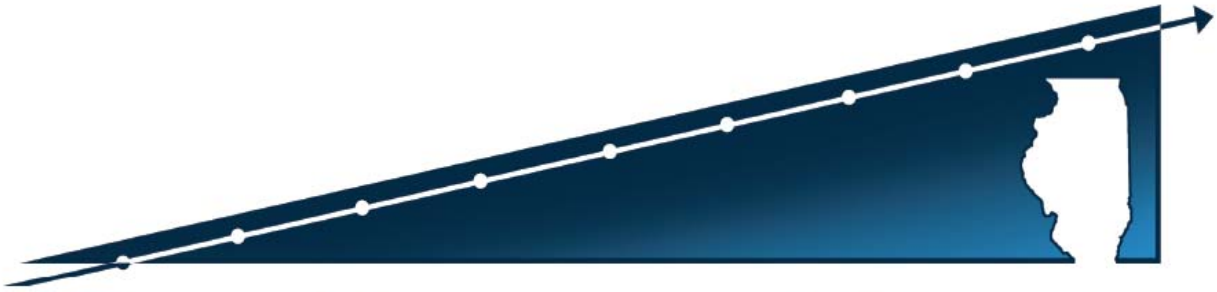

The State of Illinois RACE TO THE TOP

APPLICATION FOR INITIAL FUNDING

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN
ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 19, 2010

STATE OF ILLINOIS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

Pat Quinn
GOVERNOR

Mr. Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

January 14, 2009

Re: The State of Illinois, Race to the Top Application for Initial Funding

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We are pleased to submit for your consideration the State of Illinois, Race to the Top Application. This application presents the State of Illinois with a unique opportunity to advance its education agenda. The Race to the Top priorities are closely aligned with the State's education strategy which centers on P-20 alignment to high standards, data based decision-making, improving human capital, intensive supports for lowest performing schools and districts, and comprehensive high school reforms.

Illinois is prepared to take advantage of this funding opportunity because the State has already begun building the infrastructure to support the Race to the Top priority areas, with aggressive action over the past several years, and would welcome this opportunity to accelerate critical work that is already underway with much needed funding from the federal government.

We are excited to report that more than 350 school districts, representing approximately three-quarters of Illinois public school students, have committed to implement the comprehensive reforms in the State's plan. Through the commitments made by well over 100 local union leaders, the Illinois plan demonstrates that the most challenging reforms in education can be tackled in partnership with teachers. We are particularly proud of our twelve "Super LEAs," where the district superintendent and the union leader have both committed to boldly accelerate difficult reforms in over twenty of the State's lowest performing schools. The participation in this plan by school district leadership, teachers, principals, and a host of other partners, ensure that it will not only impact the districts that have chosen to participate, but will ensure that the Illinois education system will provide all students with the resources and opportunities to compete in the global economy of the 21st Century.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this application. We are hopeful that this application will result in an opportunity to partner with you and the Department on its implementation.

Sincerely,

Pat Quinn
Governor

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Jesse H. Ruiz
ISBE Chairman

III RACE TO THE TOP APPLICATION ASSURANCES
(CFDA No. 84.395A)

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of the Governor Pat Quinn	Applicant's Mailing Address: Office of the Governor Pat Quinn 207 State House Springfield, Illinois 62706
Employer Identification Number: 05-0527061	Organizational DUNS: 806812558
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.	Contact Position and Office: State Superintendent, Illinois State Board of Education
Contact Telephone: (217) 785-1288	Contact E-mail Address: Chris.Koch@isbe.net

Required Applicant Signatures:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.

I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Pat Quinn, Governor	Telephone: (217) 782-0244
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: Pat Quinn	Date: January 13, 2010
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.	Telephone: (217) 782-2223
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: Christopher A. Koch	Date: January 14, 2010
President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): Jesse H. Ruiz, Chairman	Telephone: 217/ 782-2223
Signature of the President of the State Board of Education: Jesse H. Ruiz	Date: Jan. 14, 2010

State Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions concerning, State law, statute, and regulation in its application are complete, accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation.
(See especially Eligibility Requirement (b), Selection Criteria (B)(1), (D)(1), (E)(1), (F)(2), (F)(3).)

I certify that the State does not have any legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the State level to linking data on student achievement (as defined in this notice) or student growth (as defined in this notice) to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation.

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Lisa Madigan, Illinois Attorney General	Telephone: (312) 814-3000
Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative: Lisa Madigan	Date: January 19, 2010

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING AND OTHER ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Accountability, Transparency and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all of the accountability, transparency, and reporting requirements that apply to the Race to the Top program, including the following:

- For each year of the program, the State will submit a report to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, that describes:
    - the uses of funds within the State;
    - how the State distributed the funds it received;
    - the number of jobs that the Governor estimates were saved or created with the funds;
    - the State's progress in reducing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers, implementing a State longitudinal data system, and developing and implementing valid and reliable assessments for limited English proficient students and students with disabilities; and
    - if applicable, a description of each modernization, renovation, or repair project approved in the State application and funded, including the amounts awarded and project costs (ARRA Division A, Section 14008)

- The State will cooperate with any U.S. Comptroller General evaluation of the uses of funds and the impact of funding on the progress made toward closing achievement gaps (ARRA Division A, Section 14009)

- If the State uses funds for any infrastructure investment, the State will certify that the investment received the full review and vetting required by law and that the chief executive accepts responsibility that the investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds. This certification will include a description of the investment, the estimated total cost, and the amount of covered funds to be used. The certification will be posted on the State's website and linked to www.Recovery.gov. A State or local agency may not use funds under the ARRA for infrastructure investment funding unless this certification is made and posted. (ARRA Division A, Section 1511)

- The State will submit reports, within 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, that contain the information required under section 1512(c) of the ARRA in accordance with any guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget or the Department. (ARRA Division A, Section 1512(c))

- The State will cooperate with any appropriate Federal Inspector General's examination of records under the program. (ARRA Division A, Section 1515)

Other Assurances and Certifications

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures or certifies the following:

- The State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs) and to the extent consistent with the State's application, OMB Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.

- The State will comply with all of the operational and administrative provisions in Title XV and XIV of the ARRA, including Buy American Requirements (ARRA Division A, Section 1605), Wage Rate Requirements (section 1606), and any applicable environmental impact requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.) (ARRA Division A, Section 1609). In using ARRA funds for infrastructure investment, recipients will comply with the requirement regarding Preferences for Quick Start Activities (ARRA Division A, Section 1602).

- Any local educational agency (LEA) receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).

- Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State (through either its Stabilization Fiscal Stabilization Fund application or another U.S. Department of Education Federal grant) a description of how the LEA will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The description must include information on the steps the LEA proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede access to, or participation in, the program.

- The State and other entities will comply with the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), including the following provisions as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74–Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 75–Direct Grant Programs; 34 CFR Part 77– Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part 80– Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State

and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81– General Education Provisions Act–Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82– New Restrictions on Lobbying; 34 CFR Part 84–Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance); 34 CFR Part 85–Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	
Pat Quinn, Governor	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: Pat Quinn	Date: January 13, 2010

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A. STATE SUCCESS FACTORS

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(1) Articulating the State's Education Reform Agenda and LEAs' Participation In It. *(65 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; *(5 points)*

* * *

I. The Illinois Race to the Top Reform Agenda

Introduction

The State of Illinois has long recognized that its education system must prepare each and every child for success in postsecondary education and employment. Yet, for too long, low achievement has persisted in many Illinois communities. While quality education is a reality for some Illinoisans, it remains elusive for many. The system's shortcomings are not confined to urban or rural districts, nor are they limited to Chicago or "Downstate." Instead, the impact is felt by every citizen of Illinois—in lost wages, lost jobs, lost revenue; and in higher crime, poorer health, and missed opportunities.

Race to the Top (RTTT) presents the State of Illinois with a unique opportunity to advance its education agenda. The RTTT priorities are closely aligned with the State's education strategy which centers on high standards, data based decision-making, improving human capital, and intensive supports for its lowest performing schools and districts. Illinois is well-positioned to capitalize on this opportunity because the State possesses a clear overarching **vision for improving instruction**, has already shown a solid **commitment to advancing education reform** (particularly in the RTTT priority areas), and boasts **strong and collaborative support for change**. So, *Illinois does not seek a fresh start in this contest, but a chance to accelerate the work that is already underway* with much needed funding from the federal government.

