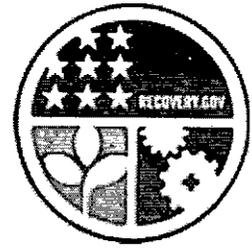




# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Jersey Application #4560NJ



#### 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>37</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	20
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	14
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(i)The applicant articulated a thoughtful reform agenda aligned to the four education goals. The path to achieving its goal however, lacks clarity and coherence. The expected outcomes for achievement and changes, as outlined in the plan lack rigor due to clarity. (ii)(a) Strong statewide commitment to the State's reform agenda as evidenced by the 378 LEAs that committed to participate in the RTTT Plan. (b)The State's plan allows participating LEAs to select the number and elements they're willing to participate. The 158 LEAs committed to all of the elements represent a significant force in creating statewide impact. (c)The application reflects broad support from superintendents and school board members as evidenced by the MOUs signed. Only 5% of union presidents signed the MOUs which indicates a strong need for continued engagement. (iii)The potential for broad statewide impact is evidenced by the number of LEAs participating, representing 69% of the State's students, of which 78% are students of poverty. However, the lack of clarity related to the applicant's achievement, graduation and college entrance goals result in the difficulty of assessing statewide impact.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	5
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(i)(a)State-level teams led by leaders in the State's Department of Education, along with cross functional teams will lead the implementation efforts of the reform plans. It is unclear from the application, the necessary activities that will be planned to build the capacity of the leadership structure to better enable it to carry out the reform work. The role of the external organizations and partners cited in the application, is unclear. (b)The applicant references current structures, such as the County Office, instructional specialists, consortium of LEAs and the department as the structures that will support LEAs in identifying and implementing best practices and assessing progress and performance. Given the complexity of the reform work, it is unclear whether the support structures described, have the capacity, knowledge and skills necessary to support the LEAs. (c)The application outlines its provisions for management and oversight as evidenced by the creation of two positions-Financial Officer and Project Officer, placed at the senior staff level. (d)The applicant's budget is aligned to its reform agenda plans as evidenced by the budget's description. Several areas need clarity: 1)one of the RTTT education goals is "design and implement rigorous, transparent and fair evaluation systems", however there is a budget item for the purchase of teacher evaluation kits, one per school @\$500. The purpose of the kit is unclear. 2)The budget references all teachers being trained in the statewide</p>		

assessment system -if this refers to all teachers in the State, an allocation under "funding for involved LEAs" is missing. 3)It is unclear as to the growth targets that will be set for performance awards. The mechanism for sustainability of the awards is unclear.4)The extent to which the State will reallocate or repurpose education funds from Federal, State and local sources is limited. (ii)Broad base support is not evident based on the few letters of support, (three letters), submitted as a part of this application.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	12
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:            (i)It is evident that the State has been engaged in ongoing reform work aligned to the four education reform areas, ie. redesigning standards, implementation of the New Jersey SMART data system, alternative certification and pilot STEM programs. (ii)(a)The State linked gains in overall achievement in reading, math and Students with Disabilities to investments such as focused attention to early childhood education program, changes to its assessment system, raised performance standards (b) The State's data and NAEP data reflect a ten point decrease between Black and White students in fourth grade reading. According to the application, a report by Education Trust cites New Jersey as a state that is closing the gap while making gains among all groups. This data is significant, however the actions taken to accomplish the stated results is missing. (c)The State is currently working on The High School Redesign Initiative to raise graduation rates, therefore an analysis isn't included.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>66</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:            (i)(a)The State is committed to developing and implementing a common set of core standards as evidenced by its participation in the Consortium of States, as per the signed MOU. (b)The consortium includes a significant number of states-48 (ii)The applicant is committed to the adoption of the Common Set of Core Standards by April 21, 2010 as outlined in the plan.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:            (i)The applicant demonstrated its commitment to working jointly in the development of common, high quality assessments as evidenced by its participation in MOSAIC (Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium) and the Balanced Assessment Consortium as per the MOU. (ii)MOSAIC represents 25 states and the Balanced Assessment Consortium represents 36</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:            The applicant outlined a thoughtful and rigorous plan to transition to high quality standards and assessments as evidenced by it's Multi-Year Action Plan. The plan focuses on systems of support for implementation, standards and assessment, an interactive website use, resource materials and a</p>		

Statewide Systemic Professional Development and Growth Initiative. The infrastructure and capacity for supporting LEAs is unclear. It was unclear, by the application, whether school site staff representatives would be involved in the facilitation of activities. The mechanism for accountability to ensure adequate support for the LEAs is unclear.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>64</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>6</b>
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The State implemented three America COMPETES elements.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant is committed to ensuring access to the State's longitudinal data system as evidenced by its Two-Phase Work Plan. The applicant identified key areas of support for LEAs in the implementation of the system to improve student achievement.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (i)The applicant is committed to implementing an instructional improvement system as evidenced by the development of the New Jersey Instructional Improvement System. The implementation plan delineates the features of the system and work plan expectations, however, it is unclear from the application, whether school site practitioners will be engaged in the development stages. It is also unclear as to the capacity-building needs of those stakeholders who will be involved at any level of the initiative and the strategies for building capacity. (ii)The applicant is committed to ensuring high quality professional development as evidenced in the Professional Development Plan. The three domains as outlined in the plan, are appropriate and are recognized as best practices in professional development. It is unclear what mechanism will be utilized to assess the professional development activities. (iii)The applicant is committed to ensuring access to researchers as evidenced by the extension of the New Jersey SMART data system within the Instructional Improvement System.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</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>16</b>
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i)The State allows for alternative routes to certification through legal, regulatory provisions as evidenced by the program descriptions as outlined in the plan. However, clarity regarding how the State is defining the routes is necessary. (ii)Alternative routes to certification are utilized as evidenced in the plan, however a system for evaluating the data is not discussed. (iii)It is evident that the State has a process for monitoring supply and demand and shortage areas as per legal requirements.		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>31</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	10
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (i)The applicant has determined an thoughtful system for measuring student growth as outlined in the plan. The measures focus on grades three through eight, however, it doesn't discuss how the remaining grades will be measured as it relates to the evaluation system. (ii)The applicant has developed a thoughtful evaluation framework for designing a rigorous fair and transparent evaluation system utilizing valid measures. The plan to utilize stakeholders, specifically those most affected by the new system is appropriate and strategic. The professional development plan as outlined is thorough and appropriate. It is unclear from the application, the strategies to be implemented for ongoing capacity building. What role will the management protocol play in the implementation of the system. (iii)Annual evaluations of teachers and principals will be a component of the evaluation system as evidenced in the reform plan, however, a plan for how the evaluation data will be utilized is not clear. (iv)The plan as outlined addresses the use of evaluations to inform professional development planning and content. Compensation concepts are discussed in the context of the performance awards. The plan does not address the areas of promotion and retention and provides little information regarding opportunities for effective teachers and principals. It is unclear from the application whether the plan will include major changes to the current decision making processes related to tenure, removal and full certification. Although these areas are included in the plan, the concepts are not developed sufficiently to ensure a dramatic shift in current practice.		
<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	5
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7
(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (i)The application provides an appropriate plan to ensure equitable distribution of teachers and principals to high poverty/high minority schools. The strategies for replication of best practices is appropriate. Although a recruitment plan is discussed, the reform elements are not clear. The stated activities are currently being implemented. The development of the Equitable Distribution Plan by the LEAs is appropriate given the need. (ii)The applicant's plan to increase the percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects builds on previous successful pilots in the State. The strategies as outlined are appropriate. It is unclear whether an assessment system will be developed to assess overall effectiveness. The timeline included in the plan is realistic and thorough.		
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>
(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (i)Student achievement and growth will be linked to credentialing and teacher preparation programs as evidenced in the design of the Longitudinal Data System. The performance targets as outlined are low as it relates to statewide impact. The applicant's process for reporting such data is not discussed in the plan. (ii)The applicant outlined its commitment to expanding successful preparation and credentialing offerings. The applicant does not discuss its process for assessing the effectiveness of the current programs. The criteria for such a selection is unclear.		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (i)The plan as outlined provides a thoughtful roadmap for providing effective data-informed professional development. It recognizes best practices in structure and content,creating professional learning communities and instructional coaches. There is a focus on building capacity across the system which will ensure ongoing support to the practitioners. Instructional coaches will play a		

significant role in the professional development delivery, however, the selection criteria for the coaches is unclear. (ii)The plan outlines a thorough and thoughtful plan for measuring effectiveness of the professional development and impact on daily practice.

<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>79</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 has the legal authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest achieving schools and LEAs.		
<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
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (i)The State identifies persistently lowest achieving schools annually. (ii)The applicant outlined a plan for the development of a plan to address the appropriate steps that will be taken relative to the persistently lowest achieving schools which includes conducting a needs assessment, community engagement, and selection of the model(turnaround, restart, school closure or transformation. Although the plan outlines the key concepts that must be included, in the absence of a comprehensive plan for support to LEAs for the decision making process and implementation process, impact can not be assessed. Capacity building within the LEAs to engage in the decision making process of determining the appropriate model is critical, however the plan does not address the necessary capacity building work that will need to take place.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35</b>

### F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i)The percentage of the total revenues available to the State that were used for education increased from 36.9% to 39.6%. (ii)The State's policies lead to equitable funding as evidenced by its equity funding model.		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: 1. The State's charter school law does not prohibit the increase number of charter schools - no cap. 2. The State has laws regarding the authorization of approval, renewal and closure of charter schools. The percentage of charters approved in the past raises questions related to possible barriers from the State. 3. The State's charter schools receive funding equitable to traditional schools. 4. The State provides for facilities agreements. 5. The State allows for innovative autonomous public schools through the Interdistrict Public Schools Choice Program.		

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State has made major investments in early childhood education. The State claims that the result of the investment is the increase in achievement as measured on the State assessments and NAEP. Through legal and regulatory provisions, the State now has equity funding. Student need is now weighted.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53</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>
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</b> The State's reform agenda will focus on improving achievement and teacher capacity through a thoughtful STEM plan. Partnerships with Institutes of Higher Learning, industry and other partners will be critical in the development and implementation of a STEM plan that will have a major impact on student achievement.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

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

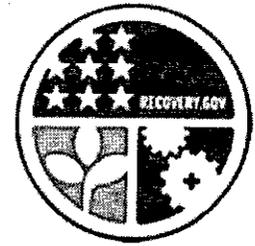
	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>
<b>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant's plan reflects a thoughtful approach to reform with the determination that the results of the reform agenda will have a broad and systemic impact on the entire State.		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>340</b>



