



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Utah Application #6360UT-1



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	56
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	1
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1)(i) Race to the Top (RTTT) is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, but RTTT is a competitive grant initiative with very specific goals, objectives, and expectations. Utah's reference to "projects" throughout the application is more consistent with language in the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act than with RTTT, which is funding specific "reforms". As the U.S. Department of Education states in the introduction of the RTTT application guidelines, "we are asking states to advance reforms around four specific areas; awards in Race to the Top will go to States that are leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform." Utah's use of the word "projects" makes it difficult to ascertain if Utah is "piloting" reform or is planning to manifest it, which is what RTTT is funding. This lack of clarity resulted in points being withheld in places where they otherwise might have been awarded if the plans were more concrete. Utah indicates that its State Board of Education adopted the Utah Comprehensive Reform Plan in January 2010. The plan outlines four goals that are focused on "decreasing" the number of Utah students who "are not" scoring at proficient or above levels in reading and math, and are not graduating from high school. Utah stresses a desire to "decrease" the "achievement gap" for student subgroups, and provide under this criterion, annual goals for "increasing" student achievement by subgroup. Utah then provides summary descriptions of 15 "projects" that it says are aligned with its State Plan and "the four ARRA reform areas." In its description, Utah articulates goals for implementing its "projects". The majority of projects Utah presents are focused on building upon educational strategies that already exist. Despite its efforts, Utah does not adequately present a clear agenda for how its projects will lead to lasting education reform in the State and does not sufficiently draw clear connections between its proposed projects and RTTT's stated purpose. The rationale provided for projects presented in the application do not provide specific or compelling reasons for why the projects are important to improving student achievement in the State. Likewise, the goals listed for improving student achievement of subgroups in reading and mathematics are not aggressive enough. For example, Utah set a five year goal (from 2009 until 2014) for increasing the percentage of African American and Hispanic students scoring proficient [or above] in reading by 14% and 16% respectively; a 3% increase annually. Utah stresses a commitment to reducing the achievement gap; however, their 2014 achievement targets for racial subgroups show that a 12% and 15% gap between white students and their Black and Hispanic peers in reading, and 16% and 17% gaps in math, will remain when the RTTT grant expires in 2014. In summary, the goals listed in this section do not present a compelling or clear path to reform and are not ambitious enough to significantly close the 20% and 25% achievement gap between Black and Hispanic students, and their white peers, in reading or the existing 28% and 29% gaps in math by 2014. These are significant gaps that Utah indicates it will solve primarily through piloted projects, web-based professional

development, and providing professional development to teachers and principals instead of significant reform at the SEA and LEA levels. More targeted and aggressive strategies are needed for Utah to succeed in closing the achievement gap. Utah's goals are too conservative and as a result, points were withheld for this criterion. (A)(1)(ii) Utah's application includes a binding MOU between the State and its LEAs. The MOU lists specific language that requires LEAs who sign it to "implement the LEA plan as identified in Exhibit I and II of this agreement..." Exhibit I, located in the Appendix, lists the overarching goals of Utah's state plan for education and include an attached preliminary scope of work that highlights reforms participating LEAs will be required to implement if Utah receives an RTTT grant. There is no explanation in the body of the application or in the Appendix of the programs, policies, or practices LEAs are expected to implement and execute as a participant in the Utah's Race to the Top grant; nothing relevant to LEAs being required to factor student data into decisions about evaluation, compensation, promotion, or termination of teachers. Without clear statements of expectations presented by the State, Utah is leaving it to LEAs to submit plans to the State that require LEAs to interpret the RTTT scoring rubric as they see fit, and build their own plans to address the scoring criteria the State has presented in Exhibit I. The State has not expressed or highlighted the direction or expectations LEAs will need to take to achieve appropriate alignment with RTTT goals and expectations. (A)(1)(iii) Utah's application includes a table that shows 105 LEAs have committed to participating in the State's RTTT application; this is 94.6% of LEAs in the state. This includes all school district LEAs and 70 charter school LEAs. Utah has indicated that 105 LEA superintendents, 92 president's of school boards, and 38 local teacher's union leaders have signed on to support the State's RTTT application. The application also includes copies of letters of support from key constituent groups statewide, including top state officials, the Utah Education Association President, and school board, principal association, PTA, and tribal leaders. Utah has presented solid evidence that the Plan it has submitted has broad statewide support. No points have been withheld.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(2)(i)(a) Utah indicates that its State Superintendent will oversee Utah's statewide reform effort. The application also mentions a "Race to the Top Oversight Team" and a "Financial Reporting Team". However, there is no additional information shared about the structure, scope of work or personnel involved with the RTTT team. No position titles, job responsibilities, or names of team members are presented. The brief explanation provided about the Financial Reporting Team says that they "will be responsible for providing effective and efficient processes in budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking, and reporting, fund disbursement, and all other issues related to required reports." Again, there is no clear indication of how Utah's RTTT Team and Financial Reporting Team will collaborate with each other or with LEAs, and no clear explanation of the leadership and team structure that will be needed to implement the State's RTTT plan. (A)(2)(i)(b) In terms of supporting LEAs with implementing the State's education plan, the application indicates that accountability for implementing the state's reform agenda rest almost solely with LEAs. The application says that "the primary focus of State assistance will be helping LEAs find their best way to implement reform." This is a clear indication that the State has not positioned itself to lay out more specific expectations to LEAs to implement the "projects" listed earlier in the application, nor has it defined its level of responsibility for ensuring LEAs fully implement the State's Plan. The application states that the RTTT team will "intervene if a participating LEAs does not meet its obligations"; but again, the obligations expressed in the MOU are not specific – they are very vague. (A)(2)(i)(c) The application presents only a three-line explanation of how the State will provide effective and efficient operations and processes for RTTT grant implementation. A high quality plan was not presented. As a result, significant points were withheld. A clearer and more detailed explanation is needed. (A)(2)(i)(d) The application presents a six-line explanation of how the State will use funds for this grant to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets. It also doesn't include where, if feasible, the State will

coordinate, reallocate, or repurpose funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so they align with the State's RTTT goals. A high quality plan was not presented. As a result, significant points were withheld. (A)(2)(i)(e) The application presents a three-line explanation for how the State will use its fiscal, political, and human resources to continue, after the period of funding has ended, successful reforms funded through an RTTT grant. A high quality plan was not presented. As a result, significant points were withheld. In summary, the application lists no specific plans for providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing Utah's RTTT grant. Utah also says that LEAs will be able to use existing state and federal funds to support implementation, but gives no examples of what these funds are. The State also says that it will "provide effective grant administration and oversight, program tracking, and reporting," but that it will "help" LEAs use the "fiscal, political, and human capital" to ensure their reforms are funded when the RTTT grant ends. Again, no details are presented to explain this. Utah, however, has presented evidence through its statements that the State is not taking the lead at developing fiscal, policy, and public support for LEAs; its leaving that to LEAs to do themselves. (A)(2)(ii) That said, Utah has received widespread support in the state from a variety of constituent groups and partners, including the state teacher's union and principals association, state school board association, and other relevant stakeholders. High points have been awarded because Utah has presented a significant show of support for its Plan.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	6
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	1
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(3)(i) Utah lists a number of reforms it has implemented under subheadings that describe the four areas of RTTT. However, under the subheading that addresses Adopting Standards and Assessments, Utah does not speak to this area at all. There are no other areas in the application where this is spoken to in great detail. Instead, Utah discusses their professional development, incentive programs for teachers, and other family and instructional improvement programs, but none of these things are relevant to adopting standards and assessments. In describing how the State has made progress on the other three areas of RTTT, Utah also does not address those areas with specific and measurable examples in the application. As a result, points were withheld. (A)(3)(ii)(a)(b) Additionally, Utah presents student achievement data (by subgroup) that shows inconsistent growth from year-to-year in student performance across all subgroups since 2003, and very limited growth in achievement among subgroups when looking at the growth in students performance reading and math from 2003 and 2009. For example, 63.2% of African American students scored at proficient levels in 2003 and 65.5% did so in 2009. Also, Utah presents a data table but does not indicate which grade level the data is for and does not explain what the acronym CRT means (referencing its state's required ESEA assessment). In each of the student achievement data tables presented, student growth is marginal at best. Utah does present student achievement data for its State Assessment in the Appendix, but the table's font is too small to read. As a result, points were withheld. (A)(3)(ii)(c) Utah's application shares that its overall high school graduation rate is 88%, and the rate for white students is 91%. At the same time, Utah acknowledges needing to address "challenging" high school graduation rates of Hispanic students and a declining graduation rate among American Indian students, but no data is provided that indicates how many students from these and other subgroups are and are not graduating from high school. As a result, points were withheld.</p>		
Total	125	77

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
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(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	35
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: 5(B)(1)(i)(a)(b) Utah is participating in a consortium of States that are working towards the development and adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in reading and mathematics. Utah indicates that it, along with 47 other states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories, is participating in the Consortium organized by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. It is stated in the application and in the MOU Utah signed to participate in the Consortium, that the standards will be internationally benchmarked and prepare students for college and careers. A copy of draft Common Core State Standards are available in the appendix. (B)(1)(ii) Utah emphasized that it is committed to adopting CCSS by August 2, 2010, or at a later date if the standards are not complete by August 2. However, no high quality plan for doing so is presented in the application. As a result, points were withheld.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (B)(2) Utah stated in its application that it has joined four Consortia that are working to prepare assessments that align with and measure student performance against the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These Consortia are: (1) Summative Multi-State Resources for Teachers and Education Researcher Consortium (14 States), which is developing a summative assessment that reports student, school, LEA, and district results and is internationally benchmarked, aligned with the NAEP, and measures student performance objectives that identify students as college and career ready; (2) MOSAIC Consortia (Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium) (25 States), which is also developing a summative assessment along with curricular frameworks and formative/local assessments; (3) Balanced Assessment Consortium (36 States), which will establish model course syllabi, and formative and summative assessments that are aligned with CCSS; and (4) Achieve Consortium (18 States), which is focused on developing a summative assessment that addresses college readiness and is internationally benchmarked. Utah has been awarded full points for this section.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	5
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (B)(3) Utah presents six projects it will undertake to support a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked standards. However, Utah does not explain how it plans to help its SEA and LEAs (and potential other agencies and partners involved in the state's RTTT Plan that it has mentioned) transition to these standards and assessments. It lists a number of activities with brief statements, but the statements require more depth of explanation. Utah does mention that it will create "web-based lesson plans" and "a repository of instructional materials", but does not clearly state how these resources will be aligned with the new standards and assessments, or that they will support LEAs ability to transition to using the new standards and assessments. In summary, Utah does not present a clear, high quality plan for how it will support its SEA or LEA with implementing a statewide transition to the new standards and assessments it has committed itself to adopting. As a result, points were withheld.</p>		
Total	70	50

