



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Hampshire Application #4440NH1



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>30</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	15
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(i)The applicant has laid out a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda as required in the application. Especially noteworthy are the twin goals of the state's vision related to ready to succeed after high school and the emphasis on civic and personal responsibility. Also noteworthy is the discussion surrounding the seven strategic levers that align with expected outcomes and overall goals. The theory of action outlined is comprehensive and visually useful in understanding the reform agenda of the state. (ii)There are some serious questions regarding the level of commitment of the participating LEAs, especially in two specific areas. First, the number of participating LEAs as a percentage of LEAs in the state is well below 50%, with 35 total LEAs participating in one or more of the reform areas (as opposed to participating in at least three out of four). In addition, the number of MOUs that include signatures from the Union leadership is cause for real concern. There does not appear to be widespread commitment from the local teacher level to the state's reform plan. (iii) It is difficult to gauge how it is possible that the 35 LEAs representing 41% of the students in the state will translate into broad statewide impact. It is also disconcerting that the proposed level of student improvement on Figure 5 (NAEP) from 2008 to 2015 represented an improvement of a little more than one point- this is hardly evidence of systemic impact. The projected graduation data presented needs clarification- in some cases the subgroup projections range from a 2.9% increase to a 7% increase with no explanation for these types of apparent guesstimates. All of this leads to the conclusion that broad, systemic statewide impact has either not been thoroughly thought through in this application or has not been presented in a way to convey a clear understanding of such impact.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	19
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(i)The application is well laid out, in terms of identifying key state support, and clearly presents evidence of strong support at the top levels of government, including the governor, state education officials and the legislature. Budgetary and personnel considerations appear to be reasonable to carry out effective and efficient implementation of the grant if awarded. The plan includes a strong focus on collaboration and communication across the state. The constant reference to using research-based approaches is also a strong plus. (ii)The only area of concern as evidenced by a point total less than</p>		

the maximum relates to the apparent void of strong statewide support from the teacher's union. This seems to be a source of real concern that needs much further development.		
<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	23
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i) The progress made in the areas of standards/assessment and data systems to support instruction is admirable. The state's involvement in various consortia is most impressive, and their commitment to strong standards, assessments and reporting is quite commendable. In the area of great teachers/leaders, little mention was made of progress in developing leaders, nor was there any discussion of alternative approaches to credentialing. In the area of turning around low performing schools, no evidence was cited. (ii) The data provided about improvement in student performance is impressive. From NAEP to high school graduation, the improvement over time is to be commended, even though there were some 'flat' growth areas. But taken collectively this data is commendable. Local assessments show the same growth trends. These trends also indicate a reduction in the subgroup achievement gaps over time as well. The only weakness is a lack of connecting the data to specific, explainable efforts regarding why the trends exist as they do. This resulted in a deduction of two points.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>81</b>

**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Clear articulation of the state's extensive involvement in the New England consortium and the CCSSO/Achieve Common Core Standards project. The applicant has a real strength in the area of commitment to and progress toward adopting common standards. Well articulated through the application! The application meets the requirement for high points earned in (B)(1), including the expectation of meeting the August 2, 2010 deadline.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Once again a well laid out explanation of the applicant's support and involvement in developing and implementing common, high quality assessments. There is a strong history and commitment to balanced assessments and constructive response items- a real desire is conveyed to adequately and effectively assess students related to standards and the vision of the state as outlined in the first section of this application.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application clearly articulates a commitment to transitioning to enhanced standards and high quality assessments through the various consortia at the national and regional levels. In addition the</p>		

state is revising the alternative assessment system at this time and has lined up eight school districts to begin the pilot process. The work they are engaged in will become the basis for large scale professional development, a key strength of this discussion.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>68</b>
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Only two of the elements met the requirements of the America COMPETES Act. Four points are awarded.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Ample evidence cited to award points for C- 2. The state has implemented a data warehouse and has contracted with Performance Pathways to implement an access portal for teachers to use longitudinal data. Plan moving forward is well laid out.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application repeatedly cites that they have been recognized for successful implementation of Performance Plus, yet no evidence is cited to support this 'recognition'. (i) Plan to explain the increase in acquisition, adoption, etc., of local instructional improvement system is well laid out, with goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties. (ii) There is no explanation of Performance Plus, which makes awarding full points for (ii) and (iii) very difficult. (iii) See comments for (ii) It is simply difficult to award maximum points without an explanation of Performance Plus and concrete documentation of implementation and support.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>

**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i)- 7; (ii)- 7; (iii)- 3 (i)- The application lays out the appropriate legal, statutory and regulatory provisions that support alternative pathways to certification. This information and the strategies being employed should be shared with other states as they are exemplary. (ii)- The application lays out the specific alternative routes to certification in existence. (iii)- The application is lacking in specifying the process for evaluating and monitoring areas of critical shortages. There are lots of descriptions of programs and project but the application does not address the requirements of (iii).		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>15</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	5
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	2

(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i)- 3 points. The application does not outline any clear goals that have been established related to student growth. (ii)- 5 points. There is a great deal of philosophical discussion in this section. However, there is very little articulated about planning- there is a minimal design and implementation effort presented. (iii)- 2 points. The discussion of annual evaluations and providing student data is very weak to non-existent. Very weak discussion of work and plan to be implemented. (iv)- 5 points- The implementation timeline is of real concern, as the proposed timeline would have the research completed by the end of 2011 and implementation well out into the future. Furthermore, when implementation occurs, it would be voluntary. This does not meet the requirements and expectations as outlined in the application definitions.</p>		
<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	0
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	0
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no plan articulated in this application for creating an equitable distribution of teachers and principals as outlined in D-3. Furthermore there is no plan to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers re: hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. There is no evidence of specifically what the state is currently doing in these areas as well. In fact, most of the material presented in this area is not related to the requested information in the proposal request.</p>		
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i)- The application does not include a real, concrete plan to link student achievement and student growth data to teachers and principals. There is some discussion through goals, activities, etc., but terminology is vague (ie secure funding) and the overall information is weak, vague and apparently communicates a lack of willingness to tackle this aspect of reform. (ii)- minimal discussion of expanding credentialing options and programs- the comments in (i) apply to this 'Romanette' as well.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i)- 9 points The application outlines a number of existing and very positive efforts currently underway to provide effective, data-informed teacher professional development. STEM is mentioned in this area related to the Innovations Network. All efforts seem appropriate. Mention is made of developing a self-sustaining model as well. There is a clear emphasis and set of activities in this application focusing primarily on teacher professional development. In the area of leadership development, there appears to be a focus on one seemingly traditional approach- a Leadership Academy and a multi-year plan for leadership development. What is missing is any new, creative, and systems reform-oriented leadership approaches. The application outlines a varreity of teacher professional development activities and plans, but in the area of leadership professional development there are very few plans that have been presented. (ii)- 2 points The presentation of information to measure, evaluate and continue to improve effectiveness is vague, lacking in depth and inadequate. It is apparent that the lack of information, especially compared to other reform areas ("i.e." standard and assessments), is a cause for real concern and raises substantial issues about whether or not the state is committed and/or able to address all of the reform areas.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>47</b>

**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:                      The plan discusses intervention but expressly explains the state has no authority to take over a persistently failing school/district. The focus is around collaboration, which is admirable, but apparently if the situation is in crisis, the state cannot take over the institution(s) involved. This raises serious questions about the state's ability to develop an effective effort in this particular area of reform.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	3
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	17
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:                      (i) The application describes a scenario around low performing schools that is very confusing. For example, the statement "some schools chose not to participate"- how can schools chose not to participate? What does this mean? There apparently is not a strong effort to develop a plan to tackle persistently low performing schools, especially within the context of previous information about the state not having the legal authority to take over these schools. Apparently it is all voluntary. (ii) The application lays out a very detailed plan about how the state supports LEAs- it is quite apparent that the state works collaboratively with the LEAs and does not have the authority for major intervention. In terms of major reform, this lack of authority raises real questions, but overall, the plan is well documented and appears to be entirely appropriate. The "Follow the Child" initiative is quite impressive. There is apparently no direct identification of any of the four turnaround models contained in the application.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>