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Jersey Application #4560



#### 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>47</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>            The State's Balanced Reform Model is a comprehensive and coherent reform framework that aligns with ARRA's four education areas. The plan, for example, implements a turnaround system in low-performing schools; gives more time (professional development, planning, and instruction) to educators; and closes historically ineffective schools. The State adopts verbatim the Department of Education's sample MOU, thus ensuring the terms and conditions of its MOU necessitate a strong commitment from participating LEAs. The State secured signatures from 60% of its LEAs, covering close to 4 out of every 5 students in poverty. None of the elements on the State's Elements of Reform plan received unanimous support. This has the potential to turn the State's comprehensive plan into a fragmented reform effort. The State's plan has high potential for statewide impact, since 7 of the 10 largest school districts and 50% of the smallest school districts are a "Participating LEA." However, the dramatic lack of union support may compromise the State's ability to implement its a la carte reform agenda. Interestingly, while the plan gives LEAs great latitude to pick and choose what elements to support, only 6% of local teachers' union signed on. The State's standing as a Top 5 performer on NAEP math, reading, and writing assessments is clear evidence it has the capacity to translate LEA participation into increased student achievement. The State does not include data or a narrative concerning college enrollment rates. Given the number of students served by participating LEAs, lack of union support, and absence of support letters, the State ability to pursue its reform goals is uncertain.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	2
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>            Given the importance of gubernatorial leadership, the fact the outgoing Governor's team developed the majority of the plan raises questions about the new Administration's commitment to and belief in the State's current reform/RttT agenda. The State's decision to have career staff brief the new leadership on its RttT agenda reverses the appropriate roles of each group. The State's cross-divisional matrix shows each element of their plan and the divisions' sharing ownership; this visual clearly, compellingly, and effectively describes the dedicated teams responsible for each element. The State, conversely, lacks a high-quality plan for implementation. Their strategy seems to be: see how reforms are implemented then determine how to best support LEAs. The State adequately addresses the re-purposing of state and federal dollars. The State plans to field a team, led by a Financial Officer, to</p>		

administer the grant. While the manpower issue is addressed, it is unclear if the State has a system (organizationally and technology-wise) to capably manage an RttT grant. The State thinks smart about life after RttT. Their decision to analyze their implementation results, see what worked and what didn't, and find the money and resources to continue effective efforts at grant's end should reduce the funding cliff risk. Using support letters as a gauge, the State's teacher and principal unions do not support the RttT plan. The overwhelming lack of support among labor has the real and credible possibility to weaken the State's reform agenda or key reform elements. The State's plan includes three letters of support, further illustrating little support from key stakeholders.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State a) has won national awards for its assessment system, b) was the first in nation offering alternative certification routes, c) has a history of using SIGs to transform low-performing schools, and d) has recently focused on strengthening its data systems. The State has been able to increase overall student achievement, while decreasing the achievement gap between whites and students of color on NEAP and state assessments. In addition, the State's poor and minority students outperform their peers in other states. These impressive results have been acknowledged by national policy organizations. The State's data system currently lacks capacity to measure and report "adjusted cohort graduation rates." The State, therefore, relies on estimating high school graduation rates, which, although high, have not changed over the years. As the State improves its data system, it is possible - if not probable - its graduation rates will decrease. Additionally, while the State clearly explains its results; the State does not describe the actions it has taken to achieve these goals.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>87</b>

## B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	16
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State, like 47 other states, has signed the Common Core Standards MOU. This partnership successfully establishes that the State is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards that are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation. The State describes a clear plan, leading to presenting "a resolution to adopt the Common Core Mathematics and English Language Arts Standards" to its Board of Education on or by April 21, 2010. The State has not developed an implementation plan, deciding to "look for ways to bring LEAs together to collaborate regarding possible implementation strategies" if and when core standards are adopted.		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State has signed MOUs with several consortia, including BAC, MOSAIC, and Florida's Assessment Consortium. Collectively, these groups affirm the State's efforts to jointly develop and implement common, high-quality assessments aligned with its common set of K-12 standards. In		

addition, the State is working with ADP to ensure their summative assessments align with college and workforce ready goals. Because the State participates in several consortia, the consortium with the highest participation rate was used to determine whether or not the State is participating in a consortium with a significant number of States. BAM has partnered with 36 States.

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State provides a detailed and compelling set of activities for supporting its transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessment. The foundation, a "Curriculum and Assessment Spine," ties new standards, as the name implies, to a revamped curriculum and balanced assessment system. These activities includes aggressive timelines, highlighting the State's desire to provide educators with classroom and student-level tools and supports as well as professional learning and growth opportunities. The challenge is the State does not describe an accountability system for ensuring its high quality plan is implemented with fidelity. The lack of accountability infrastructure may also highlight the State's lack of capacity to develop and deliver a comprehensive system for supporting educator development.		
<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>6</b>
<b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State has fully implemented three elements of the America COMPETES Act.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State currently lacks a robust longitudinal data system. It has devised a plan, predicated on an SLDS or RttT award, for improving, accessing, and using State data. The State's plan, however, is more aspirational than substantive. The State does not clearly explain how the system will be used to better understand student achievement and outcome levels, and, with the new ability to establish baseline data, target areas for student improvement and instructional support.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The State uses technology in a smart way to address local instructional improvement for teachers and principals. The State plans to give teachers a handheld device that can be uploaded with student data from its web-based Instructional Improvement System. This device has the potential to meaningfully inform lesson plans and classroom instruction, since it facilitates richer connections between student achievement data and state standards. The technology platform is complemented by an assessment suite that will monitor student and teacher performance then recommend professional development opportunities for improving instruction. The State also proposes creating a similar platform for schools, so school leaders can monitor school-level performance measures. The State's use of a climate survey tool and three-prong professional development approach (help educators understand data, talk about data, and develop new strategies based on the data) is both strategic and practical, since educators may find transitioning to new technologies and becoming to some extent a data analyst difficult. However, the State decision to hold professional development outside of an educator's school reflects a limited understanding of the practices necessary for increasing educator buy-in and support. Further, the State assertion educators "appetite for more data will grow" as each one gains access to data about their students and their performance, lack proof points within the application and affects the		

validity of the State's well articulated implementation strategy, since educators may not be as receptive to using data as the State assumes. Also, the State vaguely describes its Data Mart concept and how it will make its data from Participating LEAs accessible to researchers.

Total	47	25
-------	----	----

#### 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>13</b>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:            The State allows providers to operate alternative routes to certification independent of IHEs for aspiring principals, but does not allow the process for teachers. The alternative route for teacher certification does include five of the five elements listed in the definition, however. The State typically addresses its process for identifying shortage areas and does not list what data, if any, it has uncovered when analyzing its areas of shortage. The State does broadly mention it has used various programs, including its Teacher Recruitment Initiative, to fill these areas of shortage, but does not specifically discuss how it plans to uncover and fill shortages in math, science, and special education.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>43</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The State will measure student growth for students in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. It is unclear how and if the State measures student growth for high school students. Student progress, which the State defines as growth on interim measures, is a significant part of the State's principal and teacher evaluation, 35% and 40% respectively. However, the State's evaluation rubric is partially based on an educator's job description and professional development plan. These inclusions may undercut the State's ability to create a rigorous and fair statewide accountability system, given the lack of standardization with job descriptions and development plans. The State acknowledges its current annual evaluation is in need of improvement and will "encourage" participating LEAs to provide rich, timely, and constructive feedback to educators. The State's professional development strategy is a conundrum, since professional development will be tied to a potentially weak evaluation system. This presents a potential challenge, whereas if an evaluator does not have the right data to fully evaluate an educator's performance then the recommended professional development strategy may not lead to improved instruction. Nonetheless, the creation of personal development plans, which combines the teacher's learning needs with the student's needs, should ensure professional development increases an educator's capacity to improve student achievement. The State does not currently maintain data on "highly-effective" educators, only "highly-qualified" educators. This limits their ability to create strategies for retaining and/or rewarding highly effective teachers and leaders. The State's compensation strategy is based on paying teachers more for doing more work and compensating school personnel when the school does well. This is a sound model, although it may miss great teachers performing in poor environments. Also, the State does not provide a strategy for addressing promotion and retention among teachers and principals. The State does not address promotion and retention of teachers. Also, the State does not have a plan for removing ineffective principals, and it acknowledges their ability to address teacher ineffectiveness is limited. The State's decision, consequently, to help participating LEAs develop a system for removing ineffective tenured and nontenured teachers is appropriate. This decision, however, does not constitute a plan as much as a framework, since, for example, the State

does not explain how the removal process will be informed by evaluations. By the end of the grant period, the State may have a robust evaluation system that is not be fully utilized by LEAs due to tepid annual use targets. For example, the State has set a low performance goal to remove 5% of its ineffective tenured and non-tenured teachers and principals by SY 2012-2013.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	6
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	3
<p><b>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>          The State plans to develop an equitable-distribution plan following the implementation of its state-level evaluation system in 2012-13. While this decision increases the chance lessons from implementing its evaluation system inform the development of its equitable distribution plan, it also allows the State to put off the important issue of equitable distribution for a few years. In fact, the State approved its Teacher Equity Plan without a definition for high-minority and low-minority schools. The State's de-prioritization of equitable distribution is reflected throughout their plan. For example, the State's goal for increasing the number of highly effective teachers as well as decreasing the number of ineffective teachers is not aggressive. These actions collectively confirm the State has not developed a high-quality and ambitious plan for ensuring the State's neediest students are taught by highly effective teachers. To the State's credit, its decision to look past compensation and focus on the school's environment and leadership towards making high-needs schools a place where educators will want to work is a research-based strategy that has the potential for high impact.</p>		
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b>          The State has applied for an SLDS and SFSF grant, and, if awarded, the State will be able to link student achievement to teacher preparation programs. The State lacks a clear path for expanding preparation and credentialing options due, in part, to its limited capacity to measure student achievement and growth. Further, the State does not explain its definition of what is a successful program. The State also sets low performance targets for linking preparation programs to student achievement data; while this may be because the State does not want to make commitments for higher education it creates a misalignment between the State's commitment to building the system and actually using the system.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</b>          The State includes a comprehensive plan for providing school leaders and teachers with appropriate levels of support from supervisors and content-focused instructional coaches. The State is well-positioned to implement this plan given their track record of success developing rigorous professional development systems.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>93</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><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>          The State has the legal authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs.</p>		

<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	28
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The State has identified its persistently lowest-performing schools. The State does not provide a one size fits all model for turning them around; instead, the State seeks to develop a tailored solution for each school that addresses their specific root causes for underperformance. The State proposes a broad set of supports for turning around its schools and giving principals in said schools greater responsibility, such as hiring and termination power as well as budgetary authority. Although, the plan does not clearly explain what happens if the principal is part of the problem. The State's use of turnaround officers and Needs Assessment Review teams in the context of school reform is progressive and further reflects the State's commitment to resourcing poor performing schools with people who have track record of success. Although, it is unclear if LEAs and sites will have the capacity to implement turnaround strategies identified by the NTO. Also, the State's plan to use data, like its root cause analysis and demographics tool, to create turnaround cohorts should maximize resources and impact. The State will have to closely monitor its cohort of poor performers to ensure each stays committed to dramatically producing results and does not revert back to the actions that led to its poor performance. The proposed School Innovation and Renewal Zones is a powerful way to engage the community as co-partners in the transformation of its schools. However, the decision to give the community a say in selecting a turnaround model is unwise. Schools should be given more autonomy for producing results not performing poorly.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>

## F. General

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Funding has remained largely unchanged. The State ensures equitable funding through its School Funding Reform Act of 2008.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The State does not have charter caps. The State by law must conduct annual performance reviews of charter schools. The review examines student achievement, but it is unclear if it is a "significant factor." The State also has a history of encouraging high-performing schools to expand and forcing low-performing schools to close. The State's charter schools receive equitable funding, and charters have funding streams that can be used for facilities. The State has given LEAs the authority to open specialized schools. The programs emerging from this authority are at capacity, and it is unclear if this is due to popularity or limited space.</p>		
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The State clearly demonstrates other significant reform conditions in the state, such as its equitable funding strategy, secondary education transformation initiatives, and career and technical education program.</p>		

Total	55	51
-------	----	----

**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's application includes a high-quality plan to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in STEM as outlined in its revamped New Jersey Core Standards; (ii) cooperate with STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines by providing classroom teachers with high-quality materials to support the teaching of STEM subjects and seeking to create and convene a STEM council responsible for refining the State's strategic vision for STEM work, and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM fields by continuing to extend student understanding of STEM careers at the middle-school level and seek broader experiences to provide the chance for real-world STEM experiences.		
Total	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 plan sufficiently describe how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.		
Total		0

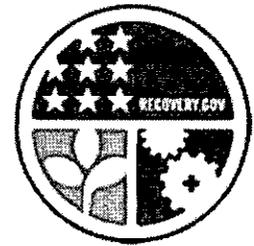
<b>Grand Total</b>	500	377
--------------------	-----	-----



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Jersey Application #4560 NJ 1