State Vision for Improving Instruction

At its core, a world-class educational system requires world-class educators. Great teachers and leaders, as research and experience tell us, are the cornerstone of student

achievement. The programs and initiatives contained in this application aim collectively to move our educational system forward in attracting, supporting and developing the most effective educators in the nation, and to create stronger professional communities in our schools and districts that appeal to and retain top talent. Such an undertaking requires us to (1) build more powerful and nimble data systems across the State, improve the mechanisms that put that data to use, and empower our educators with better assessments and resources enabling them to make sound decisions in their classrooms, schools and communities. We must also (2) establish clear and measureable goals for our students and professionals, develop methods to better gauge their performance, and offer more extensive supports and more robust accountability. Lastly, we must (3) in our schools where efforts have for too long failed to yield sufficient improvements, quickly learn—through a laser-like focus on these schools—how to intervene decisively, boldly and effectively by leveraging partnerships and expertise around the State and nation.

Demonstrated Commitment to Advancing Education Reform

Over the past year, Illinois has exhibited its deep commitment to bold education reforms and to the priorities of RTTT. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is moving aggressively toward adoption of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts as soon as possible, but no later than August 2, 2010. Moreover, the General Assembly has passed and Governor Quinn has signed four education bills in the last year that (1) establish a comprehensive state longitudinal education data system, (2) allow for alternative certification programs to operate independently from higher education, (3) create new, rigorous teacher and principal evaluation systems that incorporate student growth as a significant factor (the State's default evaluation plan will include 50 percent weighting of student growth); and (4) double the number of charter schools in Illinois and formally explore the concept of an independent charter school authorizer. This policy action and legislation exemplifies Illinois' devotion to meaningful education reform because these initiatives will proceed whether or not the State receives a RTTT award.

Strong and Collaborative Support for Change

This bold proposal was developed—first and foremost—to ensure that our State and its local educational agencies are taking the aggressive actions necessary to propel dramatic

improvements in student outcomes. We are particularly proud of the broad consensus among the Illinois education and business community that has developed around this proposal's key reforms. Such stakeholder buy-in and ownership is necessary to convert a statewide reform agenda into meaningful changes in every classroom. In recognition of this fact, our application—much like the legislative accomplishments above—has been cultivated in cooperation with civic and business leaders, management associations, labor unions, and teachers, principals, and superintendents around the State. Almost one-third of Participating LEAs signed onto the State's Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") alongside their union partners, and union and management leaders in 12 of these LEAs (representing more than 120,000 students) achieved "Super LEA" status by agreeing to waive collective bargaining restrictions necessary to tackle even bolder reforms together.

Surely, each stakeholder in Illinois will not champion every element of this proposal; but, through its collaborative development, Illinois' RTTT plan is an honest and transparent depiction of where our educational system stands today, and where we plan to take it. This is our path forward; it is unmistakably aggressive, distinctly sustainable, and it will be implemented successfully.

The Challenges for Illinois

Our path forward is not without significant challenges. We wish to recognize these challenges because—as we articulate our vision for transforming Illinois' educational system—we must confront the limitations of our capacity and acknowledge the realities of our current situation.

- **A Fragmented and Highly Disparate LEA Structure**
    - **Illinois has 869 independent school districts**—more than every state but Texas and California—ranging in size from more than 200 districts that have just a single school to Chicago with over 650. In many communities, K-8 and 9-12 instruction are separated into different districts, meaning that the 65 single high school districts in Illinois often enroll students from several K-8 districts. This not only makes aligning curricula across the P-16 continuum a significant challenge, but adds difficulty to effectively implementing any statewide policy.

- The **Chicago Public Schools**—while just one of Illinois' 869 independent school districts—is comprised of approximately 675 schools with an enrollment of over 400,000 students. This enrollment represents almost 20% of Illinois' student enrollment statewide. Too often, education policy is approached with a Chicago vs. "Downstate" dynamic—and this must change if Illinois is to fulfill its goal of consistent and meaningful statewide reform.

- **Insufficient State Capacity and Resources**
  - After years of staff reductions, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) lacks the capacity to directly deliver the robust services required to advance an ambitious education reform agenda in so many diverse districts.
  - The international financial crisis has been particularly hard on Illinois and its school districts. State revenues have dropped dramatically, although the State has made education funding a priority to sustain existing supports. Many district budgets are in disarray with some districts expecting to make substantial staff reductions to balance next year's budgets. As a result, some stakeholders are skeptical about the State's capacity to sustain the RTTT priorities beyond the term of the grant.
- **The Difficult History of the Illinois Standards Achievement Test**
  - A catastrophic failure in the vendor's 2006 administration of the **Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)**, the State's Grade 3-8 assessment, shook the public's confidence in the test.
  - A 2008 report by the Consortium on Chicago School Research found that students in Chicago who meet, or are "proficient," on the 8th grade ISAT have virtually no chance of meeting the college readiness benchmarks on the ACT or the proficiency standards on the **Prairie State Achievement Examination** (PSAE), the State's high school assessment. As a result, the percentage of students meeting State standards in mathematics drops from 87% to 52% between 8th and 11th grade.
  - Due to inconsistencies across its vertical scale, the ISAT cannot be used, without considerable investment, to measure year-to-year teacher contribution to student growth.

Instead of denying that these challenges exist or using them to justify a less ambitious proposal, our RTTT application directly addresses and overcomes them. In each of the four

RTTT reform areas, this Plan sets forth ambitious goals that build upon a strong foundation of prior reforms, with a focus on measurement and transparency for the State and participating school districts.

Illinois' Reform Agenda

In recent years, Illinois has strengthened its commitment that every child should have the opportunity to succeed in post-secondary education and/or career. In the future, Illinois will continue to invest all it can toward this purpose and toward statewide educational improvement. The addition of RTTT funds will help drive this improvement by broadening and intensifying our efforts in pursuit of four broad reform goals in the following ways:

1. **Inject into our classrooms more powerful and nimble assessment tools and instructional systems that empower educators to improve student outcomes**
   - The State will oversee the development of a menu of pre-approved formative and interim "Assessments for Learning" that all 869 LEAs can use to measure student growth and inform instruction as soon as the end of the 2010-11 school year.
   - The State will develop a next generation Learning and Performance Management System available to all Illinois LEAs which will reduce local technology costs while providing all teachers and principals with instructional improvement tools infused with fresh and relevant data.
2. **Provide meaningful and actionable feedback to educators on their practice through rigorous evaluations and hold them increasingly accountable for student outcomes**
   - Under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA)[1], all LEAs in Illinois are required to use student growth data as a significant factor in teacher and principal evaluations, with a default of 50% student growth.
   - With a RTTT award, all Participating LEAs (representing 74% of Illinois students) will incorporate student growth for at least 50% of teacher and principal evaluations and will implement them by SY 2012-13. Even if Illinois does not receive an RTTT award, under PERA the State will require recipients of federal School Improvement Grants to implement new teacher evaluation systems incorporating student growth by SY 2012-13, with other districts to follow. PERA requires new principal evaluations incorporating student growth statewide by SY 2012-13, with or without RTTT.

3. **Concentrate increased capacity and intensive supports on our persistently lowest-performing schools**
    - To address the lack of resources at ISBE for turnaround work, the State has established a Partnership Zone wherein a pre-approved group of Lead and Supporting Partners with a track record of effectiveness will work to turnaround the State's lowest-performing schools.
    - Twelve LEAs have agreed to the commitments in Exhibit II of the MOU together alongside their union partners, providing added autonomy for their low-performing schools, accelerating the rollout of new evaluations to 2011, and participating in the Partnership Zone.
4. **Focus on high schools and the transition to and from high school across-the-board**
    - More than 80% of State-designated underperforming schools are high schools. The creation of the Partnership Zone and the Participating LEA MOU commitments will lead to high school turnarounds on an unprecedented scale.
    - LEAs, in partnership with the business community, community colleges, and universities will establish Programs of Study across middle and high school that ensure students have structured, rigorous pathways to postsecondary education and the workforce.