**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:                      (i)-1 point It appears the state does not meet the standard as education funding has decreased while Transportation and Health and Human Services has increased- the percentage declined from 33.4% to 28.1%. Reference was made to the fact that student enrollment has declined as well. (ii)- 5 points Full points for (ii) due to the five funding levels as policy in the state. The application clearly laid out the policy of more funding to high-need LEAs and schools. This explanation meets the requirements of the application.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:                      (i)-2 points The explanation contained in this section leads one to assume there is not a charter cap- it is not clear from the materials presented. Yet later in this section it appears as if there is a cap because of the terminology of suspension of approvals "due to budget constraints". Low points are awarded due to mixed signals in the application. (ii)-8 points The application outlines in satisfactory detail the authorization and accountability aspects of the charter school initiative in the state. This meets requirements for the awarding of maximum points for (F) (2)(ii). (iii)- 5 points Funding for charter</p>		

<p>schools, according to state regulations and statute, is at approximately the 80% level. Accordingly six of eight points are awarded. (iv)- 0 points No points are awarded in the area of facilities, as the application clearly states that there are no provisions to provide funding for charter school facilities. (v)- 0 points No points are awarded, as the application states that the state is "currently considering" proposed legislation, but there are no existing statutes to support the requirements of (F)(2)(v).</p>		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:                  The application describes many programs, philosophies and initiatives but does not provide any evidence of student achievement data used to gauge the effectiveness of this programs, philosophies and initiatives.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>24</b>

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:                  The application discusses periodically throughout the process the state's commitment, involvement and efforts in the area of STEM. This appears to be one of the strongest elements of the proposal. There is ample evidence of the positive impact of the STEM effort in the state, especially with the P-16/higher education initiative.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>No</b>
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:                  The state does not meet this absolute priority because two of the four reform areas are not satisfactorily addressed in the application. In addition, the level of LEA participation and commitment does not rise to a level that is conducive for strong reforms being implemented statewide- the lack in the number of LEA participants and the low number of MOU signatures of Union leaders is a real source of concern. This state has many positive attributes, including superb work in standards and assessments. In addition, the state's alternative credential systems seem to be a real model for others to review. Yet in the area of great teachers and leaders, the application lacks substance, direction and a concrete plan that rises to the level required for real reform-- there is just not a level of depth of commitment required to meet real education reform. The persistently low performing school section is also extremely weak, very vague and lacking in long-term commitment- once again the level of commitment as written in this proposal raises serious, sepcific questions about the state's legal ability to intervene and the implications of this lack of state involvement. This state self-describes itself as a local control state. How this issue plays out in the application around two of the reform areas perhaps explains the weakness in these areas. It appears this state does not meet the requirements of this absolute priority.</p>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>

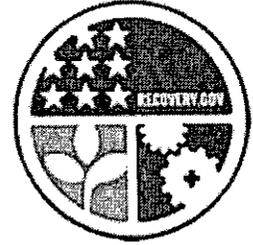
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>276</b>
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Hampshire Application #4440NH2



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>28</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	20
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	5
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>            The state provides an overview of its reform agenda, describing its twin goals, seven outcomes, seven levers, six key strategies and theory of action. An underlying logic of change, and any drivers across these lists, is not entirely clear. Reasonable targets for graduation appear to be set (though oddly with an increase in the White/African American gap), the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) score targets do not have baseline actuals, and most of the NAEP targets are not provided (only Reading/ELA, 4th, All). It is unclear how the use of external/independent contractors, particularly the use of "vetted external partners" with Tier One schools, will affect capacity-building for LEAs, intermediate entities and/or the state Department of Education (DOE), as well as fidelity of implementation. The proposed dissemination of "promising practices" from the central NH Research Group (with an outside vendor also as lead researcher) appears to rely on center-to-periphery change design, not well-supported by the research, and of concern in a self-described "local control state" context. The "preference for intensive services" to a limited number of Tier One schools, with the hope of creating a "social epidemic" of change, alongside the role/structure of Innovation Networks and the Transformation Consortium, warrant further description; it is not clear how these will, in combination, assist in providing support structures across schools and districts. Translation into statewide impact appears problematic in the plan, as only 21% of LEAs are participating, and only 49% of those have the signature of the local teachers' union leader. Just over half of the students of poverty are represented in the participating LEAs. Of the 35 participating LEAs, only 10 have completely signed off on the Statement of Work (SOW, from DOE form), with far less support for the use of evaluations in compensation/retention/promotion or in tenure/certification. Roughly half of participating LEAs are not in accord with SOW elements to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. Of the three largest participating LEAs, only one has full sign-off and SOW approval.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>            The state describes its capacity to implement its plans, providing evidence of close senior level coordination, support for LEAs, effective operational processes (including budget management), and attention to post-grant operation. In support of its graduation targets, funding for dropout prevention programs and assessment development is contained in ongoing budget items. Evidence of senior level commitment can be found in formation, roughly one month into a new Commissioner's term, of cross-</p>		

departmental working committees aligned to the four assurances. Linkage from state-level work to LEAs and to various consortia or external entities warrants further clarification; the apparent intent to use external resources to coordinate external partners in research, development, dissemination and LEA support raises questions for effective state quality control. Prior consortium work with an external contractor may provide some context for this as a successful strategy, but further information is warranted. The relation of proposed coordination structures (e.g., for Tier One schools in particular) to prior/existing structures [e.g., Statewide System of Support (SSOS), New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), "roundtables"] is not clear. Further elaboration is needed concerning the balance of local control flexibility and stated requirements, particularly for schools in Tier One Transformation. How the work of the various thematic consortia will inform the state's overall reform efforts is unclear, as is how the varied reform elements within these consortia inform each other. The proposal provides evidence of engagement of a broad array of stakeholders in the state, including the state board, higher education, legislators, administrators, reform organizations, technology concerns, other governmental agencies and others.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	17
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The state provides evidence of progress in each of the four reform areas, with some notable regional collaboration in standards and assessments. The state provides evidence of some progress in raising student achievement gains, reducing subgroup gaps, and increasing high school graduation. For state NECAP data, upper years were added to the composition of the score; the impact of this change on the results is unclear. State evidence does indicate some progress in achievement; an upward shift in lower/middle categories of achievement is apparent, though achievement gaps appear generally flat or up. NAEP reading looks generally flat across grade levels. NAEP math shows more progress, though with gaps widening a bit at the top while lessening in basic/proficiency ranges (esp. among students with disabilities). Oddly, some achievement gaps would increase if math and reading/language arts NAEP at/above proficiency targets are met (e.g., White/Afr Am gaps would increase in math, grade 4, by about a third). Graduation rates are up in all subgroups. Some subgroup gaps are aggravated (White/Afr Am) and others are reduced (White/Hisp, Male/Female).		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>74</b>

## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	18
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The state has participated in a consortium developing internationally benchmarked standards and assessments, the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), since 2002. NECAP assessments have been implemented in grades 3-8, 11. The state also participates in the Common Core consortium with 48+ other states, and has reviewed and commented upon the draft standards. The plan provides a detailed adoption process with timeline, and anticipates state adoption of new Common Core standards prior to August/Sept, 2010, allowing sufficient time for gap analysis and public commentary.		

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:  The state has participated in a state consortium for the development and implementation of common assessments, internationally benchmarked and with an extended constructed response format (half of the exam). This NECAP consortium seeks to expand membership to Massachusetts and Connecticut. The state also participates in three consortia developing assessments -- the Balanced Assessment consortium (29 states), the Consortium on Board Examination/Move On When Ready Consortium (12 states) and the Achieve-led Comparing Student Performance on Common College- and Career-Ready Standards Consortium. NH brings considerable evidence of experience from prior state assessment work and its commitment to constructed-response/performance assessments in state exams and innovative pilot work.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:  The state proposes a plan for supporting the continued transition to enhanced standards and assessments, with attention both to understanding the relationship to new Common Core standards and to an array of possible assessment directions. The state indicates a strong preference for local experimentation as a testing ground for innovative assessments, and the development of state level moderation processes for determining outcomes consistently and with rigor. The review and revision of teacher preparation is already underway, and large scale professional development is envisioned. The professional development will build off prior pilot work in HS redesign, though the design of that professional development, including structures for delivery/support, is unclear and understated relative to the assessment development, review and rollout. How non-HS and other related professional development will be addressed warrants further attention, as does the means by which the state will maintain its strong emphasis on local variation while assuring quality control in some centrally reportable manner. While reference is made to the HS network expansion's likely impact on "point of practice" variables -- calendar, instructional methods, scheduling, etc. -- so as to "free up ... methodologies," the intended scaffolding/support and/or policy mechanisms require further clarification.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>63</b>

### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:  The state provides evidence for having completed two of the elements for its statewide longitudinal data system per the America COMPETES Act.</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:  The state provides evidence of its plan to ensure that data from its student longitudinal data system (SLDS) is accessible and used to inform decision making by various stakeholders.</p>		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:  The state does not provide a clear plan for increasing the acquisition, adoption and use of local instructional improvement systems, nor does it elaborate upon its intent to "develop and implement training and technical assistance." The provision to "mandate use of Performance Plus" seems to</p>		

contrast with other modes of practice and policy as presented in other parts of the state reform plan. While the state indicates intent to "expand the scope of data" in ways consistent with other sections of the plan, the timeline and sequence of activities remain extremely vague. No evidence of how data will be made accessible to researchers is provided. The very brief narrative contains duplicate text.