#### 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>50</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	37
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	8
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>            (A)(1)(i) The Applicant has presented a coherent overview of the State's view of school and LEA reform as it supports the four education areas of the ARRA. Referred to as a balanced reform model, the Applicant discusses a system of linked action triangles (components) that represent the following reform agenda areas: 1) Standards and Curriculum System; 2) Balanced Assessment System; 3) A Data System; 4) Instructional Improvement System; 5) Career Pathways System; 6) Turnaround System. (A)(1)(ii) Applicant utilizes the model MOU provided the USED. Provides an honest discussion on the lack of union support for this plan, initiated by the State union leadership (NJEA) and followed by 94% of participating LEAs' local union representatives not signing the MOU. For the unions, the most controversial part of the plan is section (D)(2)(iv), which requires that the LEA use teacher evaluations to inform actions regarding teacher compensation, tenure, removal, promotion, and other professional decisions. The Applicant hopes to bring NJEA leadership to the table to come to some agreement on these issues. The union leaders who did sign (mostly from small, 1-6 school LEAs) should be applauded for their courage to stand up for and support this important school reform effort. Required summary tables are included in the narrative. (A)(1)(iii) According to the Applicant, participating LEAs include seven of the ten largest LEAs, over half of the smallest 200 LEAs, 67% of all schools, 57% of vocational-school students, and 46% of charter-school students, representing over 69% of the 1.2 million students in the state. Of the 158,194 students in LEAs with at least 75% in poverty, 129,350 students (82% of the total) are in participating LEAs. These numbers demonstrate the opportunity for broad statewide impact from participation in RTTT. Required evidence, Summary Table (A)(1)(iii), is found in Appendix I - Detailed Table for (A)(1). (A)(1)(iii)(c), (A)(1)(iii)(d) No response.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	16
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>            (A)(2)(i)(a) Although statewide leadership is in transition due to a newly elected Governor, the Applicant asserts that career staff will fully share all information regarding RTTT. Basic state department staff and their departments are presented in the narrative. However, no provision is made for the possible need to change the configuration of leadership teams to meet the needs of LEAs an schools participating in RTTT. It remains to be seen as the plan is reviewed, whether or not the current configuration of the departments suits the needs of the LEAs schools, and staffs participating in this</p>		

RTTT. (A)(2)(i)(b) Not much detail is provided regarding support to LEAs besides the current configuration, which as mentioned previously, may or may not suit RTTT participants' needs. (A)(2)(i)(c) A Financial Officer will be named to lead the budget-reporting and monitoring and fund disbursement for RTTT, a Project Officer will oversee the undertaking of the work proposed, the completion of deliverables, and the annual reporting and regular contact with the USED. This Project Officer will become a member of senior staff of the state department. A division graphic of the RTTT team is proposed in Appendix II (A)(2) organization chart. (A)(2)(i)(d) The Applicant asserts that it will consolidate a series of smaller grants that are being used to support educator development into the work outlined in section D. Also, LEAs will be helped to reallocate Title I funds to support the effective programs identified and initiated under Section E. If successful in its State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant application, then that frame of work will lay the foundation for the work proposed in Section C. The Applicant's budget and accompanying narrative, is completed and found in Appendix I (A)(2)(i)(d). (A)(2)(i)(e) The applicant states that the work being done under the grant will lay the foundation for sustainable reform. Developed items such as the formative and interim assessments, Curriculum and Assessment Spine, and the comprehensive state data system will have been completed and professional development for their use begun and ongoing. These are high-budget, time-consuming items that once completed, will continue to be used in the school reform effort of the state. (A)(2)(ii)(a) As previously discussed, union support is nearly non-existent for this initiative. However, the Applicant notes that importantly, the AFT that represents Newark, the largest district in the state, and three other smaller school systems have expressed union support. The 98.4% of local school boards' support is clear. (A)(2)(ii)(b) Stakeholder letters from the New Jersey School Boards Association, Rowan University, and the Hunterdon County Education Services Commission are available in Appendix I. Three letters of support out of the many stakeholders in the state raises questions regarding full stakeholder support for this RTTT state initiative.

<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	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18

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

(A)(3)(i) The Applicant is proud of the fact that the state has already raised, and redesigned, standards in 7 of 9 core content areas and has won national awards for its work. The Applicant has also provided a state-funded service for LEAs to offer Learnia, an online formative- and interim-assessment platform. The state-funded preschool programs have demonstrated that high-quality preschool programs have a significant impact on New Jersey children through second grade (see Appendix II). Regarding data systems, through state funding, New Jersey has launched the NJ SMART data system providing new access and improved availability of state data in order to increase its use by the SEA, LEAs, and schools. New Jersey is also applying for a statewide longitudinal-data system grant from NCES to accelerate the NJ SMART development. The Applicant offers an alternate route to certification, has piloted innovative programs to redesign STEM teacher preparation and has laid the foundation for building a network of professional-learning communities within and across schools. To assist struggling schools, through state funding and with the support of School Improvement Grants, the state has developed a comprehensive system of supports and monitoring for schools and districts that have been identified for improvement under Title I of ESEA. (A)(3)(ii)(a) With regard to scaled scores on the NAEP in reading, the average scaled score in reading for grade 4 was 231 in New Jersey, compared to 220 in the nation. Also, the average scores for male, female, black, white and Hispanic students, as well as students both eligible and not eligible for the National School Lunch Program has increased since 2005. In grade 8, the average scale score for New Jersey was 270, compared to 261 for the nation. NAEP math results are even better. The average math score of fourth graders in New Jersey was 247, while the average score for public school students across the nation was 239. The average scale score for New Jersey's grade-eight students, 293, is twelve points higher that it was in 2003, and eleven points higher than the national average of 282. (A)(3)(ii)(b) With regard to reducing achievement gaps between subgroups, the Applicant asserts that the gaps are closing, be they slowly.

From 2003 to 2007, the achievement gap between black and white students significantly decreased. Black students' scores increased by 12 points, and the gap between black and white students decreased by 10 points. In mathematics, the achievement gap between white and black students has decreased since 2003. The achievement gap between white and Hispanic students has narrowed slightly between 2003 and 2007. (A)(3)(ii)(c) The New Jersey High School Graduation Campaign approximated that 19,000 students did not graduate from New Jersey's high schools in 2007, and the lost lifetime earnings for that class of dropouts is estimated at \$4.9 billion. Estimates show that only 63% of African American and 67% of Hispanic high school students will graduate in New Jersey. Dropout rate calculations vary by state and sometimes even by LEAs with states. While the Applicant admits to poor reporting data on dropouts, there is no discussion on how even the poor statistics are calculated.

<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>94</b>
--------------	------------	-----------

## B. Standards and Assessments

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<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:            (B)(1)(i)(a) The Applicant signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Common Core Standards Initiative. In June 2009, the Applicant adopted revised core-curriculum content standards in seven of nine areas. The process and organizational infrastructure that resulted from the revision of the standards in the other content areas will be extremely valuable in the transition to the common standards in language-arts literacy and mathematics. (B)(1)(i)(b) The Common Core Standards Initiative is a consortium comprised of 48 states. (B)(1)(ii) In the narrative, the applicant presents a detailed timeline beginning in October, 2009 and culminating in an April 21, 2010 resolution presented to the State Board of Education to adopt the Common Core Mathematics and English Language Arts Standards.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:            (B)(2)(i) The Applicant has signed MOAs with several consortia to engage in preliminary discussions regarding high-quality assessments, including the Balanced Assessment Consortium, Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC), and the Assessment Consortium. The MOAs are found in Appendix I B2. (B)(2)(ii) Twenty-five states are members of MOSAIC, 36 are members of the Balanced Assessment Consortium, and 14 are members of the Assessment Consortium. The Applicant first adopted its Core Curriculum Content Standards in 1996, and its summative assessments have been designed to include significant constructed-response or performance components at all grade levels. In 2006, the applicant was a founding member of the Achieve/ADP Algebra consortium. Among the ADP Algebra states, the Applicant has been the third-largest user of the Algebra II test and the largest user of the ADP Algebra I test.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:            (B)(3) The Applicant lists the following goals in response to supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments: 1) Ensure instruction, not test prep, is at the heart of the system; 2) Create a P-12 "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" -- an aligned framework of evidence-based instructional tools coupled with integrated assessment practice, and professional development;</p>		

3) Employ flexible approaches to assessment, embedded within the curriculum, to provide teachers with instructionally-relevant information focused on critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills; and, 4) Enhance instructional tools by embedding cognitive research on learning progressions with a clear pathway toward college- and career-readiness. This plan has multiple components, many of which build on current programs and strategies. There are many ideas expressed, and much groundwork has been laid, which bodes well for future implementation. However, accountability measures to assure compliance and fidelity, are not presented. It is also somewhat short on specifics, details on how and who will lead the projects, the steps in between; possible pitfalls to be avoided based either on experience or projection. However, despite these shortcomings, this is a viable plan that holds promise for students and staff if accountability measures are established.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>67</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>6</b>
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(1) The Applicant has fully completed three of the twelve America COMPETES Act elements: 1- the implementation of a statewide unique student-identification number, "SID"; 2- the collection of yearly assessment data for students in tested grades; and, 3- information regarding students not tested. Partially completed elements include: 1- student-level enrollment, demographic, and program-participation information; 2- Student-level information about entry, exit, transfers, etc.; 3- audit system for data quality, validity, and reliability; 4- a teacher-identification system; and, 5-student-level college-readiness scores.</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(2) The Applicant's RTTT plan for accessing and using State data includes the following: 1- offer teachers from participating LEAs tablet computers to allow ready access to data in the classroom, both for Aggregate Reporting outlined in this section and for instructional support tools outlined in (C)(3); 2- offer web reporting tools accessible by and tailored to teachers, administrators and parents; 3- expand the data sets included in the system, to generate a much more comprehensive picture of student and school performance over time; 4- implement monitoring systems to identify students in need of support early, while intervention can still change outcomes; 5- provide sophisticated reporting that will allow all stakeholders to have context-sensitive access to student information; and 6- create a foundation for instructional use of the data (as described in section C3). The plan will be accomplished in 2 phases: Phase 1: Baseline SLDS and Phase 2: Parent-Focused Reporting; and, Professional Development for staff at all levels.</p>		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(3)(i) The Applicant plans to provide a web-based Instructional Improvement System (IIS) to all participating LEAs. The IIS will include components that help teachers use data to develop a rich picture of student ability and plan high-impact, standards-aligned instruction. (C)(3)(ii) Professional development is detailed as to content. Attention to the best methods for providing professional development to staff is not explained. Awareness of and provision for staff who find working with data in these ways difficult are not addressed. Attention to providing an on-site, full-time technology professional is advised. (C)(3)(iii) A data mart, containing fully de-identified data, will be provided to researchers based on the extended NJ SMART data elements outlined in Appendix X. Required timeline is included in narrative.</p>		