Sustaining Reform through Broad-Based Leadership and Strong Partnerships

As already mentioned, Illinois recognizes its State-level capacity and resource challenges. To advance its aggressive education reform agenda, Illinois cannot rely solely on the leadership of ISBE. ISBE will focus its resources on establishing an LEA support system that is responsive, transparent, and accountable and use outcomes-based measurement systems to assess and report on the effectiveness of (i) its own RTTT support for LEAs, (ii) supports provided through partnership organizations that build State capacity, and (iii) LEA progress toward implementing the RTTT reforms. But, in order to meet the increased need for critical services, ISBE must partner with universities, community colleges, businesses, regional support providers, and a variety of other governmental and nongovernmental organizations. By not resting on any one single source of leadership, Illinois will continue to leverage the talent, energy, ideas, and commitment of a broader community of partners to advance these bold education reforms. This

community includes our professional educators, the State education agencies, the P-20 Council (recently established by the Illinois General Assembly and charged with advising on the implementation of this RTTT plan), national experts, Governor Quinn and leaders of the Illinois General Assembly, high quality partner organizations, and civic, business, and philanthropic leaders. Illinois believes that this coalition of practitioners, advocates, and experts, informed with reliable data on progress and performance, can effectively champion our ambitious plan and sustain our current momentum.

The process for developing this proposal and adopting the new legislation that supports it recognized the financial challenges facing Illinois and its school districts. By coming to consensus around some of the most contentious reform issues, education stakeholder groups have shown a commitment to broad system change that will move ahead with or without RTTT. In particular, as part of the four month process that led to the January 15, 2010 enactment of the Performance Evaluation Reform Act, an array of education stakeholder groups—including the two state teachers' unions, Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance, ISBE, Governor's Office, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Teachers' Union, education advocacy groups, civic and business leaders, and key legislators—put aside individual group interests to advance a common agenda that led to passage of the historic reforms included within this legislation. (Generally, see Section (D)(2) for a description of this Act.) By demonstrating a willingness and ability to move these key reforms, education stakeholders are in a stronger position to secure more sustainable education funding that will carry these reforms beyond the RTTT grant period. The systems for measuring performance and creating transparency established in this Plan will also help build confidence among Illinois' citizens and their representatives in the General Assembly that increased funding for education will be used effectively.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(1) Articulating the State's Education Reform Agenda and LEAs' Participation In It. *(65 points)*

The extent to which—

* * *

(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D) or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include— *(45 points)*

(a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans;

(b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plans; and

(c) Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the local teachers' union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and

* * *

II. Participating LEA Commitment to the Plan.

The superintendents of 366 Illinois local educational agencies, representing 74% of the total Illinois public school population and 81% of its total low-income public school student population, have committed to participate in the State of Illinois Race to the Top Plan by executing the "The State of Illinois Race to the Top Application Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding" attached as **Appendix A1-1** (Participating LEA MOU). As reflected in Appendix A1-1 and described below, the Participating LEA MOU includes terms and conditions that ensure strong commitment by these Participating LEAs to the Illinois Race to the Top reform agenda set forth in Section I. To be clear, ALL Participating LEAs have agreed to ALL of the comprehensive commitments in Exhibit I, Part A of the Illinois MOU, where applicable (certain commitments are only applicable to LEAs serving specific grade levels or those with Illinois Priority Schools).

- Under **Standards and Assessments,** the Participating LEAs will undertake a process during the first two years of the RTTT grant period to: (i) align curriculum to the Common Core State Standards, as incorporated into revised Illinois Learning Standards; (ii) implement interim and formative assessments that measure student progress against

Common Core expectations; and (iii) ensure the LEA's Response to Intervention (RtI) plan is aligned to the revised Learning Standards. To address student transitions from middle school through postsecondary, the Participating LEAs have agreed to implement Programs of Study as a framework for high school reform, with specific requirements applicable to key Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) application areas.

- Under **Data Systems to Support Instruction**, the Participating LEAs will—by the beginning of the 2012-13 school year—either implement a locally developed instructional improvement system serving all teachers and principals in the LEA, or rely on a new State platform for launching instructional improvement systems serving all teachers and principals. All Participating LEAs must integrate local systems with the new State platform to ensure teacher and principal access to key features. Additionally, all Participating LEAs have agreed to fully cooperate with ISBE on data collections and data quality controls for the State longitudinal data system and enter into data sharing agreements with a new State research collaborative that will build local capacity to support policy research and development.
- Under **Great Teachers and Leaders**, all Participating LEAs will redesign local performance evaluation systems for teachers and principals for implementation by the beginning of the third year of the grant period. The redesigned systems must meet extensive requirements described in the MOU, including the requirement that at least 50% of teacher and principal performance evaluations be based on student growth. The LEAs must use these systems to inform decision-making in the areas of professional development, tenure, and possible dismissal of less effective teachers and principals. LEAs with one or more high-poverty schools and/or high minority schools must perform a comprehensive review of institutional policies and constraints that may prevent such schools from attracting top talent, considering key human capital performance metrics developed by the State, and develop strategies to address those constraints. To strengthen principal and teacher preparation programs, Participating LEAs must cooperate with the State to establish placement sites for pre-service teachers and principals from programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and leaders. Participating LEAs must establish 2-year induction and mentoring programs for all beginning teachers, and

participate in the State's technical assistance and accountability infrastructure to ensure these programs are of high quality. Finally, Participating LEAs must provide intensive educator support for critical P-20 transition points that ensure professional development and educator collaboration aligned to this Plan's key objectives.

- Under **Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools,** all Participating LEAs with one or more "Illinois Priority Schools" must, for all such schools, participate in the Illinois Partnership Zone (a structured State initiative ensuring alignment to the turnaround, restart, or transformation models), or separately undertake one of the four school intervention models identified by the U.S. Department of Education. While this commitment is subject to State and federal support for such activities, ISBE anticipates that it can target Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant funding to provide the necessary support to Participating LEAs. Participants in the Illinois Partnership Zone must commit to undertaking a series of actions at the district- and school-level to ensure school interventions are combined with a robust human capital strategy. In addition, the Participating LEA MOU requires certain LEAs identified by ISBE as candidates for school district reorganization to carry out a reorganization analysis, as the closure of underperforming schools or implementation of a "restart" model may require fundamental change at the district level. It is important to note that the State's definition of "Illinois Priority Schools" includes any school that falls within the bottom 5% of student achievement statewide (with the total number of schools in the State as the "denominator"), so that the turnaround commitments extends beyond just the "Tier I" and "Tier II" schools the State has identified for Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant purposes.

The only Participating LEA whose MOU deviates from the standard form is Chicago Public Schools (CPS), to address several unique circumstances in that district. The minimal deviations included in the CPS Participating LEA MOU are identified and described in **Appendix A1-2**.

The president of the local school board was a signatory to the Participating LEA MOU in 274 Participating LEAs (75% of all Participating LEAs). The local teachers' union leader was a signatory to the Participating LEA MOU in 115 LEAs (32% of all Participating LEAs). These

commitments obtained by the State demonstrate that the most difficult reforms in education can be tackled by districts in partnership with their teachers.

"Super LEAs"

In addition, the State agreed to set-aside at least 10% of the 50% State Race to the Top allocation dedicated solely to those LEAs where both the superintendent and local teachers' union leader agreed to "bigger, bolder, faster" reforms in their Illinois' Priority Schools (Super LEAs). This unique strategy to foster agreement by both superintendents and union leaders will help establish early proof points for the subsequent implementation of these reforms on a statewide scale. In signing on as Super LEAs, superintendents and union leaders have agreed to engage in three critical actions specified in Exhibit II of the Participating LEA MOU.

1. Super LEAs will implement new teacher and principal evaluation systems meeting the requirements of this Plan in their Priority Schools by no later than the start of the 2011-12 school year (one year earlier than all other Participating LEAs).
2. Super LEAs will provide staffing autonomy to the site-based leadership of Priority Schools to enable them to establish an effective teaching staff as quickly as possible. This includes decisions around intensive professional development, filling vacancies at the discretion of school leadership, and the relocation of staff through voluntary and involuntary transfers.
3. Super LEAs will participate in the comprehensive State intervention framework, the Illinois Partnership Zone, and agree to provide other autonomies necessary to enable implementation of the Illinois Partnership Zone model.

To maintain eligibility for this funding set-aside, as part of their final LEA plan for Race to the Top funding (due 90 days after an award to the State), the LEA and its union must demonstrate agreement on all of these actions *and* include a negotiated waiver or other agreement providing flexibility from any inconsistent provisions in its collective bargaining agreement.

The superintendent and union leader in twelve Participating LEAs, distributed across the State have jointly agreed to undertake these aggressive reforms. These Super LEAs represent 25 Illinois Priority Schools (see Table 1, below) and more than 128,000 public school students.