Total	47	11
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#### D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:            The state has the legal, statutory and regulatory authority to allow alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals, as defined for this application process. A list of the programs is provided, listing basic elements, though data regarding program completions and certifications is not provided. Alternative routes appear to include routes independent of IHEs, such as through the demonstration of competencies. A process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of shortage is described, including an annual survey, a Future Educator Academy, one college's focus on special educator preparation and Project ACROSS (a professional development/support system for alternative route teachers). The process to address the findings of the shortage survey is unclear.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>33</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:            The state provides a general description of its growth model approach, exploring the work of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), and, as fallback, a Colorado growth model tapping NECAP data. The state describes its plan to develop a new teacher and principal evaluation system over the next four years, with considerable time spent in research and consensus-building across the state in order to transition away from current systems largely defined at the LEA level. Based on a "broader definition of educator effectiveness," pilots will be implemented and tested, beginning with Tier One schools. The justification behind initiating dissemination and refining new evaluation models in Tier One schools is not provided. Annual evaluations will be conducted with multiple measures, linked to student learning, allowing for differentiated contexts, allowing for differentiated professional levels and linked to leadership role designations. Acknowledging contextual factors and professional level seem appropriate enhancements reflective of prior state work. The extended discussion and deliberation leading to development of the system seems likely to build support, though justification for the pace and the impetus for local implementation is not clear. The timeline appears to bring the state implementation only to partial implementation by 2014. The transparency of the resulting system, its link to compensation/promotion/retention, and its relation to tenure/certification/removal remain to be described. No annual targets are set for the performance measures listed.</p>		
<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state's own research has not found an inequitable distribution of educators by several quality proxies (e.g., experience, type of certification route) in this low-minority state; though it recognizes the nascent state of its data system. The state does not indicate if factors such as teacher academic background have any relation to poverty profiles of LEAs, and the attention to principal distribution is unclear. The state is beginning to develop a data system linking student performance to teachers, and is also developing a growth model based on the Colorado approach. The state has several programs to address hard-to-staff subjects, and in the past has provided a school climate survey to assist schools. No data is presented regarding the current distribution of teachers (though totals are provided), and effectiveness targets require prior development of the new evaluation system; the timeline footnoted in this section does not appear to be consistent with the longer timeline of the prior section of the proposal.		
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>
(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: The state intends to develop a system of teacher/leader incentives, at school or team level, but not at individual teacher levels. A broad based state Educator Incentive and Achievement Consortium has been formed with key stakeholders to develop the system, to include formative assessment and ongoing redesign. Again, Tier One schools would be pilots for the new system, with the justification for that approach not provided. The state intends to be able to connect teachers to student growth and in turn to preparation programs, and is pursuing relevant legislation to accommodate this. Thus, while the state has long experience with alternative route programs, it does not appear to have the authority/ability to set out a detailed plan for linking "effectiveness," as defined in this application process, to preparation programs.		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: The state presents a compelling plan for providing effective, data-informed professional development, building out four main components: NH Innovation Networks, NH Mentoring and Induction Network for New Teachers, NH Leadership Academy, and NH educator and district professional development plans. The state plan includes multiple measures by which to monitor and improve effectiveness, though the organizational means by which the rich array of data will inform program re/design is not provided.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>88</b>

## E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state is prohibited from "taking control of the daily operations" of a school or district. The state can enforce sanctions on schools and districts, and interventions can include use of a state review team; with state board approval, the state can direct a school board to implement a particular reform plan.		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	18
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

The state outlines a reasonable approach to identifying the lowest-achieving schools in the state, as defined in this application process. The plan describes the plans for turning around the lowest-achieving schools, building off the current statewide system of support (SSOS), including its more recent use of the "roundtable" process. Evidence is provided of a series of supports offered to priority schools. Evidence regarding achievement gains appears to present state-level data broken out by special population and race/ethnicity; relation of these data to those schools selected or schools previously identified for intensive support is unclear. The state uses essentially a transformation model, per the definition of this application process; use of extended learning time is unclear, and the plan concludes that "in the past, New Hampshire has not enforced bold reform." Lessons learned from Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI) draw more generally from school reform literature, and specific lessons from the state's work seem unclear. While 4 of 6 schools in restructuring in 08-09 exited, 233 schools were classified as SINI, a jump from only 6 in 2003; only 12 schools exited SINI in 2009. The future impact of prior approaches does not seem promising, and further distinction of proposed plans from prior efforts would appear warranted. The state presents a detailed work plan through four cohorts.

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33</b>
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## F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:            From FY08 to FY09, the education budget increased in nominal terms but declined year-to-year as a percentage of the budget. The state indicates that rising health/human services costs drove this, and that the K-12 population is in decline. Equitable funding is sought through the revised per pupil funding, which will be fully implemented over the next two years (full implementation by July 1, 2011). As the funding format is determined by the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch at the school level, it appears to provide equitable funding both between high-need LEAs and other LEAs, and within LEAs. No data on actual distribution per LEA or per LEA characteristics are provided.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:            The state limits the number of state-authorized charters to 20 within its pilot ten-year program, though only 16 were granted, as additional approvals were suspended owing to budget constraints. At present, only 11 state-authorized charters exist, though there is no statutory limit on the number of LEA-authorized charter schools (though only one LEA-authorized charter is mentioned, planned for Fall 2010). Charters are open enrollment schools in the state. The state has laws, regulations, etc. regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close charters, and data regarding applications, approvals, denials and closure are summarized in the plan. Charters receive a pass-through of 80% of the district's average cost per pupil for the prior fiscal year, and no funding for facilities is provided charters, though such funding is available to local districts. Current state law does not appear to support other types of non-standard schools.</p>		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:            The plan presents some recent rules, laws and regulations as significant reform conditions, though their likely impact is unclear. The shift to competency-based assessments and the regional secondary school reform effort appear promising. The plan provides some evidence of the impact of Extended Learning Opportunities Project, which may warrant further elaboration and integration with the overall proposal.</p>		

Total	55	26
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### Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The state provides a plan for developing and implementing rigorous study in STEM fields, increasing access to STEM classes (especially the underrepresented and females), recruit/retain/develop top teachers so as to have an equitable distribution of math/science teachers (especially in rural areas), and provide special support for priority schools in these areas.		
<b>Total</b>	15	15

### Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The application comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria. Sub-section comments provide further analysis. The plan provides notable attention to the state's experience as an innovator in constructed response assessments and in multi-state consortia for high-quality standards and assessment. The state's commitment to supporting local innovation, and to allow implementation pilots as sources of evidence toward determining state directions distinguish its plan. The state does not appear to have several foundations critical to its reform plan, however, at both statutory and stakeholder support levels. Greater specificity in terms of planned development of facilitating structures or mechanisms, including data systems, appears warranted for several components of the plan. In an effort to expand and/or highlight prior feedback, it should be noted that further evidence regarding the following would strengthen the plan: 1) The development/collection/analysis of qualitative/quantitative data on professional and community variables to complement the student assessment data described; further evidence warranted to gauge implementation, sustainability, formation of local capacity, shifts in professional norms, etc., including, e.g., gauges of collective efficacy, instructional practice, community engagement, parental support, working conditions, changes in use of daily time, daily professional routines, understanding of plan vision, school climate (e.g., My Voice Survey), etc.; 2) The impact of the total plan on school-level decision-making practices and demands, particularly the impact on school-level leadership practice; the plan has components to which it is committed (many seem well-warranted per evidence presented) and on set timelines; how this plan drives support rollout while also stimulating the demand-side pull from practitioners remains unclear; the plan must balance local flexibility in adapting to local context and support for this balancing warrants further clarification; 3) An opportunity exists in the continued development of longitudinal student data systems to link to non-school data, providing the greater "360-degree" view of the child, and the promise of more integrated analysis of drivers to educational performance, and thus the promise of more efficient and effective use of funds and interventions across agencies, public and private, supporting this development; 4) Data regarding local community support and civic capacity remains limited, and yet are critical factors in successful reform efforts; 5) Data regarding the drivers of inequitable teacher and principal distribution in the state; 6) Explicit strategies in how the gap between tool development/dissemination and tool use will be bridged, given the frequent experience of this gap in prior reform efforts; 7) With a public commentary period built into the rollout of the new Common Core standards, fallback strategies should be considered, should public comments/engagement demonstrate further work needed to		

coalesce sufficient support; and 8) Further supporting evidence of sustainability, e.g., how standing state funds would be reallocated to sustain an enhanced continuous improvement cycle, how existing funding sources would support ongoing collaborative support structures and intensive assistance, and how existing funding would support the upkeep of new standards, assessments, enhanced technologies, etc.

