff subject areas." The applicant does not make it sufficiently clear how it will implement each of these strategies.

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

(i) Missouri has a good plan to link student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals and to link this information to the in-state programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing. However, the applicant's plan for publicizing the results of analyses on preparation program quality is not sufficiently clear. (ii) Applicant does a good job of describing what it wants to do relative to expanding preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals and closing down those that are ineffective, but applicant does not sufficiently describe how it will do these things.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	13
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The state has a relatively strong plan for providing mentoring support to new teachers and principals. Applicant does well to identify the need to improve capacity for providing quality professional development and intends to use grant funding to enhance that capacity, though it is not entirely clear how it will do so. The plan to develop and promote the Show-Me Portal is relatively compelling. Additionally, the applicant asserts: "the State will limit funding for professional development opportunities to those that are successful in developing teachers, as shown by improvements in teacher effectiveness and student learning. The State will not fund professional development activities that do not demonstrate these results." It is not clear whether the applicant has made the effort to

identify any such professional development programs that have been proven effective to this point in the state or other settings. Moreover, despite stating that it will do so, it is not clear that the state has a high-quality plan for evaluating the effect of professional development activities that are implemented in the future.

Total	138	69
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: It appears that the state can intervene both in failing districts and schools.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	10
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: Applicant has an acceptable plan to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools using state assessments. (ii) The applicant cites the fact that the state is currently implementing a plan to support the turnaround efforts for the lowest-performing schools, but the extent to which the state is supporting one of the four approved models is not strong. The described existing turnaround model, in collaboration with the Darden/Curry program, and efforts moving forward appear to focus on extensive training programs. Thus, it is unclear that this means that the principals of these failing schools are in fact being replaced; rather it appears that they are just being trained. In the RTTT turnaround model and the transformation model, the principal must be replaced. The applicant does go on to describe how it plans to have a localized turnaround strategy, whereby "the necessary turnaround needed in these buildings will be achieved through implementing one of the four turn around models where appropriate in the LEA." However, the applicant does not appear to understand the urgency of instituting dramatic turnaround efforts immediately to offer students in chronically failing schools equitable opportunities to succeed. The historical performance in directing turnaround efforts is lackluster and the targets set for the next four years of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year are not ambitious or aggressive.		
Total	50	20

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i) Applicant reports that the percentage of total revenues used to support elementary, secondary and public education in FY 2009 was greater than the percentage of total revenues available for FY 2008. The percentage increased 4.34 percent. (5/5) (ii) The applicant provides a description of the state funding formula and evidence from a recent court case that upheld the constitutionality of the state funding system as evidence that the policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs. Applicant does not provide standard equity statistics, however, nor does the applicant provide evidence that the state's policies lead to equity within LEAs. (2/5)		

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	17
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i)The State has a charter school law that only allows charter schools to operate in Kansas City and St. Louis. Although a considerable percentage of students in these locations are in charter schools, the effect of this law limits the educational choices available to students who do not live in these cities. (2/8) (ii)The State has a partnership with NACSA to improve guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. The recommendations of this partnership are not binding on authorizers, however. The law for authorizers requires them to give preference to schools that will serve high-risk populations. The charter school approval process has led to the denial of several applicants over the past five years and the non-renewal of some operators. These figures and the accompanying explanation for these decisions provide some evidence that the authorizer function is operating somewhat according to plan with regard to promoting quality in this sector. (5/8)(iii) Applicant asserts that state's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues. Applicant fails to provide per pupil funding figures as evidence that the result of these policies is in fact equitable funding. (4/8) (iv) Applicant reports that no public schools, including charter schools, in Missouri receive state assistance for facilities. Though this may be true, applicant does not provide evidence that charter schools are not at a disadvantage in the procurement of high-quality facilities, or that the state is providing support for high quality charter operators to obtain facilities. (4/8) (v) Applicant indicates that there are no laws that would prohibit an LEA from creating an innovative, autonomous school; however, there are not laws that encourage such schools nor that provide for autonomy of such schools that would, for example, provide them will considerable autonomy over their workforce, even in districts where collective bargaining exists. That said, Missouri intends to offer funding incentives, such as start-up grants, to LEAs to develop and implement independent innovative schools including alternative schools, STEM-related schools or others to meet identified needs. (2/8)</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant makes almost no effort in this section of the application to describe the extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes. The criteria state: "The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes" and call for the following: "A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents." The only thing the applicant wrote was: "There are no state laws or rules that prohibit Missouri LEAs from creating innovative and autonomous schools. Missouri LEAs currently operate special education cooperatives, alternative schools, and technical programs. The State will collaborate with LEAs to continue to develop innovative school models and provide assistance with the implementation of these models through regional systems of support to meet the needs of local school districts."</p>		
Total	55	24

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments:

(i) Applicant is working to improve its ability to offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering. Applicant has a good plan to approach STEM content as a curriculum priority. (ii) Applicant is currently working with IHEs, stakeholders, industry experts, and other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) Applicant describes goals around preparing more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Applicant reports that "one of the key projected outcomes of Missouri's reform plan is for the percent of minority and female students graduating from high school with a concentration in STEM related coursework to increase by 7% each year as measured by the Missouri Comprehensive Data System."

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

The state's application, to a sufficient extent, comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA. Not all portions of the plan are equally strong. The stronger sections involve the improvement of data systems, standards, and assessments. The less compelling sections involve reforms to improve teacher effectiveness and to turnaround failing schools in an aggressive and ambitious manner. Notwithstanding various weaknesses, the applicant does meet this priority.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	307
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