Total	47	27
-------	----	----

## 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>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(1)(i) The Applicant has an alternate route to teacher certification dating back to 1985. It has subsequently been revised in 2009, however, the regulations are not clear regarding the criteria for alternative routes to certification independent of institutions of higher education. For leaders, (heads of schools, principals, and/or supervisors), the New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership (NJ EXCEL) program, provided by the New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association, Foundation for Educational Administration (2003) was cited as an exemplar program by the U.S. Department of Education in Innovative Pathways to School Leadership (ED, December 2004). In May 2002, the New Jersey State Board of Education approved revisions to its regulations to authorize expedited certification pathways and approved programs leading to school-leader certification from providers other than institutions of higher education (see N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12 for regulations governing the certification of administrators, and N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.7 for regulations governing the certification of directors of school counseling services). (D)(1)(ii) The Applicant cites evidence for this criterion in the Appendix I (D)(ii) with lists of the colleges, programs and areas of certification available in the alternative routes to certification. A chart comparing the numbers of teachers certified via alternate and traditional routes is incorporated into the narrative. Interestingly, approximately one-third of the Applicant's teachers have been certified through alternative routes. Similar to teacher certification, for the past three years, New Jersey has certified approximately one-third of the state's administrators through alternative routes. In 2008-2009, the NJDOE issued 372 standard principal certificates. The NJ EXCEL program design is aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.4) and the national Technology Standards for School Administrators. (D)(1)(iii) The Applicant lists a number of strategies and activities utilized to monitor, and analyze potential areas of teacher shortages. For example, in 2000, in recognition that as many as one-third of New Jersey's teachers may retire in the next ten years, the Applicant established a Teacher Recruitment Initiative. There is no mention of monitoring for principal shortages in the narrative.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>52</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(2)(i) According to the Applicant, student-level growth reports (for grades three through eight) will be available in Fall 2010. The data will be reported publicly and aggregated across grade spans. The state's growth model is based on the estimation of student growth percentiles for each student with two consecutive years of test results on the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). There is, however, no discussion regarding the measure of growth rates for grades nine through twelve. (D)(2)(ii) The Applicant will create and convene a state-level advisory committee for the design, review, and ongoing revisions of the evaluation system (New Jersey Education Evaluation Committee, or NJEEC). The advisory committee will be appointed by the new administration and will include leadership from the state and LEAs, as well as representatives from other stakeholders. Components of the evaluation plan will include: student academic progress, evidence-based classroom-observation protocols, quality of professional development, management of schools, and local evidence-based</p>		

metrics. The weighting and further definition of the measures will be recommended by the NJEEC. Evaluation results will be used to assign a school leader or teacher to one of three categories (ineffective, effective, or highly effective) based on a range of performance criteria. It is important to note that for school leaders, the student-progress measures will account for 35% of the evaluation and for teachers the student-progress measures will account for 40% of the evaluation. These percentages seem to represent the minimum student-progress-related evaluations should account for. Hopefully, in the future, the percentages will be raised to 60% and then 75%. Student progress, after all, is the business that we are in. (D)(2)(iii) According to the Applicant, The evaluation of all school personnel, except the Superintendent, is controlled by regulation and those provisions include the incorporation of student-performance data as a factor in personnel assessment (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-4.4, -4.5). The New Jersey Administrative Code requires an annual summative evaluation, coupled with a specific schedule for formal observations. Provisionally-certified and untenured teachers are observed at least three times per year, while tenured teachers have one observation per year. In addition to these formal observations, participating LEAs will encourage the use of formative observation so that teachers can adapt their practices, receive additional professional support, and improve their practices throughout the school year. School leaders and supervisors will provide timely and constructive feedback to teachers, along with recommendations for strategies to improve instructional practice that will be integrated into the teacher's professional-development plan. While conceptually, a professional development (PD) plan for each teacher is a sound idea, LEAs and the state should remain alert for the possible variations in quality of the PD plans developed. As with students, formative (and interim) observations will offer teachers optimal opportunity to improve their practice before poor instructional habits take hold for the year. Also, if conducted well, with emphasis on each individual student, teachers will become habituated to focus on students' specific needs as related to the standards thereby increasing their skill set in identifying and matching students' needs with appropriate learning activities and assessments. (D)(2)(iv)(a) Professional Development - response strategies are thorough and if implemented should result in improved teaching and learning. (D)(2)(iv)(b) Compensation – The Applicant intends to create a school-level incentive bonus for participating LEAs, which will be allocated among all school personnel. These school-wide performance awards do not specify compensatory incentives for highly effective teachers and principals as described in this criterion. The RTTT reform effort focuses more on individuals than institutions, per se, with the understanding that if individuals are supported in improvements, that the institutions will also show improvement. The Applicant's compensatory plan is more institution-based, i.e. the school, as opposed to the individuals in the school being recognized for their accomplishments. This school-wide approach may offer cover for those staff members who may not be "highly effective": (D)(2)(iv)(c) The Applicant has an adequate procedure in place for granting tenure to teachers. (D)(2)(iv)(d) While there is an existing, specific statute regarding the dismissal of tenured teaching-staff members, N.J.S.A 18A:28-5, the Applicant asserts the need for State Board to provide guidance to LEAs on precise guidelines and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures, consistent with the rigorous evaluation standards, to remove ineffective teachers and school leaders. Required timeline and performance measures are included in the narrative.

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

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

(D)(3)(i) Applicant acknowledges that, 1) while under the State's current metric, 99.7% of teachers are considered highly-qualified, that does not mean they are highly effective, and 2) their neediest schools do not have access to our best teachers. In order to reverse these unfortunate facts, the Applicant intends to: 1) improve the teacher pipeline to urban schools with programs like the Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality, with schools and activities are listed in Appendix II (D)(3); 2) offer substantial additional compensation and support for teachers serving in persistently low-performing schools, (\*\*which may not work as additional compensation may not result in more highly effective teachers coming to work in these schools; perhaps teachers should receive additional compensation

AFTER proving they can increase student achievement in low-performing schools. Also, improved working conditions in low-performing schools is often cited by teachers as incentive to go to, or remain at a presently low-performing school.) 3) students becoming teachers, focusing on recruiting high school students to become teachers in urban areas; 4) improved teaching and learning environments (as noted above), that include, for example, distributed leadership coupled with a professional environment are as important as increased compensation. (\*\*An attractive, fully functioning physical plant (especially if the building is old), safe and available parking, and an involved community also play an important role in recruiting and retaining highly effective teachers and administrators.) In the 2012-13 school year, with implementation of the state-level evaluation system, participating LEAs will develop equitable-distribution plans, complete with timelines and goals, to attract effective and highly-effective teachers and school leaders to, and retain them at, high-poverty, high-minority, and low-achieving schools. As noted above, the response to this sub-criterion is well thought-out with substantial strategies for accomplishment. Additional note: under evidence, the Applicant states: "Definitions for high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan do not currently exist. Our Teacher Quality Plan was approved without this variable." (D)(3)(ii) According to the Applicant, the State has created successful pilots and programs to attract and retain teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. They propose to bring these pilots to scale with RTTT funding. Two are innovative: passed by the legislature, Traders-to-Teachers, is an accelerated, pilot teacher-preparation program that allows individuals displaced from the financial sector or similar industries to pursue certification to teach mathematics. The second, the Progressive Science Initiative, is an alternate-route program that seeks to recruit science professionals to become teachers. To its credit, in the program's first year alone, PSI will have trained and certified twice the number of physics teachers than had been certified in prior years by all the universities in New Jersey. The World Languages program, passed by the legislature in 2006, is a university-based collaborative to develop an Accelerated Chinese-Language Teacher-Certification for native or heritage speakers of Chinese who are currently working in other fields, and who seek to earn New Jersey Chinese-teacher certification. The program has served 102 teacher candidates with 27 earning Certificates of Eligibility to teach Chinese over the two-year period of the program's existence. An excellent idea would be to offer classes in Chinese in urban schools (so urban students have the same opportunities to become fluent in a language that will clearly give them an advantage in the future) and to provide incentives to these newly qualified teachers to teach in these schools. Required timeline and performance measures are included in the narrative.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
---	-----------	-----------

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(4)(i) The Applicant asserts that as of January 2009, all professional-preparation programs were required to be nationally-accredited, either by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), and all twenty-four preparation programs have achieved this distinction. The Applicant has a credible plan to link student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals, and to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing. (D)(4)(ii) While the Applicant states they will collaborate with traditional preparation programs and non-traditional routes to ensure that training on the use of the Curriculum and Assessment Spine is embedded into teacher-preparation programs, 1) there is no plan or details supporting this idea, 2) no discussion of what successful training would look like, and 3) no measures of overall success. The Applicant plans to create a State Program Approval Council (PAC) to embed the Curriculum and Assessment Spine in content specific standards for preparation programs so that new teachers will receive the same professional learning that more-experienced peers are receiving in school settings. Listed required timeline does not include dates for the establishment of the State Program Approval Council, which is to work with the NJBOE to monitor and improve principal and teacher preparation programs.

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
--	-----------	-----------

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(5)(i) State regulations (N.J.A.C.6A:9-15) require all teachers to accrue 100 hours of professional-development time every five years, which are tied to teacher evaluations. The regulations also require LEA and school-based planning for professional learning, and call for teachers to play a key role in the design and review of school-based professional-learning opportunities. The school-leader professional-development requirement, (N.J.A.C.6A:9-16) calls for each school leader to develop a professional-growth plan every three years, by working with a team that supports his or her efforts through collegial reflection. For this criterion, the Applicant has provided a well-developed plan; however, there is some concern regarding human capital capacities to effectively conduct the extensive planned professional development, both start-up and sustained. There is no discussion with reference to substantially adding to current professional development staff. Five strategies are presented: face-to-face workshops, asynchronous distance learning, virtual collaborative environments, instructional coaches, and a nested learning system of classroom and school supports that will include the pedagogical, social, and structural supports necessary for teachers to transform their teaching in core content areas. Each strategy is sufficiently detailed as to provide both structure and guidance for successful implementation. (D)(5)(ii) The Applicant recognizes the need for monitoring to ensure effectiveness. Utilizing classroom-observation protocols and formative and interim assessment measures to capture student academic growth, they will have schools and LEAs track student performance by classroom teacher, by the quality of instruction, and by the professional development in which the teacher actively participated. The Applicant also intends to engage in a rigorous review of the impact of professional services of classroom practice and the effects that practice changes have on student achievement. In the past, monitoring of programs, assessments, effectiveness has often been regulated to cursory site-visits and checklists. A timeline is included as required. There is no associated discussion of monitoring teams, training, etc. While monitoring has been a staple activity of most state departments of education, the requirements of RTTT and the plans and intentions made in this application render old forms of monitoring moot. It is strongly suggested that a high-quality monitoring team (of sufficient number) be developed that both works on the methods for monitoring as well as conducts the monitoring. It is vital that successful projects and strategies are identified and replicated and that less and unsuccessful activities be identified (and not swept under the rug) for improvement and elimination.

Total	138	121
-------	-----	-----

## 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: (E)(1) The Applicant has the authority to partially or fully take over a failing school district. New Jersey has the legal, statutory and regulatory authority to intervene directly in the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs. The New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) system, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-3 et seq., establishes rules for evaluating and monitoring all public-school districts in the State.		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	32
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (E)(2)(i) Persistently lowest-achieving schools are identified and listed in Appendix I (E)(i). Based on the three most recent years of assessment results, the Applicant identified 18 Title I schools on the TIER I LIST and five TIER II schools, as well as six schools with unacceptable graduation rates, for a total of 29 schools. (E)(2)(ii) The applicant's plan for assisting the persistently lowest-achieving schools		

includes the following strategies: 1) Instructional Focus; 2) Transformational Operating Authority Program; 3) Network Turnaround Officer (NTO); 4) Extended Teaching and Learning Time; 4) Professional Development; 5) Leadership Academy; and, School Innovation and Renewal Zones. Parts of this plan are basic, e.g. instructional focus and professional development. There was nothing new about these two strategies explained in the narrative that would suggest they would work any better than before, particularly in a persistently lower-achieving school. A Leadership Academy has the potential for changing administrative behaviors. A Network Turnaround Officer can be effective if the role of school improvement/reform coach is understood by all involved parties, and if the superintendent respects and supports the NTO's guidance to principals. Extended Teaching and Learning Time and School Innovation and Renewal Zones hold the most promise for sustained change and improvement. More time on task and time for teachers/staff to meet and plan is valuable IF it is used properly and monitored. Extended instructional time will make a difference if the extra time is embedded in the school day; not before or after school, as student attendance is usually poor for zero hour and after school sessions. According to the Applicant, School Innovation and Renewal Zones will be created in order to allow more focused community attention where there are clusters of consistently low-performing schools. When within the School Innovation Renewal Zone, persistently low-performing schools will receive priority for various federal and state funding sources targeted to schools identified for improvement, and will be given the maximum flexibility in the use of federal, state, and district funds and regulations to implement the turnaround initiative (consistent with the transferability provisions of Title VI of ESEA). This strategy hold great promise if implemented properly. The Applicant should seek counsel from LEAs with successful experience in this area. A timeline and required chart are included in the narrative.