<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>
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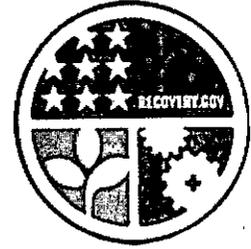
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>310</b>
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Hampshire Application #4440NH-3



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>20</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	12
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	3
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(1)(i) New Hampshire (NH) has laid out a comprehensive and coherent agenda for reform and has clearly articulated the connections among its components. The diagram on page 7 lays out this plan in a clear and easy-to-follow manner. (A)(1)(ii) The state has taken a multi-tiered approach to implement its reforms. Tier 1 contains 10 districts with consistently low achieving schools. The proposal states that only 2 schools in each of the districts in this tier will be targeted for assistance in year one. Twenty-five districts are proposing initiatives at the Tier 2 level. The impact of their reforms will be evaluated by a research group. Only 35 of New Hampshire's school districts have signed on to participate directly in RTTT, which represents only 21% of the state's school districts and 53% of the state's students in poverty. In each instance, either the LEA superintendent or the president of the local school board signed the MOU. It appears as if the Tier 1 and Tier 2 districts will serve as pilot sites for specific reforms; and after analyses of the successes of those reforms have been conducted, the results of those efforts will be shared with Tier 3 school districts via webinars, forums, and research briefs. This application is divided by strategies. Strategy 1 will provide intensive, comprehensive assistance to the 10 lowest LEAs. Strategy 2 will support innovative pilot projects. Strategy 3 will create innovative networks to share lessons learned. Strategy 4 calls for the development of effective reform practice, such as adopting the common core standards, creating a performance-based educator evaluation system, creating a leadership academy for principals of the lowest performing schools, instituting a 3-year teacher mentoring program, linking teacher performance and student achievement data, building capacity for data-driven decision making and improving teacher preparation programs. Strategies 5 and 6 expand research capacity to facilitate the use of data to improve instruction. Required NAEP performance charts were not completed. (A)(1)(iii) Since the number of school districts participating in RTTT is only 21% and the targeted population of high-poverty students represents only 53% of the state's population, it is unlikely that the initiatives proposed will have a wide-reaching impact in New Hampshire. Additionally, connections between the data and strategies presented were insufficiently described and supported to indicate that New Hampshire has a clear plan for long-reaching impacts as a result of receiving these funds.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p>		

(A)(2)(i) New Hampshire is engaged in an effort to build capacity through a variety of initiatives, including providing leadership at the state level to manage and guide the RTTT initiative, supporting participating LEAs who will be involved in the initial rollout, and attempting to build capacity to continue the rollout across years. Frequent feedback from and to RTTT participants is anticipated. Support for districts will vary according to their needs, and they will have access to significant resources, such as the effective practices identified by the What Works Clearinghouse. To assist the New Hampshire Department of Education with managing grants, such as RTTT, the Department instituted an online grants management system in 2009 to facilitate the award of grants to its school districts. Also of note is that participating New Hampshire districts have agreed to align the use of funds to support the goals of school turnaround outlined in their RTTT plan. Also notable is the legislature's decision to maintain its level of education funding for the 2010-2011 biennium, despite the downturn in the state's economy. Likewise, strong support has been demonstrated by the governor who championed legislation to raise the compulsory school age from 16 to 18, which has resulted in a lowering of the dropout rate. Another notable point for New Hampshire is its success in working with other New England states on the New England Common Assessment Program. As other consortia are formed, New Hampshire will already have experience in this arena. (A)(2)(ii) New Hampshire teacher unions/associations, the state's superintendents, the State Board of Education, the Charter School Advisory Committee and notable support from various organizations representing higher education have supported the state in this endeavor.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>(A)(3)(i) As mentioned previously, New Hampshire has been engaged in numerous initiatives over the past five years to participate in consortia for states, especially in the area of assessment. These initiatives have resulted in the development of assessments of high quality and are both efficient and cost effective in their development and administration. Additionally, the State has created a data warehouse system that provides tools to teachers and administrators for analyzing pertinent student performance data. The State has made some changes in certification rules and professional development plans. Information provided should have been more specific to demonstrate how these initiatives would sufficiently enhance the category of "Great Teachers and Leaders." In spring 2009 the state instituted through statute the state's accountability system. (A)(3)(ii) New Hampshire presented sufficient information, disaggregated by subgroup, to support that both student performance and graduation rates are increasing and the dropout rate is decreasing. Of particular note is the 10.2% increase in the graduation rate over a 5-year period for Hispanic students. However, similar progress was not evidenced in NAEP scores overall remained relatively flat.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>65</b>

## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>(B)(1)(i) Since 2005 New Hampshire has participated in a consortium of New England states to develop common assessments and is sharing its expertise with other states in its participation in the</p>		

Common Core Standards Consortiu(B)(1)(ii) The state has a well-developed plan and timeline for implementing the Common Core standards by the August 2, 2010, deadline.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:            (B)(2) New Hampshire has considerable experience in developing common assessments of high quality and rigor, given its leadership in the NECAP consortium. These assessments are rigorous, and since they have been in place, New Hampshire's performance on NAEP assessments has risen. New Hampshire has joined the Balanced Assessment Consortium, along with 29 other states and the Consortium on Board Examination Systems.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:            (B)(3) The state has a plan for analyzing the Common Core Standards and eliciting comments from constituent groups. The state plans to elicit support from potential user groups. Actions are documented in a logical timeline; however, no attempts were described to elicit comments from the public or from various advocacy groups.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>63</b>

### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:            (C)(1) In the past 5 years, the State has built a student-level data system with a focus on using data to inform instruction. New Hampshire has recently applied for additional funds to expand its data warehouse to include P-20 data. The status of each of the elements of New Hampshire's plan to fully implement the America COMPETES Act are delineated in a chart. Five of the America COMPETES elements have not been implemented at this time, since work on the listed elements has either not begun or has not been completed.</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:            (C)(2) New Hampshire has a set of goals, activities, timelines, and a list of responsible parties for each goal in its plan to create a data system to support instruction. It is obvious in the goals that with full implementation of the goals, New Hampshire educators will have an excellent set of tools to inform instruction. Additionally, parents will have access to pertinent information regarding their child's school district and school.</p>		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:            (C)(3) The State's Performance Plus data analysis tool has been well received in the state. This section delineates but does not fully describe additional activities that need to be performed to make the system robust and broaden its use. The State has outlined a plan for professional development for school personnel on how to maximize the use of the data system to improve instruction. Based on national trends and interests, the State is headed in a positive direction to encourage and support data-driven instruction, but the plan was not sufficiently developed to award full points. More detail regarding use, accessibility, rollout, and monitoring of successes should have been included.</p>		