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
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(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C)(1) Utah stated that its longitudinal data system contains all of the elements of the America COMPETES Act. Utah presented a detailed table that provided clear descriptions of how its data system is aligned with the elements of America COMPETES. However, the table was also very confusing because there were several cells in the matrix where information was presented as "under development", leading the reviewer to initially think that the only half of the elements of the Act were included. Though the clarity of information presented in the tables was unsatisfactory, no points were withheld because closer evaluation revealed that Utah has indeed included all of the elements in its application.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C)(2) Utah's application contains a high quality plan for ensuring stakeholders can access State data. A matrix outlining how Utah accomplishes its objectives in this area is available in Appendix 3. They also share a brief but definitive timeline (in C3) for when aspects of its data system will be planned, developed, and launched. As a result, Utah earned the full points for this section.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C)(3) Utah explains the sequence for how it will help LEAs acquire, adopt, and use local data, but the application does not express how they will assist and provide resources to LEAs. Utah does, however, present strategies for assisting LEAs with acquiring the knowledge and skill necessary to make effective use of the data. These supports include training of District data teams, implementing its Principal Data Institute, and staggering implementation of a data system in LEAs statewide. However, there is no clear explanation for how data from the State's instructional improvement system, along with statewide longitudinal data, will be made available and accessible to researchers. With limited information provided and not all of the requested information provided in the application, points were withheld for this criterion.</p>		
Total	47	41

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	10
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D)(1) A Utah law also established the state funded Public Education Job Enhancement Program, an initiative that provides scholarships for advanced degrees and signing bonuses for teachers of math, science, and special education. Data is presented for the number of teachers hired through ARL but no data is presented for alternative programs for principals, or for other alternative-route certification programs such as the paraeducators (who prepare to be teachers) program, American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence (ABCTE), or the Troops to Teachers Program. There was also no discussion of how selective these program are, how these programs are monitored and evaluated, or how teacher and principal shortage is addressed by the state or LEAs. As a result, significant points were withheld for this criterion.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	24
(i) Measuring student growth	5	0

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	5
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	5
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	14
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(2)(i) Utah mentions a bill that the State's Governor signed that establishes standards for formative and summative assessments base on the input of the Educator Quality Workgroup. However, Utah does not explain its efforts to ensure that LEAs have clear systems and approaches for measuring student growth in its application. Instead, Utah shares information about their ability to track the educational progress of individual students from preschool through college by assigning every Utah student a "unique personal identification number." This does not answer the question about Utah's approaches to measuring student growth, as defined in the RTT Federal Notice, or how Utah measures growth for individual students. As a result, significant points were withheld. (D)(2)(ii) Utah stressed commitment to establishing a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system for teachers and principals. They indicate that by 2014, 90% of Utah's K-12 teachers will participate in LEA evaluation systems that require the use of high quality instructional strategies and include student growth as a significant factor in measuring teaching performance. Utah also says that it will establish four levels of teacher licensing in the State – pre-practitioner (level 1), novice (level 2), developing practitioner (level 3), and Master Teacher (level 4), with each requiring annual evaluations. Presently, Utah teachers and principals are evaluated every three years. Utah stresses its commitment to changing these evaluations to annual and ensuring that student growth is a "significant factor" in the evaluation of all teachers. In its description about novice teachers, Utah states that teachers will carry the "novice" designation during their first three years of teaching. They also state that teachers who do not meet certain requirements or "demonstrate effective teaching practices and appropriate student growth will be terminated." However, Utah does not mention termination as an option for teachers who might demonstrate ineffective teaching or fail to demonstrate "appropriate" student growth as level 3 or 4 teachers. Teachers in Utah earn tenure after three years of teaching. Utah also does not say to what degree student growth will impact a teacher or principal's evaluation, and does not define what "appropriate student growth" means as mentioned its application. There is also very little is discussed in the application about the evaluation of principals. Utah does share that State organizations representing teachers and principals were involved with developing the four-level licensing plan. Presently, state law in Utah requires that annual evaluations are conducted for provisional educators, non-provisional educators who seek promotional opportunities or have had a recent poor evaluation. Otherwise, non-provisional educators are evaluated every three years, as required by state law. Utah states that evaluations for all educators will become annual, but does not cite a specific change in state law that requires this. They also do not share a clear timeline for pursuing a change in state statute to ensure the shift in the time period for evaluations are annual instead of every three years. Utah presents a very clear plan for developing Level 1 and 2 teachers and provides clear and concise examples of how experienced principals will be developed. However, Utah does not mention any strategies for level 3 and 4 teachers or inexperienced principals. The State also does not describe "how" evaluations will be used to inform the type of coaching, induction support, and professional development a teacher or principal might need or desire based on evaluation outcomes. They also don't describe how evaluations will be used to inform decisions about compensation, promotion, or retention of teachers and principals, or decisions about tenure for teachers. Presently, state law provides teachers in Utah up to two years to demonstrate competency after their initial evaluation indicates a need for improvement. The state mentioned no plans to address this timeline or pursue a shorter timeline for corrective action for teachers. Without a clear plan of action for addressing these issues, it is difficult to see how Utah will accomplish its goals. Additionally, none of the affirmative statements or commitments made in this section are clearly spelled out in the RTTT MOU between the Utah State Board of Education and LEAs.</p>		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	12

(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
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(3)(i) Utah cites its responsibilities to ESEA for ensuring that schools with high poverty and high minority populations have access to "highly qualified" teachers. They also share a formula they use for determining when schools are considered high-minority population schools. However, Utah states that they do not yet define teachers as "effective" or "highly effective." They state that they will eventually implement the "effective" designation, and after doing so, will use teacher assignment data to ensure that the data is made available to districts. Utah does not, however, specifically state goals, objectives, or actions that they will take to ensure that "effective" teachers are equitably distributed to high-poverty and high-minority schools. (D)(3)(ii) To ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, Utah assists all of its LEAs with recruitment by providing them access to an on-line recruitment service and uses its "Critically Index" (as cited earlier in the application review) to identify shortages. Utah operates a Teaching Incentive Loan Program that provides low-interests loans and scholarships to prospective teachers of high-shortage subjects and assist "under-qualified teachers" through its Public Educator Job Enhancement Program with securing advanced credentials in shortage areas; bonuses are also awarded to teachers in shortage areas. Utah mentions no additional supports being provided to districts nor do they present a high quality plan for increasing the number and percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. As a result, significant points were withheld.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	8
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(4)(i) Utah uses its CACTUS database program to connect student growth data to "teacher programs" in its annual Teacher Quality Report. Data can be disaggregated by degree granting and credentialing institutions, as well as schools. This information is reviewed annually by the State Board of Education. Evidence of this data is not available in the application. (D)(4)(ii) Presently, data on the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs in the state are not available to the public, but Utah has stressed a commitment in its Performance Measures table to have 100% of this data available to the public by 2013-14. Yet, there are no clear, well articulated plans mentioned for how this data will be made available to stakeholder groups and the general public. There are also no plans presented for expanding teacher preparation and credentialing options in the state. Utah, instead, says it will evaluate the possibilities expanding teacher preparation and credentialing. RTTT requires that applicants share a high quality plan for expanding preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals. As a result, points were withheld.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	4
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(D)(5) Very little is mentioned for how the State's RTTT Plan will provide effective support to teachers and principals. The support that is proposed is very State and university-driven. There is no mention of technical assistance or resources the State might provide to LEAs to improve the depth of quality and support they provide to their teachers. As a result, significant point have been withheld.</p>		
Total	138	58

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(E)(1) Utah law enables the State to use investigation, corrective action, monitoring, and the withdrawal or reduction of funds to individual schools or LEAs who act "inconsistent with state law, administrative rule, or the express purpose of the program" of a school or LEA." Chartering authorities are also able to intervene in the schools they charter, and terminate the charter if the school "fails to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management, or for other good cause shown." While Utah states that its state's laws allow its State Board of Education to intervene in persistently low performing schools, there is nothing mentioned in the application that explicitly or tacitly suggests that the state can intervene in schools for reasons related to poor student achievement. As a result, all points were withheld for this section.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	17
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	2
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	15
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(2)(i) Utah presents a summary of a plan for identifying its persistently lowest performing schools. The plan is tied to using the Title I School Improvement Process for schools who are identified as persistently low achieving after four years of failing to meet state benchmarks in reading and math. However, there were no plans or targets for identifying or addressing the needs of Utah's lowest performing schools. (E)(2)(ii) Utah says it will use a turnaround model for its lowest performing schools and cites an example of a school in a tribal community that was closed and restructured, and shortly thereafter, student achievement rose significantly. However, while Utah states that it will pursue this route for its most persistently low performing schools, the approach that is most discussed is using the Title I school improvement process. The Title I School Improvement Process (SIP) has been in place for two decades. Over that time period, the Title I process yielded very few significant results for within the lowest performing schools. Generally, more interventions are required in such schools than the SIP process involves. Utah further states that it does not have many Title I schools. They also share that they have non-Title I schools that have lower AYP scores than Title I Schools. Nevertheless, Utah projects it will intervene using the turnaround model in 10 schools in 2011-12, including the non-Title I schools. Since 2004, it has turned around just one school. There is no mention of how it will support LEAs in turning around such schools. From the story Utah told about the school it turned around, they clearly stated that they were inexperienced at turning around schools when the issue with the tribal school was addressed. Utah also stated that they decided not to close the school based on concerns that loomed in the Indian community about closing their school. The decision was motivated by community interest, not via a sound monitoring and evaluation process by the State or LEA. Considering this, Utah is not presenting any plans for significantly building the capacity of SEAs or LEAs to address these concerns more proactively and strategically in the future.</p>		
Total	50	17

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(1)(i) The state funded education at 59.2% of its total budget in FY2009 compared to 53.7% of its budget in FY2008. Utah is receiving full points for this sub-criterion. (F)(1)(ii)(a) Utah has an equalization formula that is highly recognized nationally as one of the most equitable systems for funding schools in the nation. Approximately 70% of funding for education is paid for by the State, with 23% of funding coming from local funding and 7% from federal funds. Through its equalization formula, the state spends proportionally less funds on high tax/high net worth LEAs than on LEAs with high concentrations of poverty. The funds disbursed are "equalized" so that schools are funded at relatively</p>		

the same level in the State. Utah is receiving full points for this sub-criterion. (F)(1)(ii)(b) In terms of equalization of funding between high poverty and low poverty schools within an LEA, sufficient evidence is not presented to determine that this is required or occurring in Utah. Utah shares a state statute that discusses how local communities are to share in the cost of educating children with the State, but there is no definitive statement made that LEAs are required to ensure equitable funding between high poverty and low poverty schools in their Districts. As a result, points are being withheld for this sub-criterion.