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>
--------------	-----------	-----------

## F. General

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(1)(i) The Applicant State's legislature increased its percentage of spending on education 2.7 percentage points from 36.9% in 2008 to 39.6% in 2009. (F)(1)(ii) The School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA) represents the first comprehensive school-funding system for the Applicant in decades to receive judicial approval as an equitable funding mechanism. The SFRA is the culmination of, and answer to, funding-equity questions that have surrounded the state since the 1970's. The SFRA includes two types of state aid: wealth-equalized and categorical. The equalization formula used in New Jersey considers both a community's property wealth (measured by equalized property valuation) and its aggregate income to determine the local ability to pay. This formula ensures that those LEAs with a lower ability to raise a local tax levy receive more state support, and vice-versa. In contrast, categorical aid is allocated regardless of a LEA's wealth. Categorical amounts are generally determined by multiplying the cost factor for a particular category by the number of students who qualify for the aid. Special education is funded through a "census-based" method.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>34</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(2)(i) Since 2000 the Applicant has had no caps on the number or size of charter schools in the state. There are a total of 68 charter schools in the state: 46 elementary, 8 middle, 8 high, and 6 K-12. (F)(2)(ii) Since charter legislation was adopted by the Applicant state in 1995, 365 charter-school applications have been received, of which 111 were approved and five denied. The balance (249 applications) were either withdrawn or never completed. From the 111 charters approved, 105 schools were opened. Thirty-seven of these have since been closed by charter revocation, charter surrenders,</p>		

withdrawal, or non-renewal. The Applicant presents a required chart of the past five years' charter school activity. Totals for the last five years are as follows: applications- 144, approvals- 30, denials- 0, opened- 28, closed- 13. Under section 18A:36A-16 of New Jersey state law, the commissioner must conduct an annual review of every charter school to determine whether it is meeting its goals, and conduct a more comprehensive review prior to granting the renewal of the charter. The commissioner may revoke a school's charter if the school either has not fulfilled the conditions required by its charter, or has violated any such condition. The legislature granted the commissioner full authority to develop procedures and guidelines for the revocation and renewal of a school's charter. The annual review also includes an evaluation of progress along several dimensions other than test scores, e.g. curriculum in compliance with Applicant's Core Curriculum Content Standards. According to sections 18A:36A-7 and 18A:36A-8 of New Jersey law, charter schools must be open to all students on a space-available basis. Preference for enrollment is granted to students who reside in the LEA where the charter school is located. In instances where there are more applicants than available spaces, the charter school must select students using a random selection process. To the maximum extent possible, charter schools are required to seek the enrollment of a representative cross-section of the community's school-age population, including racial and academic factors in its determination of what selection of students would be representative. (F)(2)(iii) The Applicant asserts that charter schools receive funding on the same basis that traditional public schools do. Charter-school state aid flows from the school LEA to the charter school. Charter-school aid is calculated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-12b, which stipulates that the school LEA must pay directly to the charter school, for each student enrolled in the charter school, an amount equal to 90% of the sum of the budget-year wealth-equalized state aid per pupil and the pre-budget-year general-fund local tax levy per pupil inflated by the corresponding CPI rate. The remaining 10% is retained by the school LEA to help cover the cost of administering the charter-school program, including the student-registration-and-verification process. With the new funding formula, charter schools benefited financially by receiving a greater share of resources for at-risk students (as did all public schools). Also, the school LEA is required to pay to the charter school 100% of the categorical state aids (those determined on a per-pupil basis) attributable to the student, and a percentage of the LEA's special-education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the LEA's special-education students enrolled in the charter school. The Applicant's state laws and regulations meet the guidelines set forth in the application for "high" points, as "the per-pupil funding to charter school students is =90% of that which is provided to traditional public school students." The 10% charter administration costs to the LEA seem reasonable. (F)(2)(iv) The Applicant states charter schools are granted flexibility in regard to the type of facility in which they are permitted to locate. They are exempt from State public-schools facility regulations, except those pertaining to the health or safety of students. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-10, charter schools are permitted to locate their facilities in part of an existing public-school building, in space provided on a public work-site, in a public building, or in any other suitable location. Charter schools are permitted to use local and state sources of revenue for facility costs, including lease payments and mortgage payments. (F)(2)(v) In 1999, the Applicant state's legislature adopted the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program (IPSCP) to allow LEAs to open enrollment of specified schools to students from outside the LEA. IPSCP was adopted to provide greater school choice to students whose home LEAs may be limited in either the variety or quality of their academic programs. Interdistrict school choice has reached its capacity for participation. This one (identified) attempt – now at capacity – seems meager in light of the many types of innovative programs available to public schools and LEAs since 1999.

**(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions**

**5**

**5**

**(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

(F)(3) The Applicant cites six reforms in response to this section. Four have been discussed/reviewed earlier in the application: providing alternative pathways for teaching certification, emphasizing STEM, early-childhood education programs, and the new equitable-funding strategy supported by a State Supreme Court decision. The two not previously discussed, a Secondary-Education Transformation initiative and Career and Technical Education Programs producing College-Ready Students, are presented. The Secondary-Education Transformation Initiative focuses on redesigning middle schools and high schools through action steps and supportive policies that align content standards,

assessments and high-school-graduation requirements with college and workplace expectations. Via a statewide high school redesign committee, a suggested framework has been developed. This document provides recommendations that focus on five areas, including standards and high-school-graduation requirements, assessment alignment, teachers and school leaders, learning communities and personalized education, and P-16 alignment. Thus far, a 21st Century Skills (Alignment) Council was created in 2008 and sixteen schools were chosen from 90 applications to pilot individualized learning plans. These plans have been implemented for students in sixth and ninth grade in these schools for a two-year study. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs: The Applicant has been using career academies to extend the role of CTE programs of study in high school. Districts are being recruited to create new and rigorous career academies. Some goals/activities used (or planned) by the Applicant to strengthen CTE are to redesign the CTE curriculum to ensure that academic skills are being integrated, offering CTE courses that count for academic credit using both the Math-In-CTE model and the creation of courses such as construction geometry, and the creation and use of AP courses in CTE programs of study. The applicant will also develop model articulation agreements for dual enrollment that can be adapted for local use in developing and implementing articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary providers of CTE. These programs appear to be worthy, and some perhaps even significant, however, most dates and other data are missing. For example, we don't know how long the Applicant has been using career academies to extend the role of CTE programs of study in high school, a strategy used throughout the country for some time now. And while information in regard to the Secondary Education Transformation Initiative is more detailed, there is no discussion as to why it has taken the Applicant so long to decide to redesign its high schools prior to two years ago, when this project began. If there was an earlier high school redesign initiative, mentioning this would provide a wider context for high school reform by the Applicant.

<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>49</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: The Applicant's STEM plan is not particularly rigorous. Evidence offered in Appendix II is strong for science (New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Science and sample science standards) and technology (The Educational Technology Plan for New Jersey, approved by the State BOE 12/07). There was no discussion in the narrative regarding similar standards or plans for mathematics or engineering. The Applicant states it will create and convene a STEM council, responsible for refining the strategic vision for STEM work and planning for additional resources to support teachers and students.		
<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: The Applicant has submitted a thorough RTTT grant proposal. Most requested and required areas were substantially covered. Questions remain as to the capacity of the NJDOE to successfully handle the plans presented in this application. In addition, issues surrounding teacher union buy-in need to be addressed as soon as possible. Without teacher support and compliance, this RTTT grant will be difficult to implement.		

Total		0
-------	--	---

Grand Total	500	420
-------------	-----	-----



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Jersey Application #4560NJ2



#### 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>39</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	29
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	5
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>                      The plan presents a coherent and comprehensive reform agenda, describing integrated approaches to core areas, with a notable integration of teachers as graders of interim assessments, linking professional development and assessment around student work at the school level. The state uses the MOU and SOW provided by the US DOE. The evidence indicates a challenging environment in terms of gaining broad-based support, with public opposition to the plan by the state's teachers union and just under 60% of LEA's participating. Few LEA's contain union leader signatures (5.8%), and six of the reform elements received less than 80% of participating LEA support, particularly regarding use of evaluations in compensation/promotion/retention and in the equitable distribution of effective teachers/principals by poverty levels. The state received a greater proportion of full LEA support from large and high-poverty districts (82% high-poverty v 69% overall), and the state's argues that these will be the primary beneficiaries of the grant funds. The plan forecasts NAEP score gap reductions (below 20 points in 4th grade reading, below 30 points in 8th grade math) and nominal score rises of a point a year; without funding, it anticipates comparable movement in the opposite direction. No subgroup breakdown of state targets is provided. While the urgency of funding is clear, little evidence is offered to support the claim of sustainability, nor to address the challenges to state wide impact evident in the uneven LEA returns. Interestingly, participating LEAs do not even represent a majority of charter school students, and only three letters of support are provided -- the school boards association, a private university and one county services commission.</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	12
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	3
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>                      The plan provides evidence of the capacity to implement the strategy, relying on career staff to provide stable leadership during the transition in the governor's office. No evidence is provided of the new governor's position on the proposed plan. Existing support structures for LEAs will be leveraged (e.g., county offices, regional consortia, etc.), and financial and project oversight will be provided. The state commits to reallocation and coordination of federal funds; state funds are indicated as sources of support for some sustenance of efforts post-grant (e.g., upgrades to assessments, consortia-participation costs, NTO program should it prove successful). While the state has evidently made efforts to reach out to a broad array of stakeholders and to disseminate its plan, and notes that 70% of the state's teachers and principals are represented by the participating LEAs, the state's largest union</p>		

chose not to support it, and only three institutions provided letters of support, none representing professional/staff associations of any sort, raising questions for implementation. State-level budget reflects the considerable investment in technology and evaluation/compensation, which together account for 72% of the proposed budget at the state level.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>                  The state provides evidence of its progress in each of the four reform areas indicated. The state provides evidence of strong overall performance and of improving student achievement, with NAEP scores rising since 2003, and state scores also rising, though with only two years of data using the new grades 5-8 assessments. The state has made progress in closing sub-group achievement gaps, significantly and in both NAEP and state data (prior to assessment change in 2007-08). Shortcomings in data prevent clear analysis of graduation rates, though evidence suggests this to be a significant area of concern (e.g., estimated 63% graduation rate for African American high school students, without a cited source). In addition, with all the caveats of new assessments and two data points, gaps in both math and language arts for both White/Afr Am and White/Hispanic increased from March 2008 to March 2009 results.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>79</b>

**B. Standards and Assessments**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<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>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>                  The state participates in a consortium with 48 other states, and has taken initial steps to align state standards to draft Common Core standards. The plan provides a detailed adoption process with timeline, building off recent standards revision work in the state, and anticipating state adoption of new Common Core standards prior to August, 2010.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>                  The state participates in three consortia developing assessments -- MOSAIC, Balanced Assessment consortium, and the Florida-led Assessment Consortium -- with 25, 36 and 14 states respectively participating. NJ brings considerable evidence of experience from prior state assessment work, its participation in ADP, and its commitment to constructed-response/performance assessments in state exams.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>                  The state provides an integrated set of supports for the transition to enhanced standards and balanced assessments, building off prior plans/structures developed for its state-level revision work (including prior work in formative-/benchmark-assessment and 21st Century Schools). The proposed plan</p>		

addresses transitional needs at the point of practice, and its engagement of teachers within the workflow of both development and ongoing support addresses a design gap too often present in transition efforts. Teacher surveys to identify "hard to teach" content areas, teacher provision of exemplars, provision of the curriculum/assessment "spine," teachers grading of interim assessments that are then gauged by independent raters, central use of student work, accumulation of practitioner judgment in the exemplar lesson bank, etc. -- the integration of these elements embeds the findings of sustainable effective professional development through targeted support of communities of practice. While there is reference to the needed collaborative professional development time, it does not appear that the extra time provided for turnaround schools (5%) will also be available to other participating LEAs, a possible limitation on the ambitious plans set out here.