Total	47	31
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#### D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:  (D)(1) New Hampshire has five different pathways to certification for teachers and administrators. Requirements are specified clearly and should be relatively easy to implement. For those wishing to teach in critical shortage areas and individuals following a site-based certification plan, they must work under a mentor teacher. These options should assist in increasing the pool of educators and providing practical pathways for individuals to attain full certification. The evidence required for (D)(1)(ii) was not provided. Thus, points were withheld. However, the State does have a process for identifying shortage areas and for addressing the areas of shortage.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>45</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	4
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:  (D)(2)(i) The State is seeking support to develop a performance-based accountability system that will allow schools to demonstrate with multiple measures that students are achieving at a high level and are improving. The NCIEA model is being researched. Their goal is to link a growth model to their accountability system. (D)(2)(ii) Over the next 4 years, New Hampshire plans to develop a comprehensive educator evaluation system to replace those currently being devised or used by individual school districts. However, this system is not currently in place, and the fact that the system is not "up and running" negatively impacts the overall plan, which is needed so that districts and the State can take full advantage of the potential power of this cohesive system. Stakeholders will be engaged in the development process, and a number of highly credible resources will be utilized. Additionally, New Hampshire stakeholders will participate in the process of developing the system. (D)(2)(iii) Annual evaluations of teachers and principals will take place utilizing multiple measures of educator effectiveness and their performance will be linked to student learning and growth. However, this plan contained insufficient details for full credit to be awarded. (D)(2)(iv) Intensive professional development about the evaluation system will be provided. The RTTT application includes a well thought-out and researched plan for developing the new evaluation plan.</p>		
<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	13
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:  (D)(3)(i) More than 90% of New Hampshire's population is non-Hispanic, white. The State will use its Educator Information System to analyze the distribution of educators across New Hampshire. However, this component is not currently in place. At this time, school administrators can view student performance information and link the data to particular teachers. (D)(3)(ii) New Hampshire offers alternative certification for critical shortage areas and all districts offer professional development.</p>		

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:  (D)(4) A consortium has been formed to develop a system of incentives based on increases in student growth. Additionally, the use of a growth model will become part of New Hampshire's accountability system. Linking student performance to specific teachers is also a priority of the New Hampshire legislature. However, insufficient specificity about the plans were included in the application to judge whether the plan was adequate.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:  (D)(5) The State will build on its system for professional development, which will blend policy and practice. Priority areas are: standards and assessment, STEM, teacher effectiveness, leadership, high school transformation, and Board Exam/Move on When Ready. The professional development will be offered for each Innovation network and may be in person or online. Also, the state will engage a contractor to design and implement a 4-year mentoring program. The state has a manageable and efficient plan for evaluating the effectiveness of its support system for teachers and principals. This plan is well thought-out and detailed and will focus on leadership, technology integration, and content.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>96</b>

### E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:  (E)(1) The State has the authority to enforce sanctions on schools and districts. If a local school board does not revise its improvement plan within 60 days or if the State Board of Education does not approve the revised plan, the State Board has the authority to direct the local school board to implement the plan.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	22
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:  (E)(2)(ii) The State has identified 4 levels of support provided to districts, and is organized by levels of need and support available. Turnaround models that have shown success in New Hampshire are those used in the lowest performing districts and schools. New Hampshire has proposed that under its RTTT Plan that 10 districts, along with 12 of the persistently low-achieving schools, will receive the most intensive support services. These districts will be bound to the tenets of an MOU that each of these 10 districts must sign. This plan would be more effective on a statewide basis if more districts were included. A detailed work plan has been included in New Hampshire's RTTT application.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>

### F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1)(i) Even though the dollar amount of education funding increased by \$11,231,015 from FY 2008 to FY 2009, the percentage of the budget that it represented fell from 28.5% to 28.1%. Thus, the level was substantially unchanged. (F)(1)(ii) The State uses five per pupil funding levels. The top tier provides double the per pupil aid as the base tier. Tiers are determined by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price meals at the school level. All students at a school are funded at the same per pupil level.		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (F)(2)(i) In 2003, the NH General Court amended the charter school law to create a 10-year pilot program authorizing the State Board of Education to grant up to 20 applications during that period. In fall 2009, 15 of 16 applications have been authorized. Eleven are still open. The figure of the total number of all schools in the state was not provided; therefore, a percentage cannot be calculated. The targets provided in the guidance were considered in assigning a low score to this section. (F)(2)(ii) Pertinent statutes were described. (F)(2)(iii) An "adequacy payment" follows each student to a charter school.		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (F)(3) To increase the rigor of NH high school courses, students are granted course credit based solely on demonstration of student mastery of course-level competencies. The competencies must be aligned with the state's assessment system. The state instituted an Extended Learning Opportunities program, and the drop-out rate for students participating in that program has been reduced at a faster rate than for non-participants. Raising the mandatory attendance age from 16 to 18 has had a positive impact on reducing the drop-out rate, as well. Positive impacts are being realized by New Hampshire's focus on High School Redesign. Also, of note is the State's desire to partner with neighboring states in various endeavors, such as common assessments, which is both efficient and cost effective.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>

### Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Competitive Reviewer Comments: A focus on STEM is a theme that crosses all elements of this application.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

### Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>
Absolute Reviewer Comments: This application takes a comprehensive approach to education reform; however many of the components are merely in the planning stage. The proposal is weakened by the low participation rate among districts. The commitment to engage stakeholders in decisions that impact students and schools, while efficiently using public resources, is noteworthy but not comprehensive. The goals are		

attainable and should result in decreases in achievement gaps across subgroups and increases in the rates of high school graduation and preparation for college and careers.

Total		0
Grand Total	500	332



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Hampshire Application #4440NH-4



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>24</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	15
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	5
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>i. The proposal articulates two goals for its RTTT initiative: (1) college/career readiness and (2) human &amp; social capital growth to strengthen the state's economy. The proposal identifies seven strategic "levers" for change, which include three of the four RTTT reform elements: turning around lowest-achieving schools, great teachers and leaders, and standards/assessments. The data capacity reform element undergirds most of the plan. The state is using a theory of change that relies on research findings to drive improvement. It is proposing a 3-tiered approach with various levels of Local Education Agency (LEA) participation intensity/commitment in each tier. The reform plan, as described in this overview, can be considered generally comprehensive and coherent, although the logic model provided could benefit from having more explicit connections between the proposed actions and the anticipated outcomes. ii. The participating LEAs comprise 21% of New Hampshire's school districts, 36% of its schools, 41% of its students, and 53% of students in poverty. Overall, only 40% of participating LEAs agreed to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provision to use educator evaluations tied to student achievement to inform employment decisions. Roughly one-half of participating LEAs agreed to provisions regarding equitable distribution of effective educators, and only 29% agreed to the provision regarding school turnaround (the summary table shows 100% participating although only 10 of 35 agreed to this provision; there is an error in the summary table for this percentage). For the 35 participating LEAs, only 17 MOUs (49%) were signed by the president of the teachers' union. iii. This level of participation has some potential to translate into broad statewide impact, but not strong potential to do so. The lack of support from teachers' unions and the resistance to key MOU provisions regarding educator quality and distribution and school turnaround efforts indicates that districts may embrace the "easy" components of reform but not those that require difficult changes. The plan is heavily reliant on the good will and professionalism of educators to embrace research-based reforms voluntarily. If this were a sound theory of change, most of the last two decades' proven reform methods would have already been adopted and implemented.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	12
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>i. The implementation/scale-up/sustainability plans in this proposal are cast mostly in generalizations and have many yet-to-be determined components. While the State Education Agency (SEA) plans include dedicated RTTT leadership and cross-function teams aligned with the four RTTT reform areas,</p>		

support for participating LEAs is only vaguely described. For example, Tier I LEAs will be "required to participate in ongoing activities," and Tier II LEAs will be "supported," but the actual supportive efforts are not delineated. While LEAs will have access to effective practices research, there is no specific plan to ensure that these practices will be accepted/infused in the participating districts. Similarly, the SEA is described as developing a plan to redeploy departmental resources and efforts to support RTTT implementations, but no details of this plan are included in the proposal. The proposed management structure appears adequate for grant administration and budget management, as well as monitoring participating LEA compliance with MOU requirements. The budget narrative does align with the state's plans and targets, and provides examples of state funds (e.g., for school improvement, assessment, career & technical education, and special education) that will supplement the RTTT monies. The sustainability plan is also vague; it cites current efforts that support or align with RTTT, but it is not clear what additional alignment and underlying structural supports will be established over the long term. While there is some mention of potential state funding to "create incentives to focus on student success," the only guaranteed funding mentioned for sustaining the RTTT effort is the continuation of educator credentialing fees and the use of federal Title funds, which the U.S. Department of Education (USED) has already aligned to the RTTT effort.

ii. The proposal describes the RTTT proposal-writing process as an opportunity to open new channels of communication among stakeholders. A state committee of stakeholders, including teachers and principals, was convened to provide input into the proposal. While updates were provided to the state's charter school advisory committee, it is not clear whether that committee had actual input into the writing of the RTTT plan. The proposal does not make clear if the stakeholder committee will continue or broaden during the course of the grant period. Stakeholder letters are included from legislators, government agencies, Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), professional organizations, and foundations. They offer general support, but do not delineate specific areas in which they will work to meet the RTTT commitments. A notable exception is one of the teachers' union state affiliates, which does mention supporting the transition to performance-based educator evaluations. No letters or evidence of input from parents were included.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	2
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12