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

40

24

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(2)(i) Utah places no limits on the number of charter schools that can operate in its State, but the State does define within its charter school law a maximum number of students that can be enrolled in charters. The law states that beginning in 2009-10, charter schools may grow (in enrollment) "by 1.4% of the total school district enrollment by October 1" annually. Notwithstanding, this policy still presents an obstacle that could limit charter growth. As a result, points have been withheld. Utah also indicates that at the time its RTTT application was submitted, there were 994 public schools in the State, of which 72 were charters (7.6% of all schools). Utah further states it only charters "quality" charter schools. Considering the RTTT criteria only ask about caps on the number of charter schools in states and not about caps on students, Utah is receiving the full points for this sub-criterion. (F)(2)(ii) Utah shared a copy of its charter school law, which clearly indicates that charters are to be approved, monitored, and held accountable achieving the goals and benchmarks of their charter. There is not mention of student achievement being a factor in whether or not a charter school remains open or closes. Only one charter school has been terminated in the State and another school voluntarily gave up its charter. Since 2005, Utah has chartered fewer schools while its denial rate has stated relatively the same. In 2009, Utah received 12 charter school applications. They approved two schools and denied 10, mostly on the basis of "lack of readiness to open" or "poor and unfocused applications." Utah's law, nor its application, speaks to the need to serve student populations that are similar to their local school districts. Points have been withheld for this sub-criterion because of the lack of clear accountability for student achievement in the State's charter school law. (F)(2)(iii) Utah states that it provides equitable funding for charter schools, and that charter schools are supported through federal, state, and local funding. State law speaks to the need for equitable funding of charter schools in the State. Utah has received medium points for this sub-criterion because no data tables, budget number or other evidence is presented that clearly articulate the funding levels of charter schools and traditional public schools. (F)(2)(iv) Utah does not appropriate facilities funding for its charter schools. It does, however, operate a 10% local replacement fund and provide a state-funded revolving loan fund to assist charter schools with facilities acquisition. Points are being withheld as a result. (F)(2)(v) Utah share several examples of how LEAs are able to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. They describe career and technical education programs, early college high school programs, year-round schools, and International Baccalaureate schools as examples. Utah is receiving full points for this sub-criterion.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

5

3

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(3) Utah presents six different state laws that demonstrate how the state has created, through law, regulation, and policy, other conditions favor to reform or innovation. However, Utah does not indicate if these reforms and innovations have improved student achievement, increased graduation rates, or resulted in other important outcomes. As a result, points have been withheld.

Total

55

33

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Utah has not completely met the Competitive Priority as it did not share a high quality plan for addressing STEM education in its application. Utah states that it will provide more rigorous math and science classes, will offer extra pay to math and science teachers, and provide professional development to educators, and develop partnerships with businesses that provide internships to teacher leaders in STEM fields. However, Utah does not explain in any detail how it will do things. They provide statements of intent with no clear evidence or "detailed plans" for (a) offering rigorous courses of study in mathematics, science, technology and engineering, or (b) "how" (with the exception of teacher internships) Utah will cooperate with industry experts, universities or research centers to prepare and assist teachers with integrating STEM content across grades or disciplines. Utah's STEM Plans also do not explain how the State will support LEAs, or how LEAs themselves, will prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM fields. As the plan for this section is not clear and has many holes, all points are being withheld from this section.</p>		
Total	15	0

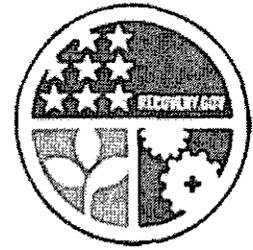
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Utah has not presented a comprehensive or coherent RTTT Plan that effectively addresses all four areas specified in the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or State Success Factors in its application. While Utah reported significant LEA participation, very little information was shared throughout the document for how the state will recruit, support, and develop great teachers and leaders or teach them how to lead and teach in a more rigorous environment. There were a number of activities proposed, but the activities lacked sufficient detail that expressed how things will get done. There were also several typos in the proposal and several of the Appendices numbers do not match the Appendices table of contents. In summary, Utah provided too little information for its initiatives, did not present a comprehensive approach that tied back to its stated vision and goals, and has not made it clear that student growth and achievement will indeed be a factor in school, principal, and teacher accountability in the near future. As a result, Utah did not meet the absolute priority.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	276



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1



Utah Application #360UT-2

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	64
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	44
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (A)(1)i Utah's Comprehensive Reform Plan for RTTT is based on goals adopted by the Utah State Board of Education as part of it's Promises to Keep effort, a statement of visions and mission for public education in Utah. They have long standing initiatives that support each of the 4 reform areas and believe these sustained efforts have helped improve student achievement and reduce achievement gaps. (There is only one Utah Title 1 school that has been identified as a persistently low performing school.) They outline detailed plans to address movement forward in each of the 4 reform areas. (A)(1) ii 94.6% of their LEAs (100% of district LEAs and 91.4% of charter school LEAs) have elected to be participating LEAs. 38 out of 43 presidents of teachers unions signed on to the agreement. They have letters of support from their state level unions and education associations. (A)(1)iii Because they have such a high participation rate and it includes 99% of their students in poverty, they will be able to reach broadly across the state to implement their RTTT reforms. In preparing their application, they held roundtables throughout the state and met with their education stakeholders.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	25
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (A)(2)i The state has the support of the governor, board of education, associations and unions, LEAs, tribes, higher education and PTAs, among others. They have personnel on 3 teams (oversight, program implementation, and financial and reporting) that will oversee the implementation of the grant, led by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Their plan outlines activities that will help LEAs implement promising practices, and evaluate and eliminate ineffective ones. The state will facilitate and offer resources. The finance team was put in place to monitor and track ARRA funds and is prepared for RTTT. All of the directors at the state level are committed to using their time and resources to accomplish RTTT goals and to maintain efforts after the funding is gone. This sounds like a rational plan, with leadership, support, leverage and a chance at sustainability, however there are few details about the scope of work or the goals and activities of these teams. (A)(2)ii The application includes 27 strong letters of support from the state's teachers and principal's unions, associations, the governor, board of education, state legislature, LEAs, charter school groups, tribes, higher education and PTAs. Some letters are boilerplate, but many go into detail expressing their support and how they want to participate.</p>		

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	25
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(A)(3)i The state has been making significant progress in the past years in each reform area. With regard to standards: they extended core standards for students with significant cognitive disorders, have developed reading models to prevent and remediate reading difficulties in K-3, a principal literacy institute that trains 30-50 each year, literacy centers for ELL students and their parents, a math initiative with PD coaching and financial incentives for teachers in 4-6, extending teacher pay and school year for science and math teachers. With regard to data systems that measure student growth: the longitudinal data system has been in compliance with the America COMPETES for several years, and Utah's data institute has been helping to increase the capacity of local administrators, principals and teachers in using data to improve instruction. With regard to recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals: they've used signing bonuses and tuition scholarships to successfully recruit and retain teachers in shortage areas, they offer alternative routes to licensure (ARL), a pre-practitioner support program through University of Utah and Salt Lake School District, and a differentiated compensation pilot involves 6 districts experimenting with different types of performance pay options. With regard to turning around low performing schools: they have developed a comprehensive system of support that has moved most of their underperforming schools forward. (A)(3)ii Utah's overall NAEP reading scores are significantly higher than the national average and the NAEP math scores are also better than the nation, showing upward trends. The trends for subgroups in both areas show growth with a gradual decrease in the achievement gap between subgroups in reading and math on both the NAEP and CRTs. The only subgroup to decline was the ELL population, to which the state attributes the growth in size in this population. Utah's graduation rate has remained constant at 88%, with a decrease in drop out rates. However, as subgroups go, Hispanic and American Indian students are actually experiencing downward trends in graduation rates.</p>		
Total	125	114

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(B)(1)i In April 2009, Utah signed on to the CCSSO/NGA development and adoption of Common Core State Standards in English language and math. These are aligned with college and work expectations, research based, and internationally benchmarked. 48 other states have signed on. They include the MOU, a copy of the draft standards, documentation that they are internationally benchmarked and list the 48 states participating. (B)(1)ii Utah is committed to adopting the standards by August 2, 2010 and has a plan to help the LEAs adopt the new standards. They cite the legal process for adopting standards, and show their comprehensive plan (across grades and subjects) and current progress and timeline for adoption.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

Utah has joined 4 separate consortiums that are working toward preparing high quality assessments. Each of these groups is working to create a host of assessments that teachers, principals, districts and the state can use to measure achievement of the new Common Core standards. Some have an emphasis on developing assessments for ELL students and those with learning disabilities. They include the MOUs for each, as well as a list of states participating, some of these totaling a majority of the states (Achieve has 27 signers).

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	18
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Utah has experience implementing standards, beginning with the state core standards in the 1980s. The experience includes a process for updating and implementing new core standards and aligned assessments. They plan to offer statewide professional development for both reading and math standards, and through expansion of current programs underway. They'll offer web based lesson plans, infuse reading into the sciences and arts, hire staff with expertise in adolescent literacy, develop and offer new math courses, push toward greater student engagement, higher levels of achievement especially for economically disadvantaged, ELL and students with disabilities, and coordination with higher education. Many of these efforts hinge on the hiring of new staff, which could be problematic for sustainability, though they build off a framework for the state's previous success in supporting LEAs in adopting new standards.

Total	70	68
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1. Unique student ID number – Yes 2. Student demographic, enrollment and program participation information – Yes 3. Student transition information P-16 – Yes 4. Capacity to communication to higher ed data systems -- Yes 5. Audit system to ensure data quality – Yes 6. Yearly test records for assessment required under the ESEA – Yes 7. Information on students not tested by grade and subject – Yes 8. Teacher identifier to match teachers to students – Yes 9. Student level transcripts containing courses and grades – Yes 10. Student scores on college readiness tests – Yes 11. Transition data from secondary to higher ed – Yes 12. Data on the alignment and adequacy of student preparation for post secondary education – Yes Total= 12 completed They stated in the narrative that they have implemented the 12 elements, and this score reflects that, however the appendix is confusing, suggesting that perhaps not all of these elements are completed.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	3
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The state has a P-20 longitudinal data system that meets most of the required elements of America COMPETES and their RTTT plan is to expand and adapt the SLDS to enhance existing capabilities for stakeholders. They will work to increase the capacity of local instructional improvement systems for teachers, principals, and administrators. They offer plans for how to do this for educators, but are gloss over how policy makers and researchers can get timely access to rich data.

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

The Utah State Office of Education will provide professional development to LEA data teams (superintendents, curriculum directors, and assessment directors) in the use of data to inform instruction, professional learning communities and school improvement strategies and in the

understanding and use of at-risk, dropout, and graduation data, and will provide targeted support to struggling schools. These efforts are sound in helping LEAs learn how to use the data of instructional improvement systems. There is no mention of making the data available to researchers, other than stating that they want to “expand partnerships with local universities and increase data analysis available on LEA and state web sites.”