Total	70	69
-------	----	----

**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	24	6
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state has fully implemented three elements of the America COMPETES Act, with 5 partially implemented. The state plans to complete the other elements using ARRA funds solicited, or state funds.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	5	3
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state presents a quality plan to increase access to data for various stakeholders, with an ambitious timeline and state-level steering committee and advisory council. Professional development and public awareness strategies are briefly described, and range for internal administrative channels to public-service announcements. How the data will be used within continuous improvement efforts is not clear.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	18	18
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state provides a high-quality plan for the use of data to improve instruction. The array of tools and functionality, to be developed around the needs of teacher/administrator instructional decision making, plus the continuous improvement tools, reveal thoughtful design. The three domains of professional development reflect sound research and practice in the field, and the provision for researcher access appears clear.		
Total	47	27

**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	21	18
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The state has longstanding (pioneering) alternative route policy for teachers, and more recently for administrators. Various providers are allowed, including limited use of providers without association to IHE's, there are selection criteria, coursework is limited and final certification the same. Roughly one-third of new teachers were alternative route in 2005-07 (30% for 07-09), with some concerns regarding mentoring and level of support needed for AR teachers, per the state's analysis. Some revisions were		

subsequently adopted. Lists of programs are provided, but no data on participation per program or regarding any variation among program elements.

<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	20

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

The state presents an approach to measuring student growth, starting with two years of assessment data (which have only been in place that long), and building in interim assessment as they are developed. It plans to deliver student-level growth reports in Fall 2010. Inclusion of grade level data beyond 8th grade is unclear. The plan proposes continued development of evaluation systems for principals and teachers, both required annually, and more frequently for those without tenure. The state presents a balanced approach, attempting to balance due process restrictions, labor organization positions and appropriate incentive provisions supportive of the RTTT plan. A state-level committee will guide ongoing development. Evaluation evidence will include a required % for student academic progress (w/interim assessments and summative), classroom observations and local evidence (15%) for teachers; leaders will be evaluated along multiple measures including student progress, management, and quality of professional development. The evaluations will inform various levels of decisions, including required individual professional development plans, school-level professional development plans, school-wide bonuses, differentiated professional opportunities (mentoring roles, etc.), tenure and removal. The process by which the evaluations will inform tenure and promotion/differentiated opportunities warrants further clarification (e.g., the Professional Teaching Standards Board will develop guidelines regarding use of evaluation data for the differentiated opportunities, and alignment with RTTT criteria therefore remains unknown). LEA's retain the authority to remove ineffective teachers and leaders. While legislative obstacles do not exist for a revised evaluation system to be adopted, local union renegotiation may impact the number of LEA's that will be able to participate beyond the 2012-13 year, when adoption of the revised framework, whose direction will be guided by the NJ Education Evaluation Committee. The LEA role in union negotiations are cited in the restrained annual targets set for several D2 goals, particularly use of the evaluation system in removal of teachers and principals (10% by 2014).

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	10
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7

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

The state proposes several means by which to ensure equitable distribution of "effective" teacher/principals across poverty profiles and for hard-to-staff subject areas. Several are intended to increase the supply of those teaching in high-needs schools and/or subjects (HS student recruitment, alternative routes, specialized recruitment like Traders to Teachers or Troops to Teachers or Progressive Science Initiative or the world languages collaboration). An effort to improve preparation of teachers/principals for the particular challenges of high-poverty/high-minority schools is evident in the "urban teacher" programs described, and addressing the professional level of teacher working conditions is included by way of technical assistance. The latter addresses an often-neglected aspect affecting professional distribution, namely the impact of the working environment, though the specifics of the strategy require further clarification. Additional compensation will be available to teachers in participating LEA's under the state's plan, presumably aiding in recruitment, though data on teacher profile in those districts is not provided. The plan does not present a clear picture of present distribution patterns, or an analysis of the relative impact of working conditions versus compensation

versus other causes. LEA's will not develop equitable distribution plans until after the state-level evaluation system is implemented in 2012-13, as effectiveness data is not now available.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:                  The state provides evidence of a high-quality plan to continue improvement of its teacher/principal preparation programs, building upon prior accreditation and quality requirements, and connecting program evaluation and expansion to gauges of teacher/principal effectiveness. The state's planned data system work will provide linkage of teacher preparation, at course level, eventually to their students' performance on state assessments. The state instituted a number of changes to improve oversight of preparation programs, guided by a new State Program Approval Council. The state intends to integrate aspects of its reform effort into preparation program requirements in the future (e.g., the Curriculum and Assessment Spine within teacher prep programs). Further clarity regarding the criteria for "success factors" of teacher/leader preparation programs, to be developed across three different entities (state department of education, Program Approval Council, NJ Education Evaluation Committee) would strengthen the plan.</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:                  The state provides a high-quality plan of support to teachers and principals, with a clear focus on the characteristics of professional development the field has found most effective. The degree to which the state can effectively monitor the professional development planning process is unclear, but the array of supports appears appropriate, combining online, web-based video, in-person events and instructional coaching. The exact relation of the mix of professional development to state intermediary units warrants further clarification. The social capital approach to professional learning communities (PLC's) is supported in the research, as is the use of these communities of practice to develop further an effective distributed leadership capacity. Further elaboration of the means by which effectiveness will be monitored is needed, though also dependent upon other aspects of the plan developing (classroom observation protocols, formative/interim assessments). The specific requirement of LEA's to modify school schedules seems critical to the PLC strategy adopted.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>113</b>

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:                  The state has legal, statutory and regulatory authority to intervene directly in the persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:                  The state has identified 29 schools as lowest-achieving, 18 in Tier One five in Tier Two, and six with unacceptable graduation rates. The state proposes a comprehensive approach to turning around its lowest-performing schools, beginning with needs assessment review to inform selection of the turnaround model. The principal will be provided additional hiring, scheduling and budgeting authority; be assisted by a network turnaround officer, who will report to the superintendent; and participate in a</p>		

to-be-formed leadership academy. The school's curriculum may be mandated, extra time (~2 hours/week) will be provided for professional development and review of student work, and extended time for student learning (15%) will be required. Each may provide essential scaffolding for embedding changed practices in the school. Teacher compensation will be adjusted for the longer hours, addressing a common disincentive for high-intensity reform efforts. Particularly promising appears to be the provision of support in regards to school context and community, through the clustering of support in School Innovation Renewal Zones, enhanced community engagement and integration across health, housing and job-creation services. In addition, expanded early childhood support promises enhanced impact. It is not entirely clear how integration at the point of professional practice, or at least at the school level, will be managed across services or exactly how zones will structure interagency collaboration, or by whom. Implementation audits, with the threat of closure/restart/reconstitution, should provide some driver for ongoing adjustments. While lessons learned from prior restructuring experiences are broadly stated, they do appear to reinforce the need for focused intervention coupled with attention to the supporting conditions of reform, including school climate and local staff buy-in.

<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>
--------------	-----------	-----------

**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:                      The state's percentage of total revenues used to support education increased from 2008 to 2009, though nominal dollars showed a 4.7% decrease. Only top-level appropriations figures are provided. Legislation passed in 2008 provides an adequacy + categorical funding formula, meant to provide equitable funding through a combination of a base amount and additional funding for more expensive school levels, at-risk status, LEP and special education. No data is provided illustrating LEA funding distribution.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>34</b>
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:                      The state has no caps on the number of charter schools, nor restrictions on their enrollment. Currently, 68 charters exist in the state, 68% at the elementary level. The state has approved 30% of charter applications, though only 21% since 2005. However, existing charters also added 28 other schools/campuses since 2005. Roughly 10% of charters have been closed since 1995. A large number also did not complete applications (68%), which the state attributes to an inability of the charters to secure funding and/or facilities. Whether or not state conditions limit charter formation prior to application completion is not clear. The state provides regulations for charters from application stage through annual review and possible closure; compliance with state curriculum, discrimination policies, admissions, achievement targets, annual reporting, and supplemental service requirements are enforced, with closure authority vested in the state commissioner. The state's charter receive equitable funding (90% of state per student aid, receives transportation, 100% categorical aid per student, 100% federal entitlement funds for which they apply). Charters have more flexibility than traditional public schools in terms of facilities, but their access to facility funding is less clear. They may use their state and/or federal revenue to pay for facilities, and may have access to discretionary federal funds. No evidence is presented of state facilitation of charter facility acquisition. Other innovations are facilitated through the state's Interdistrict Public School Choice Program, which allows cross-LEA enrollment into specified schools. However, the state has "reached capacity for participation" in this program. Further details regarding state charter law are not provided.</p>		

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state demonstrates a series of other significant reform conditions, beyond alternative teaching pathways, early childhood program expansion, and STEM initiatives already noted. The state resolved its longstanding funding disputes with an equitable funding formula approved by the state supreme court. The state has also begun implementing pilots under its Secondary Education Transformation Initiative, and plans to redesign CTE standards.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>48</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>
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The state's plan provides a clear emphasis on improving STEM education in the state, developing components to increase teacher supply, improve teacher skills, develop STEM curriculum, and enhance student achievement. Intent to integrate STEM support through the principal components of the overall plan is evident.		
<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>Yes</b>
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 balanced assessment, evidence of state technical expertise (TAC, staff), and extensive experience with constructed-response/performance-based assessment development. The state provides strong supporting conditions through its work in early childhood, and strengthens the sustainability and implementation of its reform through the active role of teachers within evaluation of student interim assessments and exemplar development. The profile of school climate and social capital distinguishes the plan, and addresses a key area research has identified as critical to school reform. 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 (NJ plans this), 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.

Total		0
-------	--	---

Grand Total	500	396
-------------	-----	-----



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 1

### New Jersey Application #4560NJ-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>45</b>
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	28
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12

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

(A)(1) (i) High points were awarded this section. New Jersey set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes. New Jersey established clear and credible paths to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application. The proposal provided big picture outcomes of what the finished products will look like and what value they will have to increasing student learning and educator competency. The proposal has six areas of concerned tightly integrated into each other. The six goals are: • A Standards and Curriculum System that will ground all of the state's education efforts in a lean Twenty-First Century subject matter-based program of instruction. • A Balanced Assessment System that adaptively uses a combination of end-of instructional-unit interim assessments, high-quality annual summative assessments, and formative assessments that can guide the day-to-day work of teachers. • A Data System that illuminates performance and achievement for all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and children. • An Instructional Improvement System that supports both teachers and leaders in instructional planning, professional growth, and continuous, collaborative improvement. • A Career Pathways System that that attracts, rewards and expands the influence of the state's best educators. • A Turnaround System that will close ineffective schools and allow teams of highly-competent educators to build capacity to dramatically accelerate student progress.

(A)(1)(ii) This section received medium points because the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) were only moderately committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). (A)(1)(ii)(a) This subsection received high points because it had a strong MOU. New Jersey is using the U.S. Department of Education's model Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with minor modifications necessary to make it a legal New Jersey agreement. The MOU and scope of work was signed by 322 of the NJ 639 LEAs. However as noted in (b) many of the 322 opted out of all sixteen items. (A)(1)(ii)(b) This subsection received medium points because it had a strong scope of work but too many LEAs opted out of some of the more important expectations. New Jersey is using the U.S. Department of Education's model scope of work with major modifications. It selected the 16 items that NJDOE believed were most concerned with LEA involvement. For those 16 the MOU did have detailed state and LEA responsibilities. LEAs were allowed to opt out of those 16 that they did not support. Because of the complexity of the response, the percentages of participation by those LEAs signing scopes of work, the proposal language is quoted. "One-hundred-and-nineteen(119) or 37% of respondents agreed to all 16 conditions listed in Exhibit I. After excluding condition (E)(2), which only applies to a small number of LEAs, a total of 158 (49%) of the 322 respondents agreed to accept all of the remaining 15 conditions. More than 83% of respondents agreed to accept at least 12 of the 16 conditions, and 89% agreed to accept eight or

more. The items in which the LEAs most commonly declined to participate were those described under (D)(2)(iv)(b)-(d), which require that the LEA use teacher evaluations to inform actions regarding teacher compensation, tenure, removal, promotion, and other professional decisions.” (A)(1)(ii)(c) This subsection received low points because of low teacher union support. Fifty percent of the total number of LEAs submitted MOU with some items in scope of work. There were serious problems in obtaining union president signatures on the submitted MOUs as only six percent of the union presidents signing their support. (A)(1)(iii) This section received high points because it had very positive data for subsections a, b, and c. No data was available for section and that is why this section did not receive a maximum score. (A)(1)(iii)(a) The LEAs that are participating in the New Jersey’s Race to the Top plan represent 67% of schools, 69% of students and 78% of students in poverty of the public school students in New Jersey. Those numbers suggest that successful implementation of RTTT will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup. As in documented in (A) (3), New Jersey has had increasing student achievement rates in both reading/language arts and in mathematics. NJ has some of the best NAPE scores in the country for both subjects. Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA; (A)(1)(iii)(b) NJ has decreased the large achievement gap for Black students quite significantly but much work remains. NJ has shown slight improvement in decreasing the smaller achievement gap between Hispanic student and white students. (A)(1)(iii)(c) New Jersey estimated graduation rate is 77 percent under the new calculations. That percentage is much higher than the national average of 70 percent. A)(1)(iii)(d) No data was found in the NJ RTTT proposal that would answer this question and so no points could be added for this section.