It is important to note that the Chicago Public Schools currently possesses and exercises the authority to provide site-based autonomy in certain underperforming schools and to engage in intensive turnaround efforts.[2] As a result, through the work of the Super LEAs and their union

leadership, alongside the Chicago Public Schools continued work, Illinois' bold RTTT reforms will be instituted in more than 60 Priority Schools in the State. Through its Super LEA strategy, the State intends to serve as a national model for how bold reforms can be achieved *in partnership with teachers' unions*.

TABLE 1: SUPER LEAS			
School District Name	**# of Students (2009)**	**# of Low Income Students**	**Illinois Priority Schools**
Community Unit School Dist. #300	19,329	6,231	Dundee-Crown High School
De Pue USD #103	474	300	DePue High School
Decatur SD 61	8,558	5,622	Eisenhower High School MacArthur High School
Kankakee School Dist. #111	5,274	4,261	Kankakee High School
Meridian CUSD #101	698	541	Meridian High School
Peoria SD #150	13,825	9,838	Manual High School Peoria High School Trewyn Middle School Tyng Primary School Woodruff High School
Plano CUSD #88	2,291	827	Plano High School
Rich Township HS Dist. #227	4,167	2,471	Rich Central Campus High School Rich East Campus High School Rich South Campus High School
Rockford Public Schools Dist. #205	26,990	19,885	Auburn High School Guilford High School Jefferson High School Rockford East High School
School District #U-46	40,449	19,321	Elgin High School Larkin High School Streamwood High School
Thornton Fractional Twp HS Dist. 215	3,447	1,686	Thornton Fractional No. High School Thornton Fractional So. High School
Zion-Benton Twp H S D 126	2,735	1,096	Zion-Benton Township High School
TOTALS: SUPER LEAs	**128,237**	**72,079**	**25 Illinois Priority Schools**
% Participating LEA Total [excluding CPS]	**11.4%**	**18.9%**	
% State Total [excluding CPS]	**7.7%**	**13.1%**	

Evidence for (A)(1)(ii):

- An example of the State's standard Participating LEA MOU, and description of variations used, if any.
  - Appendix A1-1: Participating LEA MOU
  - Appendix A1-2: Variations used in the Chicago Public Schools Participating LEA MOU
- The completed summary table indicating which specific portions of the State's plan each LEA is committed to implementing, and relevant summary statistics (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b), below).
- The completed summary table indicating which LEA leadership signatures have been obtained (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c), below).

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b)

Elements of State Reform Plans	**Number of LEAs Participating (#)**	**Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)**
B. Standards and Assessments		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	366	100%
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	366	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	366	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	366	100%
D. Great Teachers and Leaders		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	366	100%
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	366	100%
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	366	100%

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	366	100%
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	366	100%
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	366	100%
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	366	100%
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	366	100%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	366	100%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	366	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	366	100%
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	366	100%

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)

Signatures acquired from participating LEAs:			
Number of Participating LEAs with all applicable signatures			
	Number of Signatures Obtained (#)	**Number of Signatures Applicable (#)**	**Percentage (%)** (Obtained / Applicable)
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	366	366	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	274	366	74.8%
Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable)	115	363	31.7%

The number of signatures applicable for the Local Teachers' Union Leader represents the total number of 366 Participating LEAs minus the 3 Participating LEAs that indicated when submitting their Participating LEA MOU that they do not have a teachers' union.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(1) **Articulating the State's Education Reform Agenda and LEAs' Participation In It.** *(65 points)*

The extent to which—

* * *

(iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—*(15 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice); and

(d) Increasing college enrollment (as defined in this notice) and increasing the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.

III. Ambitious, Yet Achievable, Goals for Broad Statewide Impact.

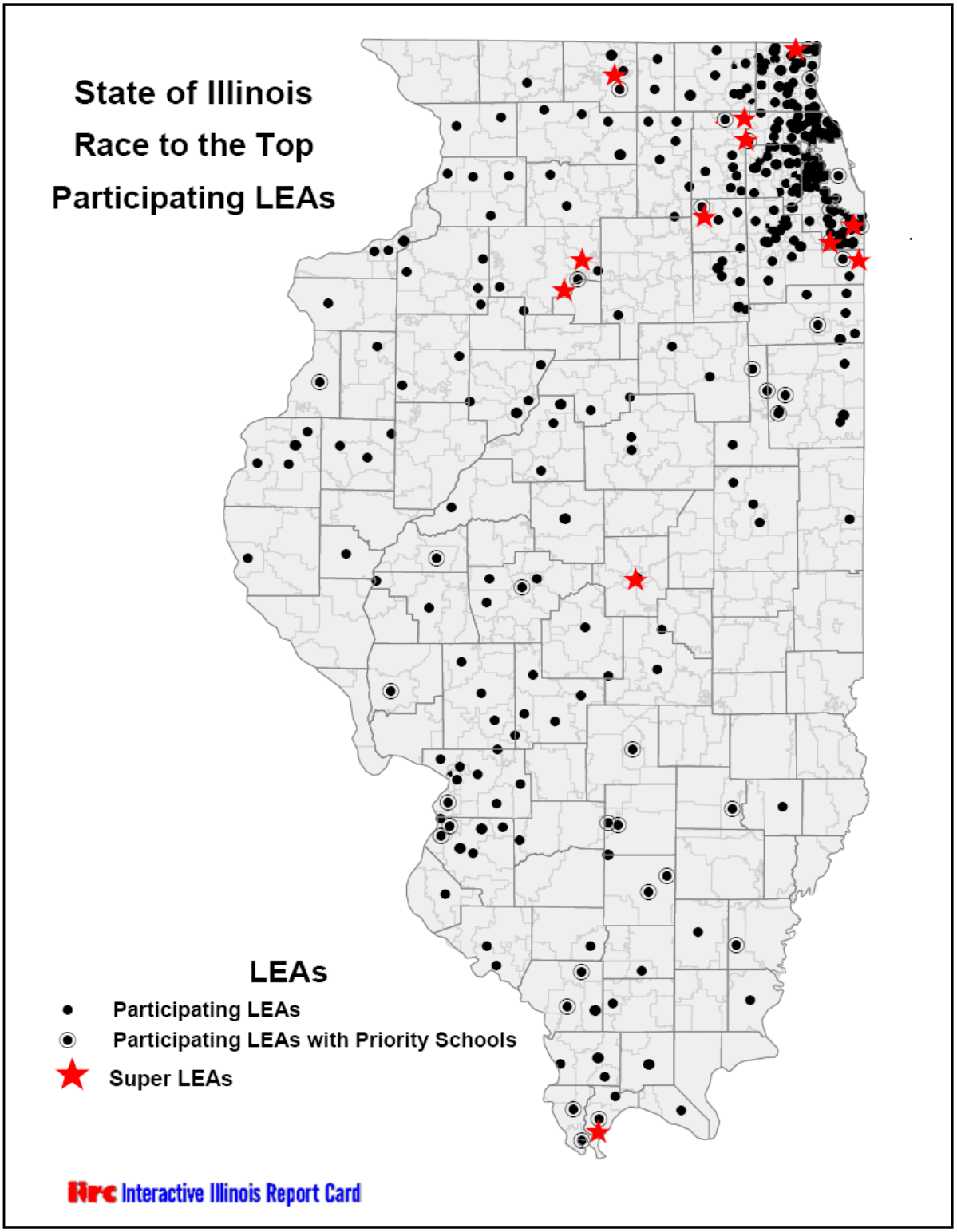
With almost three-fourths of the Illinois public school student population residing in Participating LEAs, this Plan's implementation will impact the entire Illinois education system and not simply those LEAs that have chosen to participate. The numbers and percentages of schools, K-12 students, and low-income students represented by Participating LEAs are shown in Summary Table (A)(1)(iii) below.