Total	47	39
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	16
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(D)(1)i-legal alternatives 7 State law provides Utah teachers and principals opportunities to earn licensure through alternative routes to traditional university preparation programs. In addition, LEAs may request a letter of authorization from the State Board of Education permitting someone with outstanding qualifications to serve as a principal or other administrative position. (D)(1)ii alternatives that are in use 4 The state has a number of programs that are training approximately 250 graduates each year (the total number of new teachers hired in the state last year was 3,246). The principal options are fewer and have only produced 3 alternatively certified principals last year. (D)(1)iii a process for determining shortage, and preparing to fill that shortage 5 Utah has a method for determining shortage that draws from statewide data on the number of teachers entering and exiting. They also survey LEAs to determine areas of need. They don't show if this also can determine which districts are experiencing shortage and in which fields and which grades, which can undermine policy decisions on how to best address the need. To prepare to fill the shortage they have the Public Education Job Enhancement Program, funded by the legislature. This program provides scholarships for advanced degrees, endorsements and license programs as well as signing bonuses in the content areas of math, science and special education. Other initiatives include salary supplements, coaching and STEM programs to recruit math and science majors into teaching. They don't give any details about how much they fund these programs, nor do they mention how they plan to get STEM teachers into the schools that are experiencing shortage.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	48
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	7
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	26
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(D)(2)i Measuring student growth 5 Utah is able to measure growth for each individual student and tie the information to the student's teacher. They maintain a student data warehouse that provides all teachers with criterion-referenced data and summative data from content end of year exams. They also have an educator data system that houses credential information and teacher assignment data, which allows LEAs and SEAs to make appropriate teacher assignments, track patterns of equitable distribution and determine where professional development is needed. They are well set to add student growth to teacher evaluations. D2ii Developing evaluation systems 7 In addition to expanding support for both teachers and principals, they will move from evaluating every 3 years to annual evaluations. A panel of educators and higher ed faculty met in 2007 to address teacher evaluation and recommended, among other things, that the Utah Statute be updated to reflect research based evaluation components and include student achievement. They don't say how much this measure will weigh. In March 2009, the bill was passed. These evaluations will add measure of student growth and</p>		

instructional quality as well as yearly formative assessments. They have also developed 4 levels of teacher licensing that will require yearly evaluations and other evidence to maintain a license and progress to a higher level. Principals will have 2 levels. They have developed an evaluation system that has some credibility and has been passed into law, but it doesn't say how much student growth will be a part of this measure, nor does it really address developing a principal evaluation. (D)(2)iii Conducting annual evaluations 10 They have committed to annual evaluations that will include the use of student growth data. (D)(2)iv Using evaluations to inform key decisions 26 a) developing teachers and principals 7 The information provided in the evaluations of teachers and principals will be used to provide responsive professional development that includes induction support for educators in years 1-3, coaching and ongoing professional development targeted at identified needs or new initiatives in years 3 and beyond. b) compensating, promoting, retaining 7 They have designated a Master Practitioner or Principal position with professional recognition and extended contracts. c) Tenure 7 Tenure decisions will be made after the 3rd year, based on the new evaluation system that includes scientifically recognized teaching methods, formative and summative data and appropriate technologies in instruction, student growth, and stakeholder input. Candidates must be able to show growth through their first and second year or they will not be granted tenure and will not continue in that position. d) removing ineffective teachers and principals 5 Teachers or principals who do not demonstrate competency through the evaluation system and who do not show appropriate growth will be dismissed and denied the renewal of their Utah license. They don't say how many years this entails, which is concerning given how long it currently takes to remove a teacher.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(3)i Utah analyzes and reports on the number of teachers who are highly qualified and the experience level of teachers in each school. This information is disaggregated by poverty quartiles and fall enrollment data indicating high concentrations of ethnic minority students. With the new designation of "effective" teachers to the plan in 2010, as effective teachers and principals are identified, the data will be analyzed to ensure equitable distribution. The state will review trends and identify any deficient schools or LEAs, who are then required to submit a plan to amend inequitable distribution within 90 days. In addition, each LEA must submit a yearly plan that includes data for each school on effective teachers and student growth. The state also has a statewide teacher candidate pool that all LEAs can access. These are sound plans to improve preparation programs, however currently there is no way for the public to access data on the achievement and growth of the principals' students—as shown on their performance measures table. (D)(3)ii They collect data on statewide shortages, offer a loan and scholarship program to education students in shortage areas, and recruit outstanding students to teach in these shortage areas. They also have a support program to get under-qualified teachers to receive advanced credentials, and signing bonuses in shortage areas. They also plan to support and lead rural teachers who teach out of subject to appropriate credentials. These plans seem solid, however, besides signing bonuses, there is no mention of any other strategies or special efforts to determine where the shortages are, what grades they are and to target a plan to filling those openings with highly qualified candidates.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	8
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

D4i – Link student achievement to teachers and principals and then to their preparation programs 5 Utah has developed standards for teacher preparation programs and is working on developing standards for principal preparation programs. Utah connects student growth data to teacher programs in the annual Teacher Quality Report. This data is reviewed annually by the state Board oversight committee for approval of teacher preparation programs. If a trend indicates that a program is not adequately preparing teachers, that program will be reviewed and required to present a program

improvement plan and be monitored for improvement. The state also tracks the placement of principals at all Utah schools and links effective principals to the principal preparation programs from which they graduated. In addition, there is a statewide school leadership survey sent to all graduates about their experiences as principals. New standards are also in the works to require internships that include analyzing and using student data to inform instructional practice. The standards will also examine requirements for entrance into principal preparation programs in order to inform program revisions. These are sound plans to improve preparation programs, however currently there is no way for the public to access data on the achievement and growth of the principals' students—as shown on their performance measures table. D4ii – Expand successful programs 3 Currently their data show that all the programs are roughly equal in terms of producing groups of well prepared teacher and principal candidates. As they monitor which programs produce the most highly effective candidates, they will work to expand them, though how they will do this is not explained.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals**20****11****(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

D5i – Provide effective, data informed PD - 6 The state manages 2 online systems that offer detailed information about each teacher and customized professional development options, as well as best practice video segments on over 1,000 topics for instant access. Both of these systems are informed by, among other things, student academic growth data. All schools are moving toward a professional learning communities model and many are scheduling to provide common planning time to work on collaboration for school improvement. It's not clear how schools can choose professional development and whether principals will have control over funds to purchase the kind of professional development they or their leadership teams think is best. D5ii – Measure, evaluate and improve PD efforts – 5 The state will contract with an outside reviewing agency to monitor and report on RTTT activities, including an annual review of data on student achievement, effective teachers and principal preparation and professional development. The annual review will measure and evaluate to determine the level of implementation and effectiveness of program activities to improve programs and student achievement. They mention different sources of data that they will collect, but in general, this response has few details.

Total**138****93****E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The state has legal authority to intervene in persistently low-achieving schools and LEAs, however this seems to manifest in an ability to withhold funds and that the state could do so if a LEA or school "acted inconsistent with state law, administrative rule and the express purposes of the program." There is no language there about school performance or student achievement being triggers.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	35
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
E2i Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools 5 Though Utah has been using NCLB as its measure for school performance, they felt as though some schools may be skirting by through loopholes and because most of their high schools are not Title 1 eligible. Many of these schools are lower performers than the Title 1 schools identified for improvement. They are opting to use a 4-year average of longitudinal data that will shine a brighter light on these lower performing schools. E2ii		

Turning around the persistently lowest achieving schools 30 All Title 1 schools identified as persistently low achieving will immediately begin one of the four school intervention models. In the past, the state's System of Support has been very effective in preventing Title 1 schools from reaching the persistently low-performing schools designation through research-based strategies that lead to increased achievement. For those schools that do not respond by implementing one of the 4 intervention models. They plan the same for their non-Title 1 secondary schools. They will require LEAs to allow identified schools to create the conditions for reform by providing them with flexibility and autonomy in selecting staff, implementing new structures for the school day, control the school budget, provide comprehensive services to high need students, and actively engage families. Utah has had only one intervention since 2004 and they used a turnaround model that yielded positive results. Their plans seem solid and fairly aggressive, however they have yet to intervene in a high school and they have 10 possible schools for intervention in 2 years and 9 of them are high schools. This will be new and challenging territory for them.

Total	50	35
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(1)i The % available in 2009 to support education was greater than or equal to the % available to support education in 2008 5 The percent available in 2008 was 53.7% and in 2009 it was 59.2% which shows that Utah's support of education grew from 2008 to 2009. (F)(1)ii State policies lead to equitable funding: a) between high need LEAS and other LEAS 3 Utah is one of only 5 states where no court case challenging the equity of the state's education finance system has ever been filed. The GAO found Utah to be one of only two states where on average, per pupil funding is the same in wealthy as in poor districts and that no income related funding gap exists. Revenues from LEAs in wealthy income tax areas are distributed by a formula to LEAs in areas with lower than average income taxes. b) within LEAS between high-poverty schools and other schools 0 There are recommendations in both the state code and constitution that districts provide at least a "minimum program." But they list no particular efforts to encourage districts to do something about intra-district inequity.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	26
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F2i The state has a law that does not prohibit the number of high performing charter schools 6 The state has no cap on charter schools, though it does have a cap on the number of students that can enroll in charter schools (32,921). They currently have 72 charter schools, which is 7.2% of Utah's public schools. F2ii The state has laws or guidelines regarding how authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, close charter schools, in particular, using student achievement as an important factor, encourage charter schools that serve high needs students, and have closed ineffective charters 3 They have guidelines for how authorizers approve applicants, seeking quality schools that meet reasonable management and preparation requirements. Though they have specific purposes outlined for certain types of charter schools, there is no effort to attract schools that serve high needs students. Only one school has had its charter terminated, though Utah has a law allowing it to intervene in underperforming charter schools. They don't explain why this school was closed. Two schools are being closely watched. They list the number of applicants and reasons for denial (lack of readiness, poor application, financial difficulties, applications withdrawn.) F2iii The state's charter schools receive equitable funding 5 Utah charter schools receive equitable funding compared to other public schools. They receive their commensurate share of federal funding, an annual state appropriation divided among all charter schools on a per student basis and a portion of local school district revenues

determined by the number of district students that leave traditional schools to attend charter schools. School districts are encouraged by the Utah Board of Education Rules to authorize charter schools locally by allowing locally chartered school students to receive equal funding to student attending traditional schools in the district. Though they mention these funding policies, they don't provide evidence of the amount of funding passing through to charter schools per student or how they compare to traditional public school per-student allocations. F2iv The state provides funding, access and levies for facilities 4 Utah law does not provide charter schools with funding specifically for facilities. 10% of local replacement funds must be used for facilities, however. Utah law does not impose any facility related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools. F2v. The state enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charters 8 Utah has education programs for children in custody, adult education programs for those who did not complete high school, early college high schools, IB schools, year round schools, and an electronic (virtual) high school with 35,000 students enrolled.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: In the past few years, Utah has laid the groundwork to for conditions favorable for education reform through activities that promote the 4 key areas (see A2 and A3)as well as passing laws that attempt to improve education for all students, especially some of the most disadvantaged, including programs for incarcerated youth. They have also worked to extend innovative programs to more students, including career and technical education programs, adult education programs, early college high school, international baccalaureate programs, and electronic high schools. These multiple pathways to graduation illustrate ways the state is reaching disaffected students.		
Total	55	39