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

i. The proposal documents improvement processes on the part of the state in each of the four RTTT reform areas. Participation in a four-state consortium has created more rigorous standards and aligned assessments. A longitudinal data system is in place for student information, but does not yet include a growth model. Teacher certification requirements and preparation program approval criteria have been upgraded, and regional professional development centers have been established with a primary focus on technology integration into instruction. The state's Title I System of Support provides differentiated support to LEAs based on their needs. However, it is not clear from these descriptions (1) whether there are any documented outcomes for the system improvements described in the four parts of this section, and (2) whether the state support system has successfully "turned around" any low-performing schools. In other words, the descriptions describe process, not necessarily progress.

ii. Student achievement in subgroups has increased slightly from 2005-2009 in reading and mathematics, with fewer students at the lowest proficiency levels and slightly more at the higher levels. (The state tests changed in 2005, so earlier data was not provided.) The data provided shows that achievement gaps have increased slightly at the highest proficiency levels for reading and mathematics between white students and both black and Hispanic students. The data provided show improvement for all subgroups in 4th and 8th grade Nation Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics, but reading performance at 4th and 8th grades has remained flat. Graduation rates have increased for all subgroups from 2003 to 2008. The state's data shows mixed results for improving student outcomes in the past few years, with some success in mathematics but little or no success in reading. Achievement gaps among subgroups have not closed significantly. Graduation rates have made slow but steady

improvement. The state data analysis provided in the proposal does not provide convincing linkage between the availability and use of data and the slight gains that have been made in mathematics and graduation rate. As an additional note, if the state meets its stated targets for raising student achievement, achievement gaps between subgroups would increase.

Total	125	55
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## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. NH has joined the CCSSO/NGA Common Core standards consortium, consisting of 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories. The standards produced by this consortium will be internationally benchmarked and will build toward college and career readiness. This consortium represents a majority of states and NH membership fully meets this RTTT criterion. ii. The proposal indicates that the state intends to adopt the Common Core standards within 6 months of their completion; this does not meet the August 2, 2010 deadline for fully meeting this RTTT criterion; however the later date in 2010 does indicate a firm commitment and process for adoption for partial credit on this criterion.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The bulk of the proposal narrative for this section describes the current assessments used in NH and developed with other New England states. However, NH has joined the Balanced Assessment Consortium consisting of more than half the states in the country, which will develop assessments systems aligned with the Common Core standards. The proposal states that NH joined this group to "enhance its current assessment program." It is not clear from the narrative whether the NH assessment system will be fully aligned with the Common Core standards after these revisions, or whether only bits and pieces of the consortium work will be incorporated into the existing NH assessment system. ii. The Balanced Assessment Consortium consists of more than 30 states. NH membership in this consortium fully meets this RTTT criterion.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The transition plan presented in the proposal seems largely to consist of technical reviews of alignment and conditional plans that depend on whether NH standards and assessments fit well with national consortium products. Possible activities for the transition are presented, including educator training and instructional coaching, but there is no description of who will provide these services. Although the state has established regional professional development centers, most of the responsibilities and workload are centered on the SEA, which would appear to stretch the resources of the agency. Allusions are made to "partnerships" with IHEs and professional associations to provide professional development, but the nature of these partnerships and their members' roles are not described.</p>		
Total	70	43

### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: NH has fully implemented 2 of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements for a comprehensive longitudinal data system.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The proposal provides a detailed plan to make longitudinal data accessible to various stakeholders, including parents, students, educators, researchers, and policymakers, and includes plans to make the data useful to these parties to inform decisions regarding the continuous improvement of educational effectiveness.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: i. The proposal outlines a plan to build upon an existing on-line data tool to foster improvements in instruction based on data analysis. The state proposes to mandate the use of this tool in all districts. This plan meets the RTTT requirements for this criterion. ii. A small component of the plan involves developing and delivering training and technical assistance to LEAs to interpret the data and use the findings to inform instruction. The mechanism for delivering such training and support is not described, and it is not possible to tell the level or intensity of this assistance, nor how its effectiveness will be evaluated. iii. The plan outlined in part (i) of this section indicates that data will be available to researchers and that the SEA will facilitate specific research projects based on analysis of the data. The plan references planned research on effectiveness of instructional programs and practices, but no supporting detail is provided.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>

### D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: i. The proposal describes 5 "alternatives" for educator certification, plus one additional route. Two of these do not meet the definition of alternative routes under RTTT (regular certification through a state-approved IHE program, and reciprocity with other state certification programs), as noted in the proposal. The other four routes, including the Upper Valley Educator's Institute, may meet the RTTT definition, but no information is provided regarding selectivity of the programs, the provision of school-based experiences, the amount of coursework required compared to regular routes, and whether the same level of state certification is provided for alternative program completers as compared to traditional route completers. Thus, as described, these programs can only be credited as meeting one of the five elements in the alternative route definition (permitting providers that operate independently of IHEs). ii. Although the alternative routes in use were listed, no data was provided regarding the numbers of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year. The total number of teachers and principals certified in the previous academic year was not provided. iii. Although an annual survey of educator shortages is conducted, no mention is made of how the data is used to address those shortages.		

<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>12</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	2
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	7
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	0
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	3

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

i. The proposal indicates that NH is exploring a customized version of a student growth model based on work underway or in use in other states. The mechanics of this model are not described in the narrative. The discussion references only state annual test data for tested subjects and grades, and does not address how non-tested subjects and grades would be included. There is some mention of a "tertiary growth model" that would be applied if state data did not show growth, but this was described as being applied at the school level, not at the educator level, and the tertiary growth model was not defined. ii. The proposal narrative and appendix include discussion of research on educator effectiveness and various cautions about using particular measures in particular circumstances. While this information is important to consider, the proposal does not include even a preliminary framework for educator evaluation that includes significant emphasis on student growth measures. Multiple measures are referenced and listed in general, but not discussed as they might operate in NH. Much reliance is placed on establishing two working groups for teacher and principal evaluation design, which will consider research and recommend piloting various evaluation models in the Tier I participating LEAs. An assumption is made that these pilots can lead to expansion into Tier II and Tier III schools in the years immediately following. Without a basis for measuring student growth, it is difficult to see how this timeline can be feasible. Also, given the lack of teacher's union support among participating LEAs, it is not entirely plausible that this piloting/expansion plan will be viable. iii. This section does not discuss ANNUAL evaluations of teachers and principals; the proposal projects only piloting through the end of the grant period. iv. This section of the proposal discusses only teacher and principal professional development in general, not professional development determined and customized based on evaluation data. The narrative does not address the application criterion asking how educator evaluations will be used AT A MINIMUM, to inform decisions regarding compensation, promotion, retention, tenure, and removal.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	0
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	4

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

i. The proposal states that at this time, NH does not have the capacity to evaluate student growth, so cannot analyze the distribution of "effective" teachers. An attempt to use experience as a proxy measure for effectiveness showed no significant distribution discrepancies. A discussion of state demographics addressed minority populations, but did not even mention low income student distribution. State definitions of high- and low-minority schools were not provided. It was not clear how the narrative could state that there is "constant churning" of teachers because of low salaries, but later state that it would need to continue development of the state's Educator Information System in order to analyze teacher turnover rates. The rest of the narrative for section (D)(3)(i) revisits the need for a student growth model, but does not constitute a plan to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers once the growth model is developed. ii. The proposal describes alternative certification and professional development for critical shortage areas that include mathematics, science, career/technical education, languages, and special education. The actual recruitment and incentive process is described in the proposal as being left to LEAs and their bargaining units. There is no plan in the proposal for participating RTTT LEAs to do anything beyond their current individual efforts to address teacher shortages in critical areas.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The narrative in this section did not address the proposed method(s) by which educator evaluation data will be linked back to preparation programs and be publicly reported. The narrative simply reiterated information from previous sections of the proposal regarding the effort to develop a student growth model. This response does not meet the requirements for this criterion. ii. The narrative in this section misses the intent of this criterion: to understand how the state will identify and expand those preparation programs most likely to produce effective educators and expand them. Instead, the response addresses general higher education stakeholder meetings and the general availability of alternative certification pathways. This response does not meet the requirements for this criterion.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The proposal describes the planned development of professional development networks for teachers and principals that will cover a range of content knowledge and skill development. The planned networks rely rather heavily on unnamed external providers and a trainer-of-trainers strategy. However, they do appear to have the potential of creating learning networks across educators statewide. ii. The proposal describes measures of effectiveness that include participant pre- and post-tests, performance-based participant evaluations, student work samples, and state test data. However, no mention is made of using the as yet undeveloped student growth measure that has been discussed so prominently throughout the proposal. HOW the data analysis and program improvements will occur is not described.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>35</b>