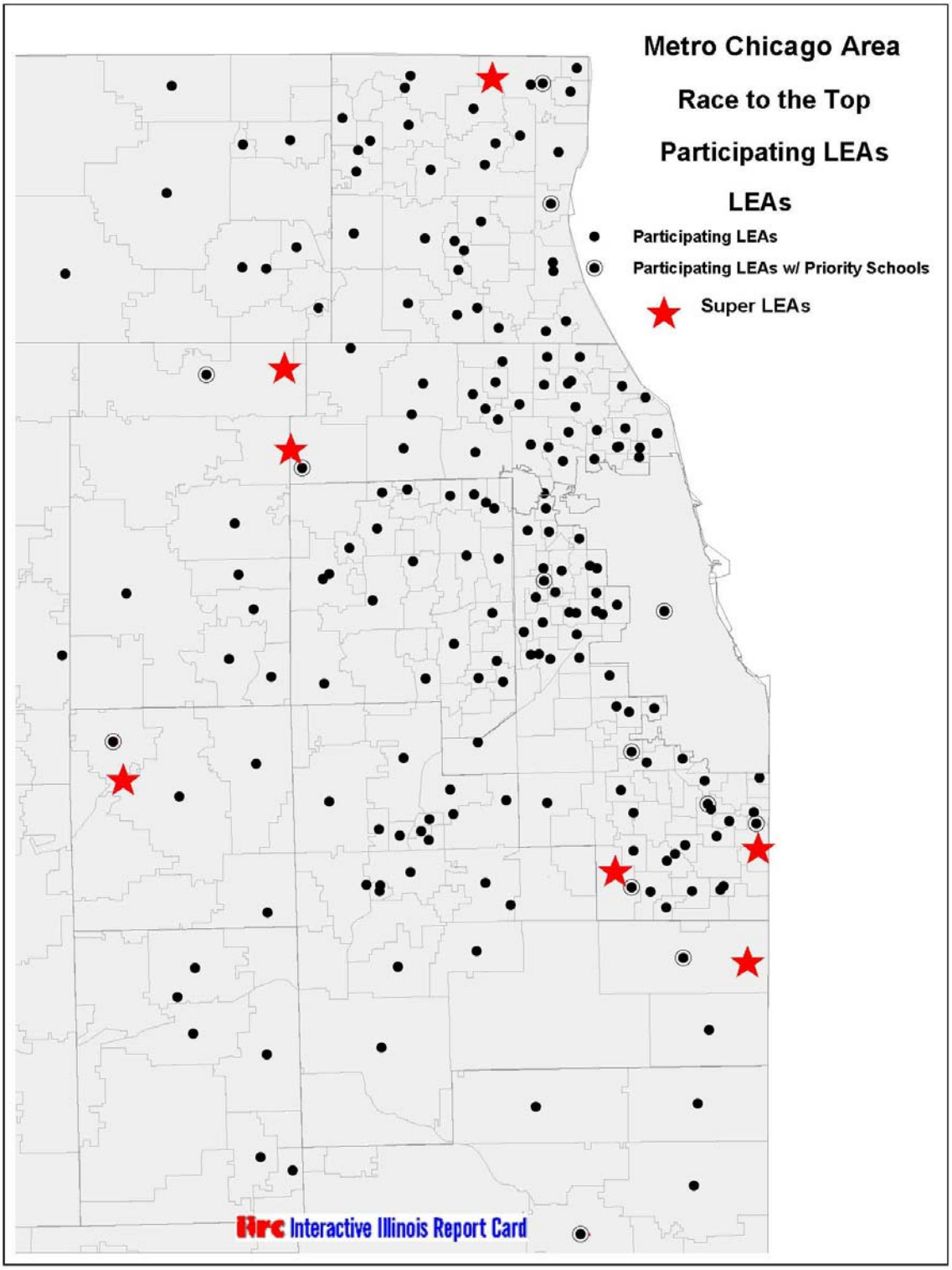
Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	**Statewide (#)**	**Percentage of Total Statewide** (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	366	869	42.1%
Schools	2483	3,910	63.5%
K-12 Students	1,536,806	2,070,125	74.2%
Students in poverty	723,188	888,719	81.3%

Note: *"Low-income" as used in this application means the same as "students in poverty."*

As shown on the following maps, the Participating LEAs represent every region and corner of Illinois – this is not simply a Chicago, suburban, or "downstate" effort.


State of Illinois
Race to the Top
Participating LEAs
LEAs
Participating LEAs
Participating LEAs with Priority Schools
Super LEAs
Interactive Illinois Report Card


Metro Chicago Area
Race to the Top
Participating LEAs
LEAs
Participating LEAs
Participating LEAs w/ Priority Schools
Super LEAs
Irc Interactive Illinois Report Card

Impact on Student Achievement Goals

The systems and supports necessary to implement the Common Core Standards, advance teacher and principal effectiveness, and provide educators with actionable data, cannot be built in a single school year. Illinois will aggressively pursue their implementation, with accelerated action to put them in place in the lowest performing schools, in the first two years of the RTTT grant period. Therefore, Illinois will strive toward student achievement gains in the first two years of the grant period that outpace current trends, with an expectation of an accelerated performance trajectory in the third year of the grant period and beyond. With this Plan's comprehensive focus on high school reform and transitions into high school, the State will seek higher rates of growth in 5th through 8th grade performance and expect that the stagnant student achievement on the PSAE will end.

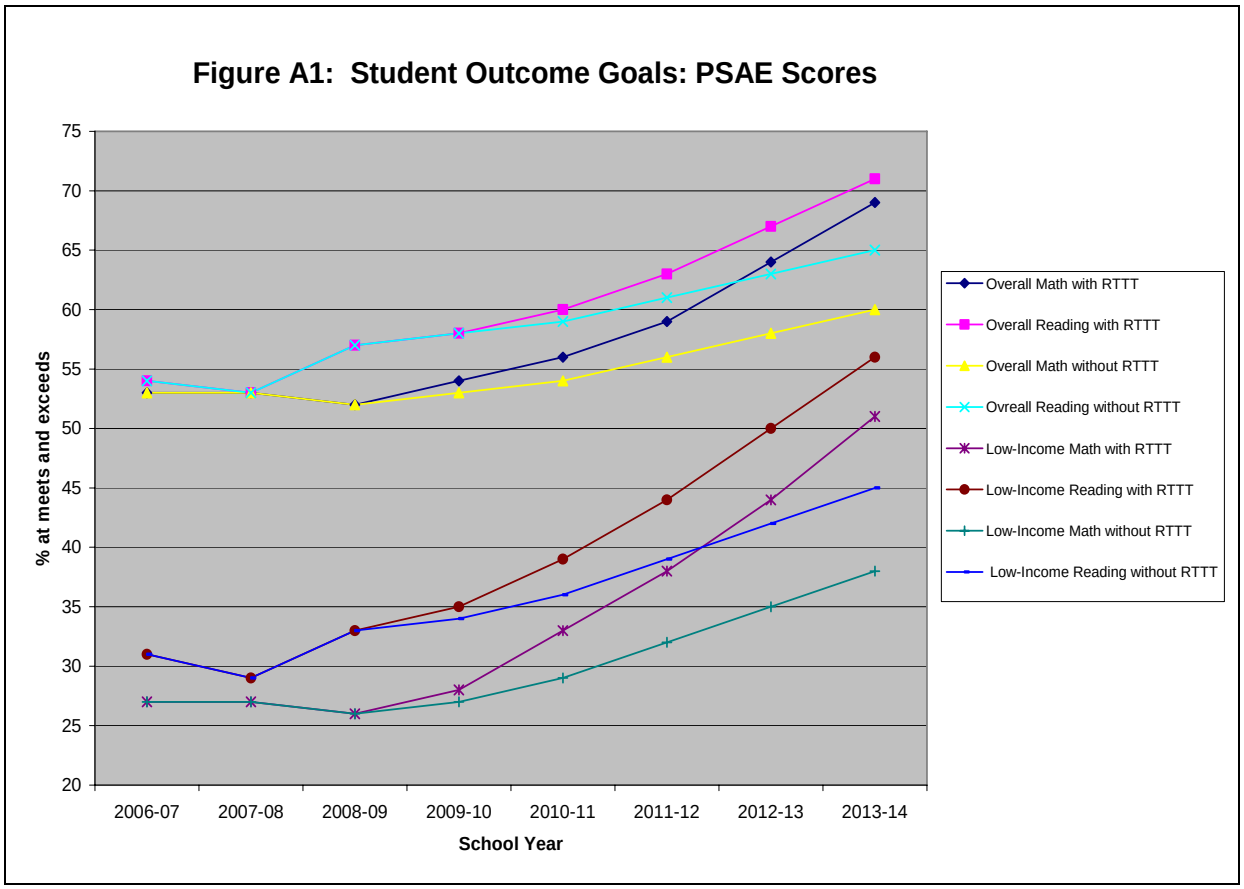
The systems and resources developed by this Plan are particularly critical to closing the achievement gap and dramatically improving performance in Illinois' lowest performing schools. Of the 181 "Illinois Priority Schools" (defined as schools within the bottom 5% of achievement statewide, see Section (E)(1)), 155 of those schools (85%) are within Participating LEAs. The State's Super LEA strategy, discussed in Section II above, and structured focus on interventions with the support of high quality partners is intended to accelerate gains for those students that are most in need of improved educational opportunities.