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The application addresses STEM concerns throughout.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The application is coherent and comprehensive in its efforts to address the 4 education reform areas. They have convened broad support for the plan. They have long standing initiatives that support each of the 4 reform areas and believe these sustained efforts have helped improve student achievement and reduce achievement gaps. They have a robust data system that will help them tie their efforts to increasing student achievement, they plan to include student growth to their teacher and principal evaluations and they have shown a commitment to funding education.		
Total		0

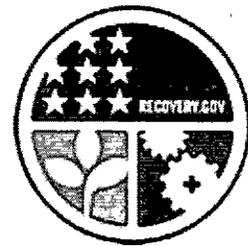
Grand Total	500	403
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Utah Application #6360UT-3



A. State Success Factors

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(i) Following a comprehensive review of the entire application, the information provided meets all of the criteria for articulating the reform agenda in a coherent and comprehensive manner. This is particularly strong in providing the following information. Utah has addressed the four ARRA areas required by (A) (1) (i). Substantial work has been done previous to this grant notice in the four areas covered by ARRA and the reform plans for funding under this grant explore these areas in depth. The application sets forth four areas comprised of 15 projects. These areas are noted below: 1. Adopting Standards and Assessments that Prepare Students to Succeed in the Workplace; 2. Building Data Systems that Measure Student Growth and Success, Inform Teachers and Principals about How They Can Improve Instruction; 3. Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals, Especially Where They Are Needed Most; and 4. Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools. The approach is system wide and proposes to use RTTT to meet a series of goals found under each area. Specific timelines for completion are listed and projects identified as well as the reform areas these projects address that lead to meeting those goals which includes new directions for the area in question. In addition, the state will expand on successful practices that have been in operation for a considerable length of time. This approach has been followed in each of the reform areas. As support for this submission, some projects although not all include a rationale to support the capacity to carry out the design of the project. In doing so, they provide a history over time of previous work in the specific area. The narrative points to previous target dates set by the state for accomplishing a project and indicate a number of times in this section and throughout the application that with RTTT funds these targets can occur sooner or at a faster pace. From the evidence provided throughout the application this appears as a comprehensive and credible design that has been clearly articulated throughout the application. (A) (1) (ii) (a) There is a strong commitment toward implementing the reform plan and provides for a major impact on students. In examining the MOU for this section, the participating LEAs have agreed to implement the plan found in Exhibit 1 – Preliminary Scope of Work. The state has obtained the participation of 105 LEAs out of a total of 111 statewide. 70 charter schools, representing 91.4% of operating charters, have agreed to participate. (A) (1) (ii) (b) The scope-of-work follows that suggested by the RTTT model and meets the criteria for this section. (A) (1) (ii) (c) Signatures have been obtained from a large majority of superintendents, board presidents and union representatives to implement this plan. (A) (1) (iii) Significant in this memorandum is the agreement to increase student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, increasing student graduation rates and increasing college enrollments of students. Goals, timelines and responsibilities are provided for each of the four reform areas. Utah provides information regarding their RTTT goals which were adopted by USBE as part of its Promises to Keep Initiative. These goals will not change if the plan is not funded under RTTT. The ability of the

state to implement these goals in a timely fashion would be seriously jeopardized without the RTTT funding due to the limited funding available within the state. Reforms contemplated under this plan would not take place for fifteen years (2025) without funding. The impact would result in achieving student outcome goals at a rate of 1% a year. Likewise, goals such as the implementation of national K-12 standards in mathematics and literacy would not be complete until 2016. The application indicates that this is true for other areas such as developing high quality instructional materials, aligning math and English standards, preparing students for post-secondary education and other plan areas.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(A) (2)(i) (a) The applicant has indicated that they have received and will receive support from a variety of political, legislative and education officials and organizations in the state. Within the USOE three teams serve to provide for implementation of the proposed program. These include an oversight team, a program implementation team and a financial reporting team. This is not a new team, but was organized originally under ARRA funding. The implementation of the plan will be overseen at the highest levels of the USOE and includes the Superintendent of Public Instruction. A more detailed description of the implementation plan including goals, activities, timelines and persons/positions/agency responsibilities would help this area. Points were not awarded based upon the lack of detail in this section. (A) (2) (i) (b) Throughout the application, ample evidence is provided for efforts to support LEAs to initiate best practices, establish new standards leading to improved curriculum and teaching strategies that have been successful and eliminate those which are ineffective. RTTT funds will focus on providing substantial support through funding for increasing professional development, research and development of new programs. The applicant refers to the use of funds as a "facilitator and resource for positive LEA change." The MOU provides a framework for that change. The oversight team has been given the responsibility of intervening in the case of an LEA that does not live up to its obligations as designated in the Preliminary Scope of Work. This is a particular strength of the state's plan. (A) (2) (i) (c) The application continues to tie work in this area to the oversight team established under ARRA funding. The Finance Team will provide oversight for the financial obligations of the proposed funding. This experienced team provides what could be described as standard practices for grant monitoring to insure the effective and efficient use of the funds in support of the program goals. In addition, the team will be responsible for performance measure tracking and reporting as insurance against misusing funds. There is a strong management team in place to carry out the plan. (A) (2) (i) (d) The plan re-purposes state and federal funds to align with the plan and move it forward. This section could use more information as to specific examples of funds and programs that would be affected. (A) (2) (i) (e) Information is needed to illustrate how funds will be used to continue reforms after the funding lapses. (A) (2) (ii) (a) and (b) Letters of support are numerous and encompass a wide range of education and political entities. Appendix 6 provides twenty-seven letters including the Chair of the State Board of Education, Utah's Governor, Superintendents Association, Education Association, Utah PTA, Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, Utah School Boards Association, Association of Secondary School Principals, Association of Elementary School Principals, Salt Lake Chamber, the Paiute Indian Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe, Utah Technology Council, universities, schools of education and the Coalition of Minorities Advisory Committee. This is a comprehensive effort to engage the assistance of the organizations and personnel who will be essential to carrying out the reform plan.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	24
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4

(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A) (3) (i) Credible proof is offered of substantial progress in all four areas of education reform. The applicant has addressed this question for each of the four Reform areas. It shows attention to an elementary reading program through the Three-Tiered Model of Reading instruction as well as the K-3 Reading Initiative STAR. The Principals Literacy Institute addresses reading strategies and attention is paid to early intervention for ELL students through the Family Literacy Centers. An extended-day kindergarten program is offered for at risk students. The math and science programs at the elementary and secondary grades provide a combination of incentive pay and coaching coupled with professional development. The narrative supports evidence of work in increasing graduation rates and preparing students for the workplace by adding new programs such as engineering, biotech, information technology and a culinary arts program. Some of the strongest work done in this section has been done in the area of creating a longitudinal data system used to improve instruction. The recruitment and retaining of effective principals is centered on signing bonuses and tuition scholarships. Much work appears to be done in the area of the Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) to bring non-traditional candidates into the field of education. Other practitioner programs have been introduced through pilot programs in Utah LEAs. In Reform Area 4-Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools, only one district has used the turnaround model in conjunction with the state. The results from the first year of operation were encouraging. The application provides information that shows progress in dealing with areas of need as it pertains to reform. The low number of actions to turn around schools raises questions about the ability of the state to move this reform forward. (A) (3) (ii) (a) The data supporting this item shows a steady progress since 2003 in language arts on the CRT and NAEP data charts. This holds true for mathematics as well, although the fact that the CRT test changed in 2009 which skews results. (A) (3) (ii) (b) Subgroups (African American, Hispanic, American Indian and ELL) are significantly below Asian and Caucasian students in performance on the CRT. Improvement does exist in the subgroup scores over time in both language arts and mathematics. ELL student scores declined which is explained as an increase in the number of ELL students entering the system. This needs to be more fully explained. (A) (3) (ii) (c) Utah has a high graduation rate for students, but data shows this is not true for two sub-groups (Hispanic and American Indian students).</p>		
Total	125	115

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B) (1) (i) (a-b) Information is provided regarding a MOU with the Council of Chief School Officers and The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices demonstrating their participation in a statewide consortium to develop the Common Core of Standards. The Standards are presented as internationally benchmarked and aligned with college and work expectations, so that all students are prepared for success upon graduating from high school. A copy of the draft standards is provided. This consortium involves a majority of states. (B) (1) (ii) The document cites Utah Code Section 53A-1-401 (1) as the legal authority to adopt standards and has provided a copy of this in the Appendix. It further cites USBE Education Rule R277-700 as an authority for the review of regular curriculum standards. The USBE has agreed to adopt the Common Core State Standards by August 2, 2010.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	9

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (B) (2) (i) The state is working with four consortiums toward preparing high-quality assessments aligned with the common set of K-12 standards. (B) (2) (ii) The largest of these is Achieve which has 27 participating states including Utah. However, there is no signed MOA. The other MOAs that have been presented do not include participating states. This information needs to be provided.		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (B) (3) The information contained in this section complies with the criteria. From the evidence provided, Utah has a history of implementing well-defined sets of standards and assessments dating back to the 1980's. With this history, this section provides a recap of each project in the reform package accompanied by specific goals for implementing a project followed by a rationale (such as "Utah has successfully used rigorous core standards for over twenty years" or "Utah has successfully used rigorous core assessments for over twenty years") followed by a project summary, the responsible parties, activities and timelines. This is a comprehensive retelling of both the initial reform goals and assessments. A table outlining the implementation time line for professional development and assessment is included.		
Total	70	69

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (C) (1) The information provided indicates that all 12 America COMPETES components are in place.		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (C) (2) The P-20 longitudinal data system is in place and undergoing continuing development. RTTT funds will be used to expand and enhance the current data system. At that time, the system will be available to key stakeholders.		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	18
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (C) (3) Projects and activities in this section enumerate the involvement of LEAs in using the data system that will be created. The narrative supports this by providing goals, activities, timelines and persons responsible for implementation of the program.		
Total	47	47

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	21
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (D) (1) (i) Utah has an Alternative Route to Licensure and fully meets the requirements of this section. The Appendix provides information regarding the Alternative Licensing Route and authority for the		

alternative route in code and rules. (D) (1) (ii) The response here meets the requirements of this section by specifying that qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education, can participate in this program. The program is selective, it provides supervised school-based experiences with support such as mentoring and coaching, limits the amount of coursework required and candidates have the option to test out of a course. Upon completion of the program, the candidates will be awarded the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award. (D)(1)(iii) Utah maintains an electronic credentialing and record keeping system which enables them to identify areas of teacher and principal shortage and develop the Criticality Index indicating critical shortage areas.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	50
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(2)(i) The application meets the requirements for measuring student growth. (D)(2)(ii) This section is currently being developed with an implementation date of 2014. When in place, it will have the promise of being able to differentiate effectiveness of both teachers and principals. More information regarding a multiple assessment of teachers and principals is needed for full credit. The projects mentioned here may have the capacity to provide an effective evaluation system. Alternative options are also available to paraeducators and principals. ARL Rules allow teachers to teach in accredited Utah schools on a temporary license for up to three years. There is a screening process for prospective candidates to be accepted into the program, which Utah states accounts for 65% of ARL teachers remaining in the profession after three years. (D) (2) (iii) The projects mentioned here have the capacity to provide an effective evaluation system. Evaluations will become annual for all educators. Student growth will be used to evaluate teacher performance. Because it is tied to teachers and students, this information can be accessed for evaluation purposes. This section meets the requirements for conducting annual evaluations and should provide information about teacher and student performance. (D) (2) (iv) (a) and (b) This section meets the provision for using evaluations to inform decisions regarding developing teachers and principals and compensating, promoting and retaining teachers. (D) (2) (iv) (c) The decision to grant tenure for teachers and principals involves several steps based on evaluations of their three years of service in the position they hold. Growth, based on demonstrated proficiency in that position, appears to be the principle means of determining their fitness for the position. Information needs to be provided as to how this will provide rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent fair procedures. (D) (2) (iv) (d) This section meets the demands of this item. Utah has in Quarterly Termination Act which provides for due process for the dismissal of teachers.