## E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal explains the relevant state laws that allow the SEA to intervene in both schools and districts that are in improvement or corrective action status. Although the law prohibits the state from taking control of daily operations, it does appear to give the SEA the authority to direct compliance with required improvement plans and to monitor that compliance.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	20
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The proposal provided a methodology identifying its 5% of persistently lowest-achieving schools, including non-Title I eligible high schools, that meets this criterion. ii. The evidence provided for state success with school turnaround models was not specific to persistently low-performing schools; instead the proposal provides general evidence of slight improvements in state tests scores for all students in the state, as was provided for Section A. No numbers of schools involved in turnaround attempts were included, nor were the type(s) of intervention models used. The plan for turning around its 12 identified lowest-performing schools includes having each school select an RTTT intervention model and sign an additional MOU indicating its agreement to fulfill specific requirements of that model. The plans for all schools include matching with an external partner to focus on instructional improvement, replacing principals, leadership academies, teacher induction and mentoring, and</p>		

piloting of statewide reforms such as the educator evaluation model. The plan, as presented, has the potential to effectively support schools in their turnaround efforts. 20

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35</b>
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## F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The proposal states that appropriations for education DECREASED from FY2008 to FY2009, from 28.5% to 28.1% (all funds) and from 33.4% to 28.1% (state funds). This decrease in funding support indicates low points for this criterion. ii. The proposal describes an equitable state education funding formula that creates five funding levels based on district students eligible for free or reduced lunch. Those schools at the highest student poverty level received twice the per-pupil funding as those with the fewest student in poverty. In addition, the proposal describes a new equity component to the formula that will go into effect in FY2012, in which additional state education aid is provided to communities with low property tax bases. These features of the funding formula qualify for high points on this criterion.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The proposal describes two routes for charter school establishment: local development approved by local school board and submitted to state for chartering, and state charter. The LEA-approved route has no caps, while the state-approved route has a statewide cap of 20 schools. Only one currently operating charter school has been certified by its LEA. The rest of the currently operating charters (10 of 11) are state approved. Lists and descriptions of currently operating charters were provided along with information regarding why some charters have closed. The percentage of schools in the state that are charters was not provided (statement left blank). However, Section A data indicates that there are 169 public schools in the state, so 11/169 equals 6.5%. While the state places no statutory caps on LEA-approved charter schools, it appears that attaining LEA approval presents barriers such that only one school has been approved in 15 years. It is not possible to ascertain from the proposal the nature of those de facto barriers. For the combination of the statutory cap on the state route to charter approval, plus the evidence of logistical barriers to LEA charter approval, this response qualifies for medium points on this criterion. ii. The SEA monitors and holds accountable the authorized charter schools, with criteria that include academic performance, fiscal responsibility, and sustainability. Student achievement targets are an important factor in charter renewal decisions. Charters have closed due to lack of students and financial insolvency, but the proposal does not indicate if state action was taken in these cases. The state does have the authority to revoke a charter due to risk to students, violations of the charter contract, financial instability, and violations of law. The proposal does not address whether the charter schools must serve student populations similar to LEA populations; many of the operating charter schools have been established particularly to serve students at risk. This accountability structure meets the requirements of this criterion. iii. Charter schools are eligible to receive at least 80% of the average per-pupil allotment as the regular public schools in the LEA. This response qualifies for medium points on this criterion. iv. The state does not provide funding for charter school facilities; thus no points are awarded for this criterion. v. The state does not currently enable LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools; thus no points are awarded for this criterion.</p>		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The narrative in this section focuses on high school reforms, including course-level competencies, a rise in the age for compulsory school attendance from 16 to 18, and extended learning opportunities. No data is provided as to whether these efforts have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other measurable outcomes.

<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>24</b>
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### Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</b> The proposal describes a STEM approach that concentrates on ensuring the universal availability of rigorous STEM coursework, improving the knowledge and skills of STEM educators, creating pipelines for STEM careers, especially among underrepresented student groups; and reducing the need for mathematics remediation in college. Components of the STEM priority are infused throughout the application. Therefore, full credit is awarded on the Competitive Preference Priority.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

### Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>No</b>
<b>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</b> The state has not done an adequate job of addressing the four RTTT education reform areas and the State Success Factors. Each area exhibits weaknesses as described in the comment sections for each criterion. In particular, the lack of progress on the longitudinal data system, the low level of LEA participation, and the incomplete responses regarding Section D (Great Teachers and Leaders) indicates that this state is not prepared to undertake the level of reform required in this competition.		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>228</b>
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Hampshire Application #4440 NH-5



#### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>20</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	12
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	4
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The State has a history of strong local control. It is evident from the proposal that a wide range of stakeholders participated in the application preparation process. The overarching goal of the project is to have comprehensive and coherent statewide reforms that focus on student learning, addressing the four reform assurances. The action plan presented builds on research and practices as presented on the What Works Clearinghouse and the Doing What Works database. Only 10 LEAs signed the MOU agreeing to participate in implementing all of the reform initiatives with another 25 agreeing to implement a significant portion of the State's reform plan. These 35 LEAs represent just 21% of the total LEAs in the state. Missing signatures from school board presidents and teachers unions, however, indicate there may be a lack of commitment to implement reforms by several of these participating LEAs. Key components of the MOU, including using evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention and ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals were not signed by the majority of the 35 LEAs participating. While a large portion of the highest need students and schools are in the 35 LEAs that signed MOU's (representing 41% of the State's student population and 53% of students in poverty), with the lowest performing schools in the tier I (10) LEAs receiving the most comprehensive services, statewide system reform will be limited.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	10
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The Commissioner of Education created dedicated teams to focus on the four core assurance areas during the application process. If awarded RTTT funds, the State will hire key individuals to oversee each of the four assurance areas. This raises the question of sustainability and infrastructure. The State has demonstrated the ability, however, to implement statewide reforms, for example, with the Performance Plus initiative. The State plan addresses how support will be provided to participating LEAs with the majority of support being offered to the 10 LEAs that signed MOUs agreeing to all reform areas. The State has a history with contributing to and utilizing best practices models including making use of the What Works database. It is not clear the extent to which the State has had success in ceasing ineffective practices and holding participating LEAs accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary. The State has capacity to provide effective and efficient grant operations and oversight for implementing RTTT funds, if awarded although it was not clear how the State plans to reallocate or repurpose education funds from other Federal, State, and</p>		

local sources to align with the RTTT goals. Finally, it is not clear how the State will sustain certain reforms given that, by the end of the grant period, several of the assurance areas will still be in pilot stages. Letters from the School Boards Association and teacher groups were supportive of "securing funds" and the "possibility" of new reforms and additional resources, but were not uniformly supportive of the plan. Nor did some of the important stakeholders address their support for the four assurances. Without strong support to implement reforms from LEAs and teacher/community leaders, opportunities for widespread reform and scalability may be limited.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State has made progress in the areas of standards and assessments and data systems to support instruction. Clear evidence of progress in the areas of great teachers and leaders and turning around the lowest achieving schools, however, is not present. Progress on improving student outcomes is also mixed. It is noteworthy that graduation rates have increased by over 10%. Progress on NAEP scores is mixed and achievement gaps have persisted.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>53</b>

## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	5
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The state actively participates in a New England consortium that has worked to develop common standards and assessments aligned with international benchmarks. The State is also listed along with 50 other states and territories as participating in the Common Core School Standards. The State has presented a plan that demonstrates its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards although it is not clear whether current deliberations pertain to the NECAP consortium standards or the CCSSs. Likewise, the timeline for implementing these standards is not clear. The application states that the state is "hopeful" that the review process can be completed by August 2, 2010.		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments as evidenced by the NECAP consortium work on jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards. The State reports that it has recently joined with 29 other states in the Balanced Assessment Consortium to establish a framework for supporting assessment of the CCSS. The work will include multiple measures of learning and performance, new technologies, teacher involvement in development and scoring of assessments and a common reference exam which includes constructed response and performance measures. A signed MOU for participation in the Balanced Assessment Consortium is not provided, however.		