<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7

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

Section A2 received medium points because while the answers were adequate they did not provide great insight or show much creativity. (A)(2)(i)(a)The dedicated RTTT team will have a project director with four managers reporting to the director. The four managers are training, finance, systems and turnaround. As was true with other answers in (A) (2) the answers given had little detail as to specific timelines, activities and persons responsible. (A)(2)(i)(b) Until the new leadership has an opportunity to consider options, NJDOE will largely use the existing structure and departments including county offices to support participating LEAs. (A)(2)(i)(c) The proposal reported the following traditional structure for financial considerations: “A Financial Officer will be named to lead the budget-reporting, monitoring and fund disbursement for the Race to the Top grant, and will have a combination of people from finance and programs who will inform this work. A Project Officer will oversee the undertaking of the work proposed, the completion of deliverables, and the annual reporting and regular contact with the U.S. Department of Education. This Project Officer will become a member of senior staff and will regularly provide effective and efficient operations internally for administration and oversight and performance-measure tracking and reporting.” (A)(2)(i)(d) The NJDOE intends to consolidate smaller grants that are being used to support educator Development to support the work outlined in section D. The largest of these is the \$2 million in Title II funds allocated for staff development and Teacher. If NJDOE is successful in its State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant application, it will be used to begin work proposed in Section C. (A)(2)(i)(e) The NJ RTTT proposal is designed so that the developmental work will have been completed and the products will continue to be serviced by existing staff. Staff will drop less effective services provided now and use their time to work with the more effective products and services. (A)(2)(ii) This section received medium points because of split support from the teacher unions. (A)(2)(ii)(a) New Jersey teachers appear deeply split on their opinion of the NJ RTTT proposal. AFT affiliates appear to be supportive and NEA affiliates appear opposed primarily because of the use of student performance in teacher evaluations that determine major career decision such as tenure, dismissal and promotions. This opposition could cause conflicts making

success less likely. (A)(2)(i)( b) Other critical stakeholders seem generally supportive and committed to make this RTTT plan successful. A. Letter from the School Boards Association was especially significant for its strong support. This strong support should enable successful implementation of the RTTT program

<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	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	21

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

(A)(3)(i) This section received high points because NJ has made progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms. New Jersey has made progress in the four education reform areas. Its most notable progress appears to be in the areas of standards, aligned curriculum materials and assessments. They also have completed considerable work on data systems. (A)(3)(ii)(a) High points are given to this section. New Jersey appears to have programs in place that are succeeding. New Jersey's NAEP scores in mathematics are very strong and almost all trend lines are those of continuous progress since 2003. The scores indicate that New Jersey is doing something right and should be commended for their very positive work in mathematics. New Jersey eighth-graders on the 2009 NAEP mathematics test had the third highest scores nation-wide. New Jersey student scored fourth highest nation-wide in the 4th grade mathematics test. The average math score of fourth graders in New Jersey was 247, while the average score for public school students across the nation was 239. The average scale score for New Jersey's grade-eight students was 293, twelve points higher than it was in 2003, and eleven points higher than the national average of 282. While there is still much more work to be done, the eighth-grade results, New Jersey students with disabilities showed particular improvement on the eighth-grade math was 259 in 2009 as compared to the national average grade-eight math score for students with disabilities of 249 in 2009. New Jersey does similarly well in reading. The NAEP 4th grade reading results showed NJ tied for second with three other states. The increase in the statewide scale score from 223 in 2005, to 231 in 2007 was the second-highest increase in the nation. Fourth-graders' scores increased across the board in seven out of the eight major demographic groups tested. . New Jersey "attributes their increases to sound preschool- and early-childhood-education programs. These programs are providing our youngest students with a solid foundation of basic fundamentals, and the efforts are achieving positive results. In grade 8, the average scale score for New Jersey was 270, compared to 261 for the nation. In 2007, New Jersey eighth graders tested as the best writers in the nation for their grade level, (A)(3)(ii)(b) This section receive high points but not maximum because the next steps were not detailed. The achievement gaps between white students and their Black and Hispanic Peers. Part of the gap is attributable to very high white test scores but clearly NJ has significant work ahead of it in this area. The good news is that from 2003 to 2007, the reading achievement gap between black and white students has significantly decreased. Black students' scores increased by 12 points, and the gap between black and white students decreased by 10 points. This was the largest gap reduction in the nation, and New Jersey was one of only three states with a 10-point decrease. Hispanic student's achievement gap was smaller to start but has narrowed only slightly. In mathematics, the achievement gap between white and black students has decreased since 2003. The achievement gap between white and Hispanic students has narrowed slightly between 2003 and 2007. It should be noted and commended that New Jersey's low-income and minority students are outperforming their peers in other states. (A)(3)(ii)(c) This section, on increasing high school graduation rates, received medium points because next steps to improvement were not detailed. Under the old method of computing graduation rates, NJ had very high graduation rates for all students. Under the new way of calculating graduation rates, estimates show that only 63% of African American and 67% of Hispanic high school students will graduate in New Jersey. Using the old data estimates suggest a white graduation rate of approximately 77% and stable graduation rate since 2003.

Total	125	92
-------	-----	----

**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:                      (B)(1)(i)(a) New Jersey is a member of the Common Core Initiative being led by the Council of Chief State Officers and the National Governors Association for best practices. The standards are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation (B)(1)(i)(b) Forty-eight states and three territories are participants in the Common Core Initiative. B)(1)(ii) High point are given because New Jersey has a detailed high quality plan that demonstrates its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010. The activities descriptions provided sufficient details to determine what work, products and services will be completed and met all the conditions of the notice.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:                      (B)(2)(i) Maximum points are given to this section because NJ is working with two consortiums. New Jersey is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality formative assessments, aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards, through participation in the Multiple Options (for) Student Assessment (and) Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC). . Missouri, Wisconsin and Nebraska are currently serving as the organizational lead states for this consortium. New Jersey is also committed to active participation in the development of the common summative assessments with member states of the Balanced Assessment Consortium. Thirty-six states are part of the Balanced Assessment Consortium as of January 14, 2010. The Balanced Assessment consortium of states is focused on developing formative and balanced assessments for evaluating the common core standards It will start by examining principles derived from an examination of successful state systems in the U.S. and high-achieving systems internationally. (B)(2)(ii) This section receives maximum points because one of the consortiums has more that 26 states. The assessment consortium MOSAIC has 20 states that are working collaboratively toward the common goal of implementing formative and interim/benchmark assessments. As of January 14, 2010, thirty-six states are part of the Balanced Assessment Consortium.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:                      (B) (3) This section got high points but did not get maximum points because it lacked information on collaboration with LEAs. New Jersey has developed an implementation plan that is rich in activities and has a timeline for some of them. The plan has a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments including formative and interim assessments; developing and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students. Unfortunately, the plan has little information on the operational aspects such as who will do the work and how the quality control aspects of the plan will be monitored. The plan also does not provide information on how collaboration with LEAs will take place and encouraged.</p>		

Total	70	66
-------	----	----

**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C)(1) New Jersey received only six points because it currently complies with only 3 of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act.		
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2) Maximum points are given to this section. New Jersey 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, as appropriate, key stakeholders. The plan is rich in detail and very creative. Most important, it appears to have great power while using a simple to use interface that does not require a lot of specialized equipment. NJ SMART currently provides statewide reporting on student performance. As part of New Jersey's Race to the Top program, the state intends to: Provide tablet computers to teachers; Offer web reporting tools accessible by and tailored to teachers, administrators and parents; and Expand the data sets to provide more comprehensive picture of student and school performance over time; Identify students in need of support; and Provide sophisticated reporting. It has a timeline for implementation. It is detailed in how professional development will be provided and what documentation support will be provided.		
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3) (i) New Jersey plans to provide a web-based Instructional Improvement System (IIS) to all participating LEAs. It will do so to leverage their SLDS investment, "create an economy of scale, and ensure that we can sustainably provide the necessary support tools and resources for the other reform initiatives that New Jersey will be undertaking as part of this proposal. Their philosophical underpinning for design and use of instructional improvement systems can be captured in one sentence where they noted that; "Instructional Improvement spans many areas, including collaboration, knowledge management, formative assessment, actionable reporting, and targeted instruction." Their design for their system has all those elements. The components are: A Formative-Assessment Platform, A Targeted Instructional-Content System, Assessment-Focused Reporting, A standards-aligned Action-Planning Module, and Self-service Upload Interfaces (C)(3) (ii) New Jersey has a detailed high-quality plan for supporting participating LEAs and schools on how to use the instructional improvement systems. New Jersey recognizes how important professional development is for appropriate and valued use. Professional development will focus on system use, user adoption at all levels, and the integration of the system into daily practice. They noted that educators will need assistance with: Data interpretation and inference, Data conversations, Differentiated instruction, Inquiry work and action research, and Online collaboration. As with other subsections of (C)(3, activities and timelines were provided. (C)(3)(iii) New Jersey has a high-quality plan for making the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers. A data set, containing fully de-identified data, will be provided to researchers The data bases will be structured so that researchers will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>29</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>18</b>
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(1)(i) High points were given to this section because of the large scope of the program. New Jersey was a pioneer in allowing alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education. Statistics indicate that the alternative route programs provide a large number of teachers and that the various programs are well accepted. The proposal stated that "A single regulatory framework applies to all alternate-route providers. Regulations governing the alternate route are found in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8 and 6A:9-11. " The proposal indicated that; "The state allows multiple alternate-route-provider configurations, including higher education providers; providers affiliated with an institution of higher education such as Teach for America; or LEA providers. The alternate route in New Jersey includes a process for individuals who already hold a bachelor's degree (or a higher degree) and a Certificate of Eligibility (CE) to become licensed teachers without having to complete a traditional teacher-training program. NJDOE issues a CE to incoming teachers who have provided evidence of appropriate academic preparation in a subject area and who have passed the corresponding Praxis II exam." In May 2002, the New Jersey State Board of Education authorized expedited certification pathways and approved programs "leading to school-leader certification from providers other than institutions of higher education (see N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12 for regulations governing the certification of administrators, and N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.7 for regulations governing the certification of directors of school counseling services)." (D)(1) (ii) High points are given to this subsection because alternatives are being used in large numbers. In 2009, IHEs had 7,728 graduates while alternate routes issued 2,778 certificates. Teach for America and District consortiums appeared to provide the most alternative route teachers. Since 2003, New Jersey has offered a non-traditional preparation pathway for aspiring school administrators, principals, supervisors, and (since 2008) directors of school counseling services. The New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership (NJ EXCEL) program, provided by the New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association. The program has been recognized because it is attempting to meet needs in districts with many low performing schools, and to address the need for more diversity in the candidate pool. Approximately 200 (Between 10 and 15% of total ) of principal candidates received Certificates of Eligibility (CE) through the EXCEL program each year. (D)(1) (iii) New Jersey plan for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing for shortages was not as rich in detail as the two previous subsections. New Jersey monitors on an annual basis, the database of certificated staff to determine shortage areas and analyzes policy changes that would increase the needs for teachers. It was very clear that New Jersey depends very heavily on alternate route alternatives to fill their shortages.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>36</b>
(i) Measuring student growth	5	2
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	10
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	14
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(2) (i) This section received low points because it focused almost exclusively on design technicalities and very little on how it would collaborate with LEAs to develop buy-in. New Jersey has established " a growth model: approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student and is given high points. In its proposal, NJ wrote of the advantages of such a model primarily that it provided predicted and aggregated scores. There was no mention of advisory groups comprised of teacher and administrator organizations, as well as</p>		