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

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(D) (3) (i) The narrative outlines several actions and strategies currently in action that serve to ensure equitable access to both highly effective teachers and principals. High minority schools are defined by Utah as schools which exceeded 51.75% minority. Low minority schools are defined as those with 28.7% or less. Utah complies with the ESEA Act requiring equitable distribution of highly qualified and experienced teachers where there are large concentrations of minority children. To further comply with the act, Utah will include the designation of "effective" teachers to the SEA and LEA equitable distribution plan in 2010. The narrative outlines several actions and strategies currently in action that serve to ensure equitable access to both highly effective teachers and principals. The use of RTTT

funds and Title IIA funds will provide support for rural teachers who teach multiple subjects are sufficiently supported to meet the "effective" category. This is a high area of need given the large number of schools which are both high poverty and high-minority and have ineffective teachers (30.4%). Goals for this section have not been set due to the lack of adequate data. An actual plan to provide highly effective teachers and principals to schools is not clearly spelled out. (D) (3) (ii) The USDE performs a survey of districts yearly to obtain information about hard-to-staff subjects or specialty areas. This section needs extensive development to show how the state will provide for equitable distribution in these high need areas.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	7
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 (D) (4) (i) Several means (survey, coupling of teachers to student performance, the Continuum of Support for Educator Excellence, Dean's Council) are used to inform schools of education preparing teachers of the needs of their coursework. This is also true for the principals. The development of similar standards such as CSEE is a work in progress. The public can not access this data. An effective plan needs to be developed in this section for identifying successful educators and principals and link their success to specific education programs. (D) (4) (ii) This section needs to develop a plan that in some depth that would lead to expansion. Currently, no such program exists.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	8
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 (D) (5) (i) The narrative addresses the need for four pedagogical variables that influence achievement in the classroom such as student-teacher relationships and instructional procedures independent of content knowledge and curriculum. There are several areas that are overlooked in the limits established for this criteria including common planning time, designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high-need students and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices. Each of these needs to be included in this response. (D) (5) (ii) This is a very general response which focuses on an outside agency to conduct a study of the effectiveness of support for teachers and principals. Information regarding how these supports will be evaluated needs to be provided.

Total	138	96
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 (E) (1) Utah state law allowing for the direct intervention in schools or districts is not clearly spelled out. Information needs to be supplied about the state's ability to directly intervene in persistently low performing schools. It needs to clarify the limits placed up intervention as well.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	25
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(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
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(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	20
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 (E) (2) (i) Utah currently is using the recommended USDE method for identifying low performing schools. It suggests an alternative method for identifying the schools that would be more inclusive in the table they provide. For those Title I Schools identified for improvement and state identified lowest achieving elementary schools and secondary schools, the state identifies this process in an

accompanying table. (E)(2)(ii) Only one school, since school year 2004-2005, was restructured using the turnaround model. In the performance measures, the expectation is that 10 schools will utilize the intervention models in 2011-2012. There is a very low incidence of intervention in the state to turn around schools. With this low record of turning around schools, it seems overly ambitious to expect 10 schools to undergo this process within the SY 2011. Credible evidence should be supplied as to the possibility of this actually taking place.

Total	50	30
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F) (1) (i) Documentation for this section is presented showing an increase in the education budget as a percentage of the State Budget. The increase was 5.5% over the previous year. (F)(1)(ii)(a) The USOE has demonstrated through this section that equitable funding pervades the school systems. The state has on the books a law called the Minimum School Program Act that insures districts received their fair share of state funds for education. (F)(1)(ii)(b) As mentioned previously, the Minimum School Program Act provides equitable funding for schools. This section includes information related to Utah Code 53A from the Utah State Constitution as evidence of policies leading to equitable funding. (F)(1) (ii)(c) Evidence for this is contained in (F)(1)(i).		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	24
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (F)(2)(i) While the narrative states that there is no limit to the number of charter schools in Utah, the Code governing charter schools does define the maximum number of authorized students in charters. It does provide for an annual increase in charter schools equal to 1.4% of total school district enrollment as of October 1 of the previous year. This does seem to set limits upon student enrollment and needs to be clarified. (F) (2) (ii) There is a need in the narrative to show how the state will encourage the development of charter schools relative to high-need students. (F)(2) (iii) Equitable funding is provided for charter schools. (F)(2)(iv) Utah law does not provide charter schools with funding specifically for facilities. (F)(2)(v) This section shows significant offerings for innovative and autonomous schools.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (F)(3) This section provides information found in the Appendix that cover the legal authority for a majority of innovative programs listed in the previous section.		
Total	55	39

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

There is only a slight mention throughout the application to technology and engineering which are central to the STEM program. The plan needs more detail to ensure that it can be successfully expanded and extended to students throughout the state.

Total	15	0
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Utah has addressed the four ARRA areas. Substantial work has been done prior to this grant notice in the four areas covered by ARRA and the reform plans for funding under this grant explore these areas in depth. The application sets forth four areas comprised of 15 projects. These areas are noted below:
 1. Adopting Standards and Assessments that Prepare Students to Succeed in the Workplace; 2. Building Data Systems that Measure Student Growth and Success, Inform Teachers and Principals about How They Can Improve Instruction; 3. Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals, Especially Where They Are Needed Most; and 4. Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools. The approach is system wide and proposes to use RTTT to meet a series of goals found under each area. Specific timelines for completion are listed and projects identified as well as the reform areas these projects address that lead to meeting those goals which include new directions for the areas in question. In addition, the state will expand on successful practices that have been in operation for a considerable length of time. This approach has been followed in each of the reform areas. As support for this submission, some projects although not all, include a rationale to support the capacity to carry out the design of the project. In doing so, they provide a history over time of previous work in the specific area. The narrative points to previous target dates set by the state for accomplishing a project and indicates a number of times in this section and throughout the application that with RTTT funds these targets can occur sooner or at a faster pace. From the evidence provided throughout the application this appears as a comprehensive and credible design that has been clearly articulated throughout the application.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	396
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Utah Application #6360UT-4



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	65
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	45
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: Utah's proposed Promises to Keep reform effort consists of 15 projects related to the four ARRA reform areas, with special focus on Great Teachers and Leaders, and developing and implementing tools to measure and improve instruction. The reform plans build on past and current initiatives in the state, pertaining to: adopting standards and assessments (e.g., K-3 Reading Initiatives; 4-6 Mathematics Initiative; Extended Kindergarten for at-risk children); data systems that measure student growth (e.g., USEO Utah Test Item Pool, Utah Mentor Teacher Academy); effective teachers and principals (e.g., Principals Literacy Institute, Public Education Job Enhancement Program), and turning around lowest achieving schools (e.g., USOE School Support Team). Utah's Comprehensive Reform Plan is designed to help them "achieve literacy by third grade, increase effective teaching K-12, assist in creating school environments more conducive to learning; and engage the community in turning around struggling schools." They have secured widespread LEA commitment, with 105 participating LEAs out of the state's 111 LEAs (94.6%), and 91.4% of their 70 charter LEAs. Signatures for MOUs were secured for a high proportion of key leaders, including 100% of superintendents (n = 105); 87% of presidents of school boards (n = 92), and 88% of local teachers' union leaders (38 out of 43 leaders).</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	25
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant demonstrates its ability to draw upon strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans, through the support of the Governor, Governor's Deputy for Education, Utah State Board of Education and State Office of Education, and 15 key organizations and associations. Dedicated staff from the State Office has been organized into three teams (for oversight, program implementation, and financial and reporting). The proposal did not provide much detail on the names or backgrounds of people who would be selected to be the key members of these teams. Planning for the reform proposal involved five meetings held around the state, with over 300 individuals participating. The proposal details how the State will address supporting LEAs, provide effective and efficient operations, accomplish the State's plans and meet targets, and use resources so that initiatives are sustainable beyond the grant funding. The applicant did not provide much information on what types of other state funds will be re-purposed so that they align with the Race to the Top Plan. A broad range of stakeholder support is evident. Letters of support were provided from</p>		

many individuals, representing a wide range of professional educational associations, higher education institutions, political and business leaders, and Native American and minority organizations.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	24
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	19
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides evidence that the state has made progress in each of the reform areas. The state has made progress concerning: adopting standards and assessments (e.g., Three-tiered Model of Reading Instruction (primary special education model); K-3 Reading Initiatives; 4-6 Mathematics Initiative; Extended Kindergarten for at-risk children); data systems that measure student growth (e.g., Utah's Data Institute); effective teachers and principals (e.g., Utah Mentor Teacher Academy, Public Education Job Enhancement Program), and turning around lowest achieving schools (e.g., USOE School Support Team). The State has experienced increases, albeit gradual, in student achievement since 2003 in their ESEA required CRTs. These changes are attributed to such programs as their K-3 Reading Initiative, Extended Kindergarten Program, Family Literacy Centers, and 4-6 Mathematics Initiatives. Utah's NAEP Reading and math scores also showed general increases since 2003. Targeted subgroups also increased, with the exception of ELL students, which they attribute to the growing population of ELL students. Utah has seen a slight decrease in achievement gap between subgroups. A new system for tracking high school class was just established in 2007. Overall graduation rate is 88%, although with higher rates for Caucasian students (91%) as compared with downtrends amongst American Indian, Hispanic, and ELL students, which they hope to address in parts of their reform plan. No definition is provided for what constitutes graduation rate, nor specific data figures provided for this area, by sub group.</p>		
Total	125	114

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has demonstrated strong commitment to developing and adopting common standards. Utah is participating in the 48 state Common Core State Standards CCSO Consortium. It is committed to adopting the common set of standards by August 2010, and has outlined a plan of how they will help LEAs adopt the new standards.</p>		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Utah has demonstrated the high value they place on developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments. Utah is participating in four different consortia addressing state assessments. These include the SMARTER (14 states), MOSAIC (25 states), Balanced Assessment (36 states) and Achieve (18 states) Consortia.</p>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	15

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal presents a set of six projects that they assert will help schools make the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments. These projects include: 1) New Common Core State Standards in Reading/Language and Mathematics; 2) Using the Common Core Standards to Improve Reading Instruction; 3) Using the Common Core Standards to Ensure Mathematics Literacy for All Utah Children; 4) Ensuring Postsecondary Success; 5) Improving Early Learning Outcomes, and 6) Refinement of Utah Performance Assessment System for Students (U-PASS) Testing. Detailed plans and timelines for each project are offered both in the project proposal narrative and reform plan in the appendix. Lacking in the proposal, however, is a substantive description in the proposal body itself at the beginning of this section which clearly articulates how these projects constitute a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to enhanced standards and quality assessments, and how collectively, form a well-integrated and coherent plan.