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:  The State has presented a plan, in collaboration with eight school districts, 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. The plan does not call for the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments until the fourth year of funding, however. The State therefore does not plan to scale up the models for enhanced standards and assessments until examination of the different pilots provides evidence of the effect of curriculum, instruction, and assessment designs on student achievement. While the piloting of these approaches is laudable, the plan does not provide for transitioning to enhanced standards and assessments by the completion of the grant period.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>43</b>

### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:  The State has only two of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act included in its statewide longitudinal data system. Evidence suggesting implementation was only found for: Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments (E6); and Information on students not tested, by grade and subject (E7).</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:  The State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, key stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers). The State data warehouse is in place with plans to implement differential access portals to provide feedback for the continuous improvement process, policy analyses, and research.</p>		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:  The State uses Performance Plus, a commercial data analysis tool, to inform instruction for individual students and groups of students. It appears this tool has primarily been implemented in districts with large populations of underrepresented students. Plans are presented for extending the use and applicability of the system to include a richer set of data and analysis tools to inform decision making that directly impacts teaching and learning on a daily basis and for continuous improvement. It is not clear from the plan how LEAs are supported in using the improvement system or how teachers and administrators receive professional development in the use of the data system tools and features. It is also not clear how the data from the Performance Plus system is incorporated into the statewide longitudinal data system both for decision making and for use by researchers to evaluate effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>17</b>

## D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There are clear statutory provisions for supporting alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals. These provisions have been in place and been used for many years and include, in most cases, provisions for supervised, field-based experiences and support. It is not clear from the language of the statute that alternative providers can offer certification but it does provide for individuals to directly apply for alternative certification to the State or to be recommended by the local Superintendent. One alternative provider, Upper Valley Educator's Institute was mentioned but provision for alternative providers is not explicit in the statute cited. It is thus not clear that alternative routes can be offered by non IHE's. Concerning areas of teacher and principal shortage, an annual survey of superintendents identifies shortage areas although it is not clear what happens with this data; therefore, it is not clear what processes are in place for preparing teachers and principals for shortage areas. There appear to be recruitment efforts and programs for preparing teachers that include preparing teachers in shortage areas. No mention is made of alternative principal programs for high need, low performing, and/or turn around certifications.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>19</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	5
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	3
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is not clear the model being explored for supporting a performance-based accountability system links individual student performance with growth over a period of time nor how student growth data might be used for designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals. There is evidence that multiple rating categories and assessments are planned but it was not evident that the model being developed provides for annual evaluations of all teachers and principals, how information will be included that provides timely and constructive feedback to teachers and principals, and how these evaluations will provide teachers and principals with data on student growth. Therefore, it is not clear how these evaluations will be used to develop teachers and principals, compensate, promote and retain effective teachers and principals, link performance to tenure or full certification, or remove ineffective teachers and principals. The plan does not provide for statewide implementation of teacher and performance effectiveness measures by the end of the grant period, 2014.</p>		
<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	3
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	4
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is not clear how the State plan ensures the equitable distribution of teachers and principals to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals. One of the "challenges" for the State is that the state population is 92% White. Addressing the issue of equitable distribution of teachers and principals might focus on high poverty, high challenge schools although these were not mentioned in the strategies provided. The plan is also not very well articulated with regard to strategies for increasing the number and percentage of effective</p>		

teachers who teach in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education as well as other shortage areas as defined by the State. Specific incentives and strategies such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes were not addressed.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:  It is not clear how teacher preparation programs are currently evaluated, nor what the plans are for implementing a high-quality plan for linking student achievement and student growth to the programs that prepare their teachers. Much of the information in this section of the proposal was irrelevant to the issues of improving teacher preparation programs and expanding credentialing options. Because plans for student growth models are still being developed, the State has no clear plan to improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:  It is not clear how that existing structures for professional development are driven by data; therefore strategic and effective use of professional development to make significant difference in student achievement are not in evidence. The State Innovation Network does provide six priority areas around which professional development can be formed. Likewise, mentoring and induction networks and strategies are in place that will facilitate implementation of a plan to provide meaningful and effective support based on individual teacher and principal needs. It is also not clear how the system of supports provide information on effectiveness based on student achievement and growth. The plan and existing strategies focus on self-report of participant feedback. Other measures, such as classroom and school "walk-throughs" may or may not strategically provide evidence of training effectiveness at the level of student performance.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>42</b>

### E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:  The State does not appear to be able to intervene directly in either schools or LEAs failing to meet AYP although this is ambiguous. The statute gives the State authority to enforce sanctions but prohibits "taking control of daily operations."</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>14</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	4
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	10
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:  The State has a mechanism for identifying the lowest performing schools in the state. Participation in the identification process, however, seems to be optional. The potential for turning around low performing schools if the process is optional seems to be compromised. It is not clear from the support plan that schools and professional development activities are informed by and focus efforts on school-based data. Evidence of work with in SINI, restructuring or DINI indicates schools have exited need for improvement status but it is not clear from the plan how benchmarks for success were set and achieved. The State recognizes there are no enforcement policies in place that support a comprehensive effort to reform schools and districts at this time. Support to LEAs does not seem to</p>		

provide for one of the four school intervention models: turnaround, restart, school closure, or transformation.

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>19</b>
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## F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:            While the State appropriations to K-12 education increased from FY 08 to FY 09, the percentage declined. Funding seems to occur differentially to accommodate for local funding capacity toward ensuring an equitable distribution of funds. It is not clear, however, the extent to which the Adequacy Aid can address potential inequities of funding available to LEAs. The tiered per pupil funding and accountability plan has not been fully implemented and so it is difficult to assess the impact of these policies.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>11</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:            The charter laws passed in 1995 allow for charter schools; charter school proposals must first be approved by the local LEAs, however, before being considered by the State Board. From 1995-1999 only one charter proposal was approved by a local school district. That charter was not able to open because of lack of funding. In 2003 the State amended the charter school law and created a pilot program for authorizing the State Board to grant up to 20 state charter schools. At this time, 15 charters have been authorized although additional charters will not be considered through 2011 because of budget constraints. In this context, it appears the State de facto has charter school laws that effectively inhibit the number of charter schools. Annual assessments of charters consider progress toward school goals, so it appears there are mechanisms for monitoring, holding accountable, reauthorizing, and closing charter schools. Funding for charters that are approved by the local districts under the 1995 law is set at a minimum of 80% of the LEA funding. Funding for state charters under the 2003 law is to match or exceed local funding, although this level of support must occur through private means. It is unclear what the state obligation in these cases is. The state does not provide funding for facilities and does not have policies in place to support the development of autonomous or innovative schools.</p>		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:            The State has increased the compulsory age for education from 16 to 18. Also in place are credit recovery programs and extended learning opportunities for students. It is not clear whether LEAs are required to support these initiatives and the conditions upon which participation might be mandatory, however, and specific laws, statutes or policies were not cited.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>21</b>

## Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		

STEM courses are offered through a virtual learning academy and concurrent enrollment programs are provided for STEM courses. The State also seems to have a strong working relationship with the various two-year and four-year IHE's in the state. It is not clear how students are encouraged/required to increase STEM proficiencies/coursework, or how teachers are identified and/or mandated to increase their proficiencies in STEM content, however. While structures to support extending STEM offerings are in place or being planned for expansion, plans for systemic improvement of STEM education and focused attention on increasing student participation in advanced STEM offerings are not in evidence.

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

	Available	Tier 1
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>No</b>

**Absolute Reviewer Comments:**

While the State has some reform elements primed, there are not sufficient reforms or infrastructure in place to ensure a comprehensive, systemic approach to statewide reform. Especially crucial are the need for clearer mechanisms for determining student achievement growth and teacher and principal effectiveness. Other reform approaches, including assessing teacher preparation programs, developing and supporting alternative approaches to teacher/principal certification, and supporting and targeting charter and other innovative schools hinge on having a comprehensive and clearly articulated data information system that is transparent and available for use by multiple constituencies. In addition, there does not seem to be statewide commitment or buy-in to the State's proposal. In order for reforms to be far reaching, especially in the context of strong local governance of public schools, there needs to be evidence of commitment from a larger proportion of the LEAs. The State plan and existing context has not demonstrated existing capacity or commitment to developing data systems that improve instruction, preparation and evaluation of effective teachers and leaders, and turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

Total		0
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<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>210</b>
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