For the Black, Hispanic, and Low-Income subgroups, the State's goals are more aggressive, both in the timing and trajectory of student outcomes. With Participating LEAs representing over 80% of the State's low-income student population and the high participation rate of LEAs with Priority Schools, the State will strive to aggressively narrow the achievement gap through Black, Hispanic, and Low-Income subgroup gains that more than double the gains for non-minority students.

Appendix A1-5 contains a table identifying the State's overall and subgroup-specific goals over the life of the RTTT grant period for increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics on the NAEP, ISAT, and PSAE, as well as for increasing high school graduation and college enrollment rates. The State has also established statewide goals that are more reflective of college- and work-ready expectations, with goals centered on the percentage of students achieving the College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT and the

percentage of students required to take one or more remedial courses upon entering an Illinois public community college.

Figure A1 below includes the State's student outcome goals for the PSAE, both with and without RTTT funding. Student outcome goals are shown for both the "overall" student group as well as the low-income subgroup. The growth trajectories highlight the State's expectation that even without RTTT grant funding, the State will see an increase in student achievement and progress in closing the achievement gap due to recent aggressive reforms. However, RTTT presents an opportunity to achieve significantly higher rates of growth, and prepare a far higher number of Illinois students for postsecondary education and the workforce.



Evidence for (A)(1)(iii):

- The completed summary table indicating the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii), below).
  - Contained in narrative

- Tables and graphs that show the State's goals, overall and by subgroup, requested in the criterion, together with the supporting narrative. In addition, describe what the goals would look like were the

State not to receive an award under this program.

- Appendix A1-5 Student Outcome Goals

Evidence for (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii):

- The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion (see Detailed Table for (A)(1), below).
  - Appendix A1-3 Detailed Table (A)(1): Participating LEAs

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(2) <u>Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans</u> *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—

(i) Ensure that it has the capacity required to implement its proposed plans by— *(20 points)*

(a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;

(b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary;

(c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement;

(d) Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and

(e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and

* * *

(A)(2) <u>Building Strong Statewide Capacity to Implement, Scale Up, and Sustain Proposed Plans</u>

Illinois recognizes its State-level capacity and resource challenges. Implementation of this Plan will extend far beyond the resources of any one agency, and will require continued strong state leadership and a network of strong outside partnership organizations. To address LEA capacity, ISBE will establish a responsive support system, with a strong focus on outcomes-based measurement processes, that will focus on reform readiness with equal rigor as traditional compliance monitoring. By aligning this Plan to both federal and state education priorities and building State and LEA systems that will continue beyond the grant period, Illinois

has developed a sustainable strategy for its use of RTTT funds that will enable the reforms to carry forward well beyond the 2013-14 school year.

A. Reform Leadership and Building Capacity Through Partnerships. Successful and sustained implementation of all components of this Plan will require strong, broad-based leadership and full and continued engagement with all key education stakeholders. Over the course of this past year, the Governor, General Assembly, and the State education agencies have worked intensively with a broad number of stakeholders to enact a series of landmark education reform bills to (a) raise the State's charter cap, (b) establish the framework for the State's P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System, (c) permit non-institution of higher education sponsors for alternative certification programs, and (d) overhaul teacher and principal evaluation systems through the Performance Evaluation Reform Act. *(See **Appendix A1-4** and Sections (A)(3), (D)(1), and (D)(4) for further information on this legislation.)* By enacting these laws, Illinois has demonstrated that it is willing to apply the core reform objectives of Race to the Top to all Illinois districts, and to carry reforms forward after the conclusion of the grant period.

As the reforms in this Plan move forward, strong State-level systems exist to direct their implementation. The Illinois General Assembly has established a P-20 Council consisting of representatives from the State's education, and business, and civic communities. Governor Quinn has charged this group with advising on the implementation of this Plan and identifying the need for resources to sustain reforms. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will continue to provide leadership within all four of the Race to the Top reform areas. All three agencies have been actively engaged in developing policies and programs to ensure more Illinois students are prepared for college and the workforce, through such actions as joining the American Diploma Project, establishing intergovernmental agreements for P-20 data sharing, and adopting strategic plans aligned to the Race to the Top reform areas.

In 2010, ISBE is a much different agency than it was in 2000—the agency has far fewer employees directly working with school districts in the field, and has shifted to increased management of partnership organizations and regional delivery systems to carry out services and supports to LEAs. While ISBE has been aggressively advancing an education reform agenda aligned with RTTT, it must rely on key partnership organizations to provide on-the-ground support for implementation. The State's implementation of the initiatives outlined in this

application will require reliance on many of the agency's existing partners, as well as the development of new entities and partnership relations to carry out the key reforms. As further detailed in the individual reform plans, various partnership organizations, consortia, universities, and regional systems will be critical to providing the capacity necessary to implement key statewide reforms. ISBE supports for Participating LEAs will be deployed through partnerships such as the civic and business community representatives that will launch the STEM Learning Exchanges (see Section (B)(3)), the higher education institutions that will form an education research collaborative (see Section (C)(2)), and the Lead and Supporting Partners within the Illinois Partnership Zones (see Section (E)(2)). These partners will be held accountable for implementation in accordance with specified outcomes through the State's outcomes-based measurement system, discussed below.

Illinois will also be drawing on top national expertise and numerous multi-state collaborations. In particular, in addition to joining multi-state consortia for standards and assessments, Illinois is joining three new multi-state efforts that will provide added capacity for critical Race to the Top-funded reforms. The first is the State Collaborative for Great Teachers and Leaders (with at least Florida, Illinois, Indiana, and Louisiana participating) that will support a network for states to lead the nation on improving key policies related to teacher and leader effectiveness. Illinois is also one of up to 17 states participating in the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium to establish high quality, evidence-based, performance assessments. Finally, Illinois and a select few other states have been chosen by Mass Insight Education & Research Institute to participate in a three-year, $70 million effort to create scalable and sustainable turnaround strategies. The State is committed to fully leveraging these partnerships to learn from other states, obtain needed expertise, and create multi-state alliances for the most difficult reforms *(See **Appendix A2-1** for more information on these multi-state collaborations.)*

B. <u>Assessing and Building the Capacity of Participating LEAs</u>. The State must assess and build local capacity to implement and carry forward the reforms included in this Plan. The State's strategies to assess and build Participating LEA capacity include: (a) building State and LEA capacity to use outcomes-based measurement systems to assess and report on effectiveness; (b) utilizing a redefined State recognition process to assess the capacity of Participating LEAs to effectively carry out their Race to the Top commitments; and (c)

redesigning the System of Support to ensure a consistency of services and better align supports and interventions to the needs of districts.

1. Outcomes-Based Measurement

The State has defined the critical components and performance measures of an evaluation and measurement capacity plan that will allow Participating LEAs and the State to track both process and outcome indicators for work funded through Race to the Top, and that will build State and LEA capacity to use data to inform practice and policy (the "Measurement Plan"). The Measurement Plan is intended to foster a performance measurement culture in the State, and will assess the State's progress in meeting key goals, addressing objectives and undertaking each of the activities outlined in the Race to the Top application, and determining the effectiveness of the overall program, its activities and the degree to which teacher, principal and student outcomes are being advanced. The Measurement Plan will incorporate all of the federally required and State-developed performance measures specified throughout this application. It will also measure both "required" and "recommended" supplemental indicators to provide enhanced transparency and reporting on performance outcomes.

Ultimately, the State, LEAs, schools, and the State of Illinois will use data from the Measurement Plan to inform decisions at a local level and state level, and then demonstrate overall performance relative to other states. The State expects that deployment of the Measurement Plan will help build LEA and State capacity to foster data-informed practice at the local level and policy decisions at the State and local level. *(See **Appendix A2-2** for further details regarding the key components of the Measurement Plan.)* In particular, as highlighted across Section (D) of the application, the Measurement Plan will result in the development of State-, LEA-, and School-level Educator Effectiveness Scorecards that will publicly report on Participating LEA implementation of this Plan's central teacher and principal reforms: the extent to which key human capital decisions are consistent with performance evaluation results, metrics on teacher academic capital and school-level average salaries in high-poverty and high-minority schools, and the targeted allocation of professional development resources.