Total	70	65
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Utah has stated in the body of the proposal that it has implemented all 7 capabilities and 12 elements described in the America COMPETES Act. The information they provide in the appendix, however, was somewhat confusing regarding which elements were completed or alternatively, under development.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Utah outlines two projects addressing the accessing and use of state data: 1) Expansion and Adaptation of State Longitudinal Data Systems, and 2) Effective Data Access for Instructional Improvement. Detailed plans and timelines for each project are offered both in the project proposal narrative and reform plan in the appendix. The proposal also includes a set of performance measures for reaching 100% implementation of completed longitudinal data system in 100% of the LEAs, by the end of SY 2012-2013.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: I, ii and iii combined: Utah outlines two projects addressing the accessing and use of state and local instructional improvement systems (IIS): 1) Effective Data Access for Instructional Improvement (also mentioned in C2) and 2) Effective Use. The Effective Use project is designed to support the "use of data to inform instruction, professional learning communities and school improvement strategies, and in the understanding and use of at-risk, dropout and graduation data." While the proposal outlines the various steps and tasks involved in creating the local IIS, and there is very little information or discussion as to what types of support they anticipate teachers and principals will need to be motivated to work with the data systems, and what type of substantive professional development they will need. Specific information and details regarding how data from the IIS and other statewide longitudinal data systems would be made available and accessible to researchers was not thoroughly provided in the proposal.</p>		
Total	47	41

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>I - Teachers in Utah have multiple alternative routes to earn licensure, other than traditional university preparation programs. Para educators can receive scholarships to move to a licensed educator. A few alternative routes to licensure are available for principals and administrators. It appeared that the routes satisfied all 5 of the 5 elements. li - The proposal presents 7 current programs offering alternative routes, with a total of 238 educators completing the program 2008-09, and 990 enrolled in 2009-10. For the largest program offered through the largest state community college (Salt Lake Community College), data is provided that shows that of the new teachers hired for the 2008-09 school year, almost 8% were prepared through an alternative route. There is generally very little offered by way of alternative routes to certification for principals. One method, involving a special letter of authorization, yielded only 3 principals during the 2008-09 year. lii - Utah has a current system for monitoring and identifying areas of teacher shortage, and preparing teachers to fill these areas of shortage. Tools and programs include the Computer Aided Credentials of Teachers in Utah Schools (CACUS) to track and analyze data, including use of a Criticality Index, and a Public Education Job enhancement Program providing salary supplements, coaching, and STEM recruitment efforts.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	42
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	6
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>I - Utah has a system it can currently use to measure growth for each individual system, and link the information to the student's teacher. The two major components of its data system include criterion referenced data and summative data for students, and an educator data system. Utah also has in place a unique personal identification system for each student, teacher and administrator. li - The proposal outlines 4 different projects dealing with teacher evaluation and effectiveness: 1) UCSEE (Utah Continuum of Support for Educator Excellence (a state-wide continuum of support for developing and practicing teachers); 2) Principal Leadership Pathway, and 3) Measures of Instructional Quality; 4) Performance Pay Pilot Program. Utah has also passed some recent laws that enable the establishment of yearly formative assessment, and standards for formative and summative evaluation. For UCSEE, Utah plans to designate 4 levels of teacher licensing (pre-practitioners, novice practitioner; developing practitioner; master teacher), and for the Principal Leadership Pathway, two levels of licensure. While these various programs are generally described with the many steps and activities listed, the proposal contains little information or substantive discussion of how student growth or school academic growth will play a significant factor in teacher or principal programs. lii - With the new framework for teacher evaluation, evaluations will become annual for all educators, and factor in appropriate use of student growth data. This will improve upon the current system, where annual evaluation are required only for provisional educators, and non-provisional teachers are evaluated only every three years. The proposal, however, provided little discussion as to how such data will be used, and what was entailed in ensuring timely and instructive feedback, and how student growth data would be presented or utilized. Iv - Plans are provided for how teachers and principals will receive coaching, induction support, receiving higher compensation or tenure for being highly effective, or may be dismissed if they do not demonstrate competency. The ways in which student growth data would be used in these cases was mentioned, but not fully discussed.</p>		

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	12
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	7
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5
<p>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes a number of general systems and plans in place to address equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. Started in 2010, Utah will add the designation of "effective" teachers to the SEA and LEA equitable distribution plan, so that the data can be analyzed to ensure equitable distribution into high poverty or high minority schools. LEAs use the CACTUS database that houses comprehensive credentialing data on all Utah educator license holders, and LEAs must be in compliance with equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers in settings with high concentrations of minority or poverty children. The state is also working with Teachers-Teachers.com to manage a statewide educator recruitment initiative, and giving all LEAs access to the pool of teacher candidates. There was little detail or discussion of a plan of how to reach equitable distribution, nor targets set for any plan. The primary equitable distribution strategy discussed in the proposal was a description of a past partner involving a recruitment process. li – The applicant outlines several different strategies it uses to address equitable distribution of hard-to-staff subjects. Various loan and incentive programs help recruit teachers in critical areas of need. The proposal indicates that they intend to use RTTT funding in addition to Title IIa funding to ensure that educators in rural areas of the state, often required to teach multiple subjects, are supported in their professional development. It does not, however, sufficiently describe the form or nature of that professional development support. The proposal does not lay out a specific plan for addressing overall inequities regarding hard-to-staff subjects, nor lay out any targets for a plan.</p>		
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	7
<p>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Utah currently has a reasonable, general system in place through the CACTUS data base system to provide student, and teacher performance data by degree granting and credentialing information. This information is reviewed by a State Board committee for approval of teacher preparation programs. The proposal also reports work in progress regarding a pilot integrated teacher preparation model at the University of Utah/Salt Lake School District, and further development of Utah Standards for teacher preparation. Several initiatives are also cited for principal preparation, utilizing the CACTUS system and a School Leadership Preparation and Practice Survey, which includes student learning outcomes amongst a variety of different issues surveyed. While the proposal lists relevant on-going work, it does not lay out in sufficient detail a particular, well-designed coherent plan for work in this area. li – Utah has a quite manageable number of total teacher credentialing programs (11) and principal credentialing programs (6) in the state. They report that longitudinal data shows that the programs are producing roughly equivalent groups of well-prepared teacher and principal candidates (but do not provide numbers or percentages for these findings), and plan to use new data on effective and highly effective teachers and principals to identify and expand those programs that demonstrate most success. They hope to identify programs that produce significantly more teachers in hard-to fill areas such as math and science, and the recruiting and retention tools used. They only generally allude to looking at "elements of successful programs", without much specification of the kinds of analyses and critique different credentialing programs would receive.</p>		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	9
<p>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State describes a reasonable plan to provide effective support to teachers and principals. It plans to integrate two currently existing on-line tools that provide online tracking of professional development and provide teachers with models of instructional excellence (via research-based video segments), and also offer a professional learning communities model, and common planning time. For principals, they note efforts of the Utah School Leadership Institute that measures and promotes student</p>		

achievements as well as key areas of school quality highly related to student achievement. The applicant draws upon relevant research work being conducted within the state, at Utah State and Brigham Young University. The USOE will be contracting with an outside reviewing agency (not specifically named) to study the effectiveness of these supports, to be done on an annual basis, with a focus on continuing improvement of student achievement. This evaluation work was described only in the most general terms, and only in a very brief paragraph, for such an important piece of work. Furthermore, the work seemed to include two totally different evaluation agendas -data from implementation and effectiveness of program activities that will be useful feedback to teachers and principals, and work from the outside evaluator to evaluate the overall system.

Total	138	85
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	0
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The proposal does not explicitly declare that the State has legal, statutory or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	26
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	21
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: To its credit, Utah is proposing a new more accurate procedure that they feel places more rigorous emphasis on longitudinal data, compared with the current method recommended by the US DOE. Such a procedure will allow them to identify many of the lowest performing schools in the state that are in fact not Title I schools. The technique also proposes to use a four-year average, rather than two consecutive years of not achieving AYP, and to factor in graduation rate for determining low performing high schools. Utah has been effective to date in preventing Title I schools from reaching the persistently low performing schools designation. The proposal presents two projects addressing turning around persistently lowest achieving schools, System of Support for Title I Struggling Schools, and Preventing Low-Achieving Secondary Schools. Of note, the latter project proposes a more proactive strategy for tackling low achievement schools, and grants not only training and support, but requires LEAs to allow identified schools greater flexibility and autonomy in selecting staff, creating new structures for the school day, control the school's budget, and other aspects of the school's operation. The proposal does not specifically discuss in detail any of the four intervention models listed in the Notice that they propose to use. No thoughtful plan is provided to accompany their declaration that they plan to reach 10 schools by the end of SY 2011-12, in their performance measures table.		
Total	50	26

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		

The State of Utah increased its support for public and higher education from 2008 to 2009 in terms of percentage of state budget (although not in actual dollars.) The actual 2008 education budget for education was 53.7% in 2008 and 59.2% in 2009. Utah has sufficiently adequate laws and policies that lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAS and other LEAs, and between high-poverty schools and other schools. When measured by the GAO, it was one of only two states that had basically no income-related funding gap between wealthy and poor districts. It did not provide specific information as to how state policies led to equitable funding within LEAs, between high-poverty and other schools.

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

40

23

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Utah has a number of successful conditions in place for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools. There is no limit to the number of charter schools in Utah. There are now 72 charter schools in Utah (7.3% of schools), serving 6% of public school age population. There are 70 Charter school LEAs, with a wide range of types listed in the proposal (e.g., core knowledge; classical education; arts; back to basics, science and technology.) The main structural constraints deal with a combined maximum student capacity for students, that annually increases by 1.4% of student enrollment per year, to facilitate the Legislature's financial planning. ii – The state has appropriate laws, etc. regarding how charter schools are approved, authorized, and held accountable, and if charters fail, including failing to serve lowest performing students who fail to make AYP. Only 1 charter school has been terminated, while another two are being closely monitored. The proposal did not indicate that State encourages charter schools to serve high-need student populations. iii – No evidence is provided as to how state law ensures that Utah charter schools receive equitable funding compared to other public schools. iv – Utah does not provide charter schools with funding specifically for facilities. It does provides assistance through such things as availability of state-funded revolving loans. It does not impose any requirements that are stricter than those applied for traditional public schools. v – The state enables LEAS to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools, and has a number in operation, including early college high schools, IB schools, and the Utah Electronic High School, coordinated by the Utah State Board of Education.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

5

3

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal lists several of Utah's laws that allows the State Board of Education to waive rules that they are convinced inhibits innovation, efficiency and productivity in schools, and encourages innovative, autonomous public schools and programs. Connections between these laws and ways in which they have increased student achievement and graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes were not fully discussed in the proposal.