representatives of higher education that will review future materials. New Jersey did not discuss the additional materials available from the consortiums on assessment that it has joined. (D)(2) (ii) This section received medium points because most of the section was devoted to what is in place presently. Yes, NJ does presently consider student performance but does nothing need to change. The section was highly deficit on building ownership and value for the new evaluation on the part of teachers. Participation in decision-making on this topic is highly dependent on one representative on one committee. The proposal did not discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the present system and how responsive it was for more focus on student performance as required in RTTT. The proposal did not have a high-quality plan with activities, timelines and persons responsible necessary to make a high-stakes evaluation both fair to teachers and principals and focused on student growth. There was minimal discussion of how NJ plans to design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor. There was little discussion on require participating LEAs to use model assessments or to adopt locally-designed tools with comparable elements and a similar level of rigor. Mention was made of a 15% leeway but what does that mean. Most important, there was little discussion on how assessments will be designed with collaboration and input from teachers, school boards, and other stakeholders. (D)(2) (iii) Maximum points are given to this subsection because the New Jersey plan exceeds the requirements of the RTTT notice. It requires more frequent evaluations dependent on the educator's level of experience and demonstrated success with students Different time periods between evaluations are required for provisionally-certified and untenured teachers than are the annual evaluations for tenured teachers. Participating LEAs will ensure that teacher and principal evaluations are conducted as required. (D)(2) (iv) This section received middle points because the commitment to use student performance are very mixed and at times seemingly contradictory. Only 10% of participating LEAs would use performance-based evaluations for removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals while 90% or districts would use student performance to grant tenure or full certification. Seventy percent of the participating LEAs would use student performance on decision associated with compensation and promotion. In New Jersey, each tenured and non-tenured teacher is required to develop a professional-development plan, as part of the evaluation process. Thus it was very surprising that only eighty percent of participating districts would use student performance in considering professional development.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	10
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	8

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

(D)(3) (i) This section receives upper-middle points because it does have very high rates of qualified teachers though not all are highly effective. The section did not have a detailed plan with timelines, activities and persons responsible for seeing that high-poverty schools have the same percentages of highly effective teachers. New Jersey presently complies with the federal requirement of employing highly-qualified teachers (99.7% are labeled highly-qualified) in core subjects but does not have a way of identifying highly effective teachers and principals and thus has no information on present distribution of highly-effective teachers and principals. It does have a very general plan to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. Plan had sufficient details. Chart showed ambitious but do-able targets. (D)(3) (ii) This section received high points because the plans acknowledged specific needs and had special program in mind to provide remedies. It also tied timelines to activities. Strategies included providing higher pay, loan forgiveness, tax credits, or tax-free scholarships for advanced professional learning opportunities, additional alternative route programs that include early classroom practice, mentoring and induction programs, expand alternate teacher preparation programs, and partnerships with businesses.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(4) (i) This section received low points because the plan noted below had overly general timelines, specific activities or assignments of responsibility. The (D)(4) performance measures showed low targets with only 20% of teacher preparation programs having public data by the end of SY 2013-2014. The New Jersey RTTT proposal indicated that NJ proposes to "calculate individual student-growth scores and enable our data system to compile this information at a teacher level, and, in addition, to include our current statewide annual assessments and propose to include statewide interim assessments". The proposal noted that there would be linkages to teacher preparation programs and classes to inform program quality. There was no information about linkages for principals. (D)(4)(ii) This section received medium points because the narrative for improving programs provided very general and brief language. It noted overly general timelines, specific activities or assignments of responsibility. Instead New Jersey stated that it would use the data collected in the evaluation process, as described in Section D2, to monitor and improve principal and teacher preparation programs. It did commit to create a rating scale for key indicators and shared with both traditional and nontraditional programs. Its response to expanding successful programs was "Programs exhibiting particular success will be identified and examined to identify correlating success factors. Once success factors have been identified, the NJDOE can explore ways to carefully replicate successful programs. The NJDOE will also publish the complete range of scores for all preparation programs in order to further program transparency and to allow prospective applicants to make informed decisions."</p>		
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(5) (i) This section unlike (D)(4) did have richness of detail and insight. It will be given maximum points and is recommended to other states looking for a model for providing effective support of teachers and principals. New Jersey's plan for providing effective support to teachers and principals is built around two concepts: (1) Specialized professional development structured within learning communities in and out of their school, and (2) Addressing needs of each teacher at their grade levels and/or content area. The proposal stated it this way: "New Jersey (will) create networks of disciplinary-focused learning communities to build relationships across schools to study, reflect, and assess student work and instructional practice, both face-to-face and online." This section had an exemplary research-based design for professional development. The summary noted that high-quality professional development was: content-based, used evidence in design, emphasized collective participation, had an emphasis on active learning, coherence by helping teachers to see connections, and the active support of school and LEAs. The Section concluded with specific action steps and mutual responsibilities between the State and LEAs. (D)(5) (ii) Data will be collected continuously with every services provided to districts giving special attention to the impact of those services on changing professional practice and increasing student performance. Also evaluated would be changes in classroom or leadership practices. The quality of the programs will be determine not only on surveys but also on reports on how students performed on various measures such as the New Jersey Assessment Program</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<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>(E)(1) This section was given maximum points because New Jersey has the authority to intervene in BOTH the State's lowest performing schools and LEAs. In New Jersey, the Department of Education</p>		

can partially or fully take over a failing school district. "The New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) system, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-3 et seq., establishes rules for evaluating and monitoring all public-school districts in the State. NJQSAC is designed to be a single, comprehensive accountability system that consolidates and incorporates the monitoring requirements of applicable State and Federal programs."

<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	32
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(2) (i) For the purposes of identifying the State's lowest-achieving schools, New Jersey has followed the U.S. Department of Education guidance for identifying lowest-achieving schools. That guidance recommends identification based on the academic achievement of the "all students" group and the school's lack of progress on those assessments over three years in the "all students" group. "Based on the three most recent years of assessment results, New Jersey identified 18 Title I schools on the TIER I LIST and five TIER II schools, as well as six schools with unacceptable graduation rates, for a total of 29 schools." (E)(2) (ii) This section received high points because New Jersey has a very specific and well thought-out plan for supporting its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). The plan will result in a very different approach to working with lowest-achieving schools and for this reason high points are given to this section. Historically, New Jersey has used "major governance restructuring" almost exclusively when working with the lowest-achieving schools. The proposal did not have a lot of discussion about the successes or failure of this approach. It did have an extensive list of lessons learned. Some of the most important were: Programs aren't stand alone solutions, Effective support teams matter, The benchmark process is a critical step that requires planned consistent follow up, Schools and districts do not necessarily know how to implement an effective practice or recommendation, Restructuring must be a unified process and closely observed by leadership, and School climate matters. Based upon those recommendations and research, New Jersey has develop a high-quality plan that has timelines, activities and mutual responsibilities. The biggest change from past practice is that NJ will do more thorough needs research as to the problems and solutions facing each school and then an intervention team will narrow the choices available to the lowest-achieving schools to the four options outlined by the U.S. Department of Education in both Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The TEAM recommendation will also carefully consider the LEAs' capacity to implement the selected option. Unless the Commissioner of Education determines differently, the schools under study would have to accept the recommendation for one of the four options.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>

**F. General**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(1) (i) Maximum points were given to this subsection because even with a troubled economy, the State of New Jersey increased the percentage of funding to public schools. New Jersey increased its percentage of spending on education from 36.9% in 2008 to 39.6% in 2009. Actual dollar figures were down. Nominal education appropriations decreased by 4.7%, from \$12.0B to \$11.5B, a decline that</p>		

was smaller than the 11.3% decline in total State appropriations from \$32.6B to \$28.9B. (F)(1) (ii) Maximum points were given to this subsection because New Jersey does have policies that lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools. Because of its complexity, the exact language is quoted from the proposal: "The School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA) represents the first comprehensive New Jersey school-funding system in decades to receive judicial approval as an equitable funding mechanism. The new formula provides the most generous resources in the nation for children at risk. The SFRA includes two types of state aid: wealth-equalized and categorical. Wealth-equalized aid is allocated according to each LEA's ability to raise enough local revenue to support its adequacy budget (as defined below). The equalization formula used in New Jersey considers both a community's property wealth (measured by equalized property valuation) and its aggregate income to determine the local ability to pay. This formula ensures that those LEAs with a lower ability to raise a local tax levy receive more state support, and vice-versa. In contrast, categorical aid is allocated regardless of a LEA's wealth. Categorical amounts are generally determined by multiplying the cost factor for a particular category by the number of students who qualify for the aid."

<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>
---	-----------	-----------

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

(F)(2) (i) Maximum points are given to this subsection because New Jersey has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools. As of December 31, 2009, there were 68 charter schools opened and operating in New Jersey. Many of these schools are much larger than they originally were and an organization holding a charter may expand to new campuses without new approval. (F)(2) (ii) Maximum point are given this section because New Jersey has detailed and stringent procedures and expectations regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools. Historically, New Jersey DOE has "received 365 charter-school applications, of which 111 were approved and five denied. The balance (249 applications) were either withdrawn or never completed. From the 111 charters approved, 105 schools were opened. Thirty-seven of these have since been closed by charter revocation, charter surrenders, withdrawal, or non-renewal. The large number of application withdrawals or non-completions in earlier years was attributable to the relative inexperience of applicants, many of whom were unable to raise sufficient funds and secure facilities between approval and the planned opening... To the maximum extent possible, charter schools are required to seek the enrollment of a representative cross-section of the community's school-age population, including racial and academic factors in its determination of what selection of students would be representative." As of December 31, 2009, there were 68 charter schools opened and operating in New Jersey (F)(2) (iii) New Jersey charter schools receive the same per-pupil funding that the student would have earned in the district of residence. The school LEA is required to pay to the charter school 100% of the categorical state aids (those determined on a per-pupil basis) attributable to the student, and a percentage of the LEA's special-education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the LEA's special-education students enrolled in the charter school. If applicable, the school LEA is required to pay to the charter school 100% of preschool education aid. (F)(2) (iv) New Jersey charter schools are permitted to use local and state sources of revenue for facility costs, including lease payments and mortgage payments. They also have access to any discretionary federal grants that are available for facility expenditures. (F)(2) (v) New Jersey has no state laws or rules that would prohibit an LEA from creating an innovative, autonomous school. However at this point, inter-district school choice has reached its capacity for participation

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (F)(3) Maximum points were given to this section. New Jersey listed six significant reform conditions they thought should be noted. They are: Alternative pathways for teaching certification, STEM, Early childhood-education programs, Equitable-funding strategy, Secondary-education transformation; and Career and Technical Education Programs.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53</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>0</b>
Competitive Reviewer Comments: After reviewing both the appendix on STEM and the standards and lesson plans, the conclusion is that the New Jersey proposal does NOT meet the STEM priority competitive requirements. The proposal does NOT (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) and does not give evidence of cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) is not doing anything special to prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Very likely those activities are taking place in New Jersey. However, they were not documented in the proposal. Because reviewers are required to give all or no points, this proposal will be given 0 points.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</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>Yes</b>
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The New Jersey RTTT proposal suffered from unevenness. Some sections were exemplary and others were written very poorly. The New Jersey proposal does comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success This proposal meets all conditions required for the absolute priority. The New Jersey RTTT proposal is given a yes for meeting the requirements of this section.		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>387</b>