2. Utilizing the State Recognition Process to Assess Participating LEA Capacity

ISBE has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with AdvanceED, the parent organization for the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), to revamp the State's recognition process for public and non-public

schools. Each public and non-public school in Illinois must be "recognized" by ISBE through its recognition process to determine whether the school meets requirements imposed by law. If a school fails to meet State requirements, ISBE can require further review, place it on probation, or ultimately change its status to "nonrecognized" and thereby impact the district's ability to claim General State Aid for students within the school. Under the MOU with AdvanceED, the State's recognition process will shift from a "check the box" compliance exercise to an in-depth analysis of the capacity of LEAs and schools to implement effective improvement initiatives. To earn and maintain Accreditation from NCA CASI, a school must:

- Adhere to AdvancED's rigorous accreditation standards;
- Engage in ongoing self-assessment and continuous improvement;
- Document results of improvement efforts;
- Complete a Standards Assessment Report between six weeks and six months prior to the Quality Assurance Review;
- Host a Quality Assurance Review Team once every five years;
- Act on the Quality Assurance Review Team's recommendations; and
- Submit a progress report two years following the Quality Assurance Review.[3]

For Participating LEAs, this process will be taken a step further, and focus on the capacity of the LEAs and its schools to implement the specific commitments set forth in this application, assessed in a manner aligned to the Measurement Plan. During the RTTT grant period, all Participating LEAs will be funded to participate in the NCA CASI District Accreditation process for all of their schools, including a Quality Assurance Team visit (with first priority to the lowest-achieving schools). This process will help ensure that LEAs and schools are ceasing ineffective practices and aligning resources to the RTTT reforms. Through its partnership with NCA CASI, ISBE build off an existing regulatory process and leverage the capacity of AdvancED resources to perform an in-depth analysis of the capacity of Participating LEAs to carry out their Race to the Top commitments.

3. Redesigning the Statewide System of Support

ISBE created the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) to provide assistance to schools and districts that fail to meet the State's academic performance expectations. The system currently consists of a network of 10 entities spanning 10 regions in the State, and also includes the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Principals Association, and the

Illinois Association of School Boards. Through the SSOS, ISBE assists schools and districts in their efforts to increase student achievement and ensure that all students graduate with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to be successful in college and careers.

In 2009, Illinois joined the Academy of Pacesetting States – a group of nine states receiving support from the Center on Innovation & Improvement to evaluate and improve state systems of support. Over the course of the next 6 months, ISBE will engage in an extensive process to redesign the SSOS, consisting of both regional and statewide service providers and ISBE staff, to ensure greater consistency of services across the State in core reform areas and address different tiers of support. The SSOS redesign will also align supports and interventions to address "focused" or "comprehensive" needs of schools and districts through a tiered delivery system providing an increasing intensity of services, consistent with the State's federally approved differentiated accountability model.

To oversee the SSOS, ISBE will establish a Center for School Improvement addressing the following core reform areas: (1) Implementation of Standards-aligned instructional systems; (2) Use of data for continued improvement; (3) Educator effectiveness and support; and (4) District and school innovations and interventions. ISBE will generally use its 1003(a) School Improvement funds and State funding to establish and operate the Center; however, RTTT funding will support the creation of specific units within the Center focused on performance evaluation and turnaround supports. The Center will be operated outside of ISBE by one or more entities such as universities or nonprofit organizations with a proven track record to support the delivery of services in each area of focus, and with greater flexibility than ISBE to quickly scale up capacity to address the scope of the RTTT program. ISBE will contract with the Center, coordinate its activities with ISBE divisions and programs, provide oversight and performance management of Center activities, and hold it accountable for statewide implementation. The Center will in turn be responsible for ensuring that effective practices are widely disseminated and replicated across regions of the State and that the regional delivery system provides effective support to each tier of need within the SSOS. The Center will ensure ISBE has the data and information necessary to hold regional providers accountable for effective local implementation.

C. Effective and Efficient Operations for Grant Administration and Oversight. The Measurement Plan, described above, will play a key role in the State's performance management of RTTT activities. ISBE will also have in place effective and efficient operations and processes

for administering and providing oversight for RTTT grant funding. During the past 12 months, ISBE's internal control processes for grants administration have been reviewed by the US Government Accountability Office, the US Department of Education Office of Inspector General, the Illinois Office of Internal Audit and the State's A-133 external auditors, KPMG, LLC. ISBE has devoted significant agency resources to its Electronic Grants Management System (eGMS) to allow for electronic submission and processing of grant applications and related documentation. ISBE's Financial Reimbursement Information System (FRIS) performs edit checks to ensure that reported expenditures are within the limits of the approved budget and to confirm that grant recipients do not possess superfluous grant funds. When it is determined that a grant recipient has excess grant funds, payments are withheld until a subsequent expenditure report is filed that demonstrates a zero or negative cash balance. On-site monitoring of grantees is conducted utilizing a Cycle-Based Risk approach to ensure that grant programs and sub-recipients determined to be high-risk are monitored on an annual basis. In addition, ISBE has a strong process for review and disposition of sub-recipient A-133 audit. Given the unprecedented funding levels and transparency needed for RTTT, ISBE will further strengthen its grant oversight processes by entering into regionally-based contracts with Certified Public Accounting Firms for fiscal monitoring of sub-grantee awards. These regional firms will allow ISBE to quickly provide assistance or monitoring at a Participating LEA if any problems arise relating to fund administration.

D. Using RTTT Funding to Advance the State's Education Reform Objectives.

As the RTTT priorities are aligned with the State's education priorities, RTTT will accelerate, rather than redirect, reforms that are well underway. Therefore, Illinois does not need to significantly reallocate State and federal funds to pivot to RTTT, but instead needs to effectively leverage RTTT and other federal, State, and outside funds to build systems that will move reform at a faster pace and that can be sustained after the grant period. The State's budget for Race to the Top and the accompanying budget narratives, included in **Appendix A2-3**, achieve this objective. Major RTTT expenditures such as new performance evaluation support systems, the Learning and Performance Management System, STEM Learning Exchanges, and Dropout Prevention & Reenrollment require a large up-front investments but can be transitioned to State and local funding streams after implementation. Illinois has set aside a significant amount of its SEA budget allocation for the Super LEAs, using a funding carrot to bring unions

and districts together to accelerate and deepen the Plan's reform objectives. Other priorities of the Illinois plan are intended to coordinate with and build off of other significant existing federal and State programs, such as:

- The State's allocation of Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grants will be used to both support turnaround and as a key driver of adoption of redesigned performance evaluation systems (see Section (D)(2));
- The Plan's focus on Programs of Study (see Section (B)(3)) can leverage federal funding through the Perkins IV program; and
- State investments in early childhood and induction and mentoring will be used as a foundation for expanded investments through RTTT.

E. Using the Fiscal, Political, and Human Capital Resources of the State to Sustain Reforms. As described in Section (A)(1), the recent success enacting legislation to support the State's RTTT agenda has built a state-wide coalition that will keep education reform and funding at the top of the Illinois policy agenda. The coalition included a broad range of stakeholders, including the School District Management Alliance (representing board members, superintendents, principals, business officials), the two statewide teachers unions, business and civic leaders, and a host of other organizations. The transparent process used to develop and advance the legislation contributed to its enactment and to the prospects for future success advancing the RTTT legislative policy and funding agendas.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(2) <u>Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans</u> *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—

* * *

(ii) Use support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the statements or actions of support from— *(10 points)*

(a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and

Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (*e.g.*, business, community, civil rights, and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (*e.g.*, parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.

Stakeholder Support

The Illinois process to develop its plan and enact supporting legislation included transparency and extensive engagement with a broad range of stakeholders. On August 18, 2009, ISBE posted on its website a detailed Race to the Top planning document describing its intended plans across the four reform areas. This transparency gave key stakeholders a chance to review and react to the State's direction at the earliest possible stage. From that point forward, the State Superintendent convened school district management and union representatives on a frequent basis to discuss concerns, share ideas, and ensure these stakeholders had full input into the process. Members of the civic and business community were also frequently engaged, and took leadership on helping to develop solutions to the systemic challenge of high school reform. The State's legislative leaders held multiple hearings and helped drive agreement on performance evaluation reform and alternative certification legislation enacted prior to the application date.