Total

55

33

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		
Utah offers a reasonable plan incorporating various educational elements concerning STEM, including creation of rigorous and relevant math courses and lesson plans, implementing a K-6 math initiative and algebra initiative; professional development in mathematics, and promoting information for students and parents on STEM career and college pathways. It also will be using its USTAR program to extend teacher pay for STEM educators, and its PEJEP program for recruiting and retaining teachers in STEM. It also plans to cooperate with STEM-capable community partners to provide internships for teacher leaders.		

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

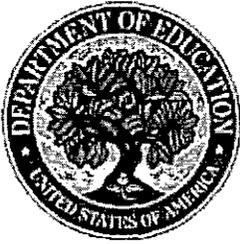
	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Utah's proposed Promises to Keep reform effort features 15 projects addressing the four ARRA reform areas. They have secured widespread LEA commitments (94.6% of all LEAS in the state), as well as good statewide capacity and a broad range of stakeholders. Regarding standards and assessment, it is participating in the 48-state Common Core State Standards CCSO Consortium and in multiple multi-state consortia addressing state standards. It has presented six projects to help schools make the transition to enhanced standards and assessments, and two projects addressing the use of state data, and local instructional improvement data systems. The state has multiple alternative routes to earn licensure, and methods for identifying areas of teacher shortage and ways. It has a general system in place for measuring student growth that can be linked to a student's teacher, and proposes four projects dealing with teacher evaluation and effectiveness, including efforts to link teacher effectiveness with teacher credentialing programs. The proposal also outlines projects to address turning around persistently low-achieving schools.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	379
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 1

Utah Application #6360UT-5



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	61
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	44
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: A1i - The application has articulated a comprehensive plan that addresses the four education areas and is consistent with the specific reforms plans proposed throughout the application. Additional specific detail regarding implementation would have strengthened the description. A1ii - The MOU and Scope-of-Work descriptions require participating LEAs to implement all portions of the State's RTTT plan and reflect their strong commitment to the goals. The percentage of signatures from LEA board presidents (87.6%) and particularly union leaders (88.3%) is very high which increases the likelihood that the plan will have significant statewide impact. The completed summary table is included and contains the required information. There are slight discrepancies in the statistics (participating charter schools) in the narrative. The percentage of LEAs participating is very high (94.6%), representing 99.7% of all students and 99.8% of students in poverty so the likelihood of the RTTT plan implementation translating into broad statewide impact is high. The plan includes goals for each of the four required areas and the goals, while difficult to read, seem achievable. The data presented on improving graduation rates was mixed and the improvement goals not clear (only the ultimate goal of 100% was mentioned). The contrast between what the goals would look like were the State not to receive a RTTT award and if it were, is clearly articulated.</p>		
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	25
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: A2i - The Utah Comprehensive Reform Plan is built on past successful state initiatives and articulates leadership for each component which will provide implementation support for LEAs, including a plan for systemic monitoring. The application describes other funds and resources will be aligned (repurposed) to the Comprehensive Reform Plan and an indication of the state's commitment to continue the reforms after the grant period; however, exactly how that will happen is not clearly articulated. A2ii - The application includes strong letters of support from a broad group of stakeholders including teacher and administrative associations, legislators, institutions of higher education and community organizations</p>		
(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	23

(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: A3i – As described in the plan, Utah has made progress in each of the four reform areas. Notable areas are: updating the CTE standards, developing a longitudinal data system, implementing incentives for teachers to teach in hard-to-fill areas, and developing a system of support for low performing schools. A3ii – While the data presented indicated overall increases in student achievement as demonstrated by the longitudinal NAEP and ESEA results presented, the NAEP information was difficult to read. There was no definition of graduation rate so it was difficult to assess whether graduation rates have increased, particularly for subgroups. As required, appendix 7 provided raw data for ESEA criteria.		
Total	125	109

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: B1i - Utah is participating in the Common Core Standards Initiative consortium (which includes 48 States) that is developing and disseminating standards in ELA and mathematics (as defined by the notice). The MOU and list of participating states is included as an appendix in the application. B1ii - Utah is committed and prepared to adopt the CCS when approved, as early as July 2010.		
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	10
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Utah is participating in the MOSAIC consortium (which includes 26 States) that is developing and disseminating formative, diagnostic, and benchmark assessments to assess student progress on the Common Core Standards throughout the year. The MOU and list of participating states is included as an appendix in the application.		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	16
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application has outlined a realistic plan for 'rolling out' the new standards and assessments throughout the state and is based on previous state experiences. Coaching is mentioned in a number of places but details of a coaching infrastructure are not described. Also, the assessments will not be fully implemented until 2014, which seems like a delayed timeframe; earlier implementation of the ongoing assessments would have strengthened the application.		
Total	70	66

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The narrative indicates that Utah has completed the twelve elements described in the America COMPETES Act; however, in the appendix, several aspects of many of the elements appear to still be under development, so it is confusing. Further clarification will be required if the State is interviewed.</p>		
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Utah currently has a system that allows parents, teachers and administrators to access State student achievement data that is described in the application.</p>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	12
<p>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: C3i - The application describes that the state will support access to the data needed to improve instruction through the longitudinal data systems but does not include detailed information about how this will be implemented. It would be helpful to include a chart that clearly articulates the goals, activities, responsible parties and timeline for the plans described in the narrative for C3i and C3ii. C3ii - The application describes general information regarding professional development for principals and teachers but the plan is not detailed sufficiently to assess the quality of the plan C3iii - Regarding making access to this longitudinal information to researchers the plan only indicates access to universities, not necessarily the wider audience of researchers.</p>		
Total	47	41

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	19
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: D1i - The legal, statutory and regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification are clearly presented and can operate independently of IHEs. D1ii - The application clearly indicated the alternative routes to certification that have been in use and the number of teachers certified by each for the last several years; however, the number of teachers certified through this process seemed low - approximately 15% of applicants (151 approved). Additionally, only 3 principals were certified by this process, which seems very low. D1iii - The application describes the process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying teacher and principal shortages that is currently in use as well as how to fill these areas of shortage is clearly articulated.</p>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	23
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: D2i - Utah currently has a system for measuring student growth for each individual student (as defined by the notice). D2ii - Teacher and Principal evaluation systems have been developed and will be implemented on an annual basis that differentiate effectiveness using multiple ratings and take into account students growth as a significant factor, and have been designed and developed with teacher</p>		

and principal involvement. D2iii – The state plan articulates the annual evaluations process for teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback, including data on student growth on a student, class and school basis; however, the emphasis is on new teachers and principals. More information about how evaluations would be used for more veteran teachers and principals would have strengthened the application. D2iv – The state plan describes how the annual evaluations could be used to inform key decisions; however, more information about how evaluations would be used for removing ineffective teachers and principals, and especially for more veteran teachers and principals would have strengthened the application.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	13
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments:

D3i - Although the state has not articulated specific annual targets, they have indicated the baseline data and a formula for calculating the subsequent targets. The application has clearly described current programs that monitor the distribution of qualified teachers (and plans to add 'effective' as defined in the plan) through the CACTUS database and has partnered with another agency to develop and implement a recruitment system to which all LEAs have access. Quarterly and annual reports are provided. The State will require LEAs to develop a plan for equitable distribution of teachers, but does not include specific details about what would be required in these plans. The performance measure annual targets were not completed. D3ii – The application only generally describes incentive programs and professional development to ensure equitable distribution of qualified teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and areas. The existing systems described in D3i are a reasonable starting point, but the plan for actually achieving these goals was not strong. The performance measure annual targets were not completed.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	10
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(D)(4) Reviewer Comments:

D4i - The plan describes linking teacher credentialing data to passing scores on content knowledge exams and other related licensure data, but the description of the same for principal credentialing is not as strong. D4ii – The plan minimally describes expanding programs that have been successful in recruiting prospective teachers interested in teaching in urban school settings, but does not provide targets for interim years. The description for principals is briefly only mentioned.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	12
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:

D5i – The application generally describes two online systems for tracking and monitoring professional development and credentialing that will enhance the ability of LEAs and the State to ensure that the supports for teachers and principals are effective; however, the specifics of an implementation plan are more vague. The described effort to develop professional learning communities and the collaborative effort with researchers to identify effective practices is promising. D5ii – The plan only articulates the development of a plan to gather data to assess the effectiveness of the professional development plan, and is not a detailed implementation plan.

Total	138	105
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The State has the legal, statutory or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs; however, the link to student achievement growth and the specific implementation steps are not specifically identified.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	31
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	26
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: E2i – The state has clearly identified the persistently lowest-achieving schools. E2ii – The plan has identified the possible intervention models (that are in compliance with the definitions of the notice) for turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools and indicated which ones were appropriate for individual schools; however, what is described for use is only the restructuring model. There is a plan that articulates goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties, but there is a strong reliance on outside parties with expertise in turnaround efforts, without detailed information about what the implementation plans would be. The description of the WINS program effort is ambitious, but if implemented could have an impact on student achievement. Evidence of state implementation of turnaround measures is documented, but very limited. Given the State's limited experience, the goal of turning around seven secondary schools is optimistic.		
Total	50	36

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: F1i – The plan indicates that education expenditures, as a percentage of state budget, appropriated in 2009 (59.2%) exceed the actual expenditure in 2008 (53.7%) F1ii – The State policies as described in the plan includes some provisions for redistribution of funds but do not ensure equitable funding for high needs schools.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	28
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: F2i - The State has charter school laws do set some limits to the maximum number and annual increases for students in charter schools. F2ii- The State application describes the laws and regulations regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor and close schools but does not include a provision for ensuring that the population of the school is similar to that of the district in which it resides. Student achievement progress is a factor in closing a school, but the definition of student achievement is meeting AYP goals, not as defined in the notices. The state has closed one ineffective charter school. F2iii - The application describes that Utah has statutes that intend for charter schools to be funded equitably in comparison to traditional public schools; however, it also states that the Utah BOE rules only encourage school districts to allow charter school students to receive equal funding, and does not provide assurance. F2iv - The State does not provide facilities funding for charter schools; however, it does not impose any facility related requirements that are stricter than for traditional public schools. F2v - The application describes wide latitude for LEAs to operate innovative and autonomous schools other than charter schools.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application cites eight current Utah Education codes or legislation that have allowed Utah to encourage innovative autonomous public schools and programs.		
Total	55	41

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The plan adequately addresses (i) offering rigorous STEM courses, (ii) cooperating and collaborating with community and higher education partners, and providing incentives for teachers; however, additional description of how criteria (iii) (preparing more students for advanced study and careers in STEM and addressing the needs of underrepresented groups) would have strengthened the application.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The application presents a comprehensive and plan for addressing each of the four required reform areas that present a systemic approach to improving student achievement. However, the coherence of the plan could be strengthened by organizing the presentation of the programs, rationale, activities in a more coherent fashion; as presented it was somewhat difficult to follow.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	413