Appendix A2-8 describes the organizations submitting letters of support and their commitments. While not every stakeholder engaged during the Plan's development chose to express support for this Plan, the State is committed to continuing to engage all stakeholders throughout the Plan's implementation and understands that stakeholder buy-in and ownership is necessary for the Plan to be successful.

The letters of support included in Appendix A2-8 demonstrate enthusiasm for the Illinois Race to the Top Plan from the K-12 education community as well as higher education, business and the civic community. The following quotations from letters highlight the broad support for the Illinois application. *(See Appendix A2-8 for the copies of all the letters.)*

The Illinois Education Association…has expressed its support for this application and its belief that the funding of the application can move our state forward on ground-breaking, transformative reforms. The IEA expressed appreciation for the collaborative process leading to the application, and is committed to supporting its local associations who have agreed to participate in the application.

--Ken Swanson, President, Illinois Education Association

The Illinois Federation of Teachers looks forward to partnering with the Illinois State Board of Education on the development and implementation of the state's Race to the Top proposal.

--Ed Geppert, President, Illinois Federation of Teachers

Our member districts, who make up over half of the children of the state of Illinois, will be the recipients of the broad transformation that will occur due to our state's involvement in Race to the Top.

--Diane Rutledge, Executive Director
Large Urban Districts Association

Illinois' application builds rationally upon some of the great things we've been able to accomplish recently in Illinois.

--Jeff Mays, President, Illinois Business RoundTable

These reforms will transform the state's schools, replacing an input-driven, compliance-focused system that is failing with an outcome-based, results-oriented system that helps prepare every child in the state to be world-ready.

--Robin Steans, Executive Director, Advance Illinois

CCSR will work to support the implementation of a number of components of the state's plan including its efforts to develop data systems to support instruction, produce and support great teachers and leaders, and turn around the state's lowest performing schools.

--Penny Bender Sebring, Interim Co-Executive Director
Consortium on Chicago School Research

We believe that RTTT presents an unparalleled opportunity for Illinois to dramatically improve student performance and outcomes and serve as a leader in preparing students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines.

--Gerald R. Roper, President,
Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

In Particular, I am pleased to see the extent to which the RTTT proposal supports and aligns with current reform initiatives in the Chicago Public Schools.

-- Clare Muñana, Vice President
City of Chicago Board of Education

External Foundation Funding

To support the State's planning and application process, a coalition of 18 national, state, and community-based foundations formed "The Race to the Top Initiative"—a short-term collaborative fund of The Chicago Community Trust—to demonstrate their financial support to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) for this important endeavor. Those foundations included the Circle of Service Foundation, Grand Victoria Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Polk Brothers Foundation, Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation, and the Spencer Foundation.

The foundations remain committed to continued conversations with the State for the long-term improvement of education in Illinois, and ISBE will seek to build on this collaboration to more fully engage the foundation community in its policies and programs. The foundation community is next interested in supporting a communications effort to explain the new teacher and principal evaluation systems that will be developed around the state. To support this plan's central focus on performance evaluations, the Joyce Foundation has invited two grant proposals described in Section (D)(2), Goal II of this application. Finally, two of the foundations mentioned above (the Grand Victoria and Joyce Foundations) paid for or loaned specific staff members to the Governor's office to help with the Race to the Top application.

Evidence for (A)(2)(i)(d):

- The State's budget, as completed in Section VIII of the application. The narrative that accompanies and explains the budget and how it connects to the State's plan, as completed in Section VIII of the application.
    - Appendix A2-3 Budget Summary and Project-Level Budgets

Evidence for (A)(2)(ii):

- A summary in the narrative of the statements or actions and inclusion of key statements or actions in the Appendix.
    - Appendix A2-8 Letters of Support

(A)(3) Demonstrating Significant Progress in Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—

(i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; *(5 points)*

* * *

Over the past several years, the State of Illinois has made significant progress in each of the four Race to the Top reform areas. The initiatives described below and the consistent improvement of student outcomes at nearly all grade levels have served to prepare Illinois students, teachers, principals, and other education stakeholders for the changes and the progress that will come with the RTTT grant. The initiatives and data described below demonstrate that the State is positioned to effectively implement the reforms set forth in this Plan.

Illinois College and Work Readiness Partnership

In 2007, the State of Illinois entered into the Illinois College and Work Readiness Partnership—an agreement between the State Board of Education, the Office of the Governor, and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop policies and programs to ensure more Illinois students are prepared for college and the workforce. From 2007 through 2009, this Partnership focused on three policy areas that are now central to the Race to the Top program: (1) college- and work-ready learning standards; (2) state education data systems; and (3) interventions in low-performing schools and districts. With outside technical support, the Partnership achieved the following accomplishments:

- Provided analysis and support to the State's initial review of its Learning Standards, which led to the State joining the American Diploma Project.
- Framed priority areas for data system improvements, aligned with the Data Quality Campaign's "10 Essential Elements."

- Analyzed the application of state and federal privacy protection laws to P-20 data sharing in Illinois, and developed strategies and an agreement for P-20 data sharing.
- Revised ISBE's administrative rules to add the ISBE unique student identifier to student transcripts. This rule change has facilitated data sharing between P-12 and postsecondary systems.
- Analyzed current State intervention strategies in low-performing schools and districts and, working with Mass Insight Education & Research Institute, recommended State policies for intervening in low-performing schools.

American Diploma Project

In October 2008, the State Board of Education, in partnership with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Office of the Governor, and the Illinois Business Roundtable, joined 33 states in the American Diploma Project (ADP). This effort has involved both an external and internal review of the Illinois Learning Standards in English/Language Arts and Math. Teams of secondary and postsecondary educators have convened to compare the Illinois learning standards to the ADP exemplary standards and to clarify what it means to be ready for college success. The teams have been working to revise the Illinois standards in order to bring needed coherence between standards, curriculum, assessments, and college entry requirements. The ADP highlighted the need for new, higher standards at all grade levels, and the State's adoption of the Common Core Standards will build off of its ADP foundation.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network

Illinois has also participated in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network because of the State's commitment to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary for today's students to be successful in tomorrow's workplace. The State is using the Partnership to incorporate 21st century skills and expectations into the learning opportunities of all students and infuse these attributes throughout our educational system.

ACT Systems of Excellence

The 11th grade Prairie State Achievement Examination, made up of the ACT and Work Keys, is a major asset in Illinois' student assessment system. In October 2009, Illinois was one of two states that received the ACT Systems of Excellence Award honoring states that have made significant progress toward improving students' college and career readiness and

implemented coherent policies and initiatives that raise the expectations for and performance of all students. ACT acknowledged that Illinois was one of the first states in the nation to recognize that a state test could serve multiple purposes of measuring rigorous state standards, advancing college readiness for all students, and providing increased value for students, parents, and postsecondary institutions.

P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act

In July 2009, Governor Quinn signed into law the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act (Public Act 96-0107)(attached in its entirety in **Appendix A1-4**). This Act, which has led to nominations for the Data Quality Campaign's 2009 Leadership Award, establishes the requirements and framework for the development of the State's longitudinal education data system. The legislation:

- Sets forth a long-term vision for the State's education data system;
- Requires the State to implement all of the America COMPETES Act elements;
- Requires the longitudinal data system to support a broad array of state and school district educational functions;
- Ensures the necessary authority to collect postsecondary data (including data from private postsecondary institutions); and
- Establishes a framework for data sharing with outside entities to support research and evaluation consistent with privacy protection laws.

The legislation also requires connections to early learning data, and Illinois is already actively working to design a comprehensive early learning (birth through Pre-K) data system that will be incorporated into the longitudinal data system. In addition, the State of Illinois recently received a $9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, for implementation of a longitudinal data system.

Over the past two years, ISBE and IBHE convened stakeholder advisory groups to develop plans to restructure school leader preparation and certification. This spring, the group will present recommendations to the ISBE for administrative rulemaking to overhaul the State's administrator preparation program. The recommendations for preparation programs included: (1) a stronger focus on instruction and school improvement; (2) meeting the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium Standards; (3) including the strands of Distinguished Principal; (4) strengthen content understanding for special education and English language learners; (5)

partnership with one or more school districts; (6) candidates must meet enhanced selection requirements; and (7) a comprehensive internship/residency requirement that includes a minimum of four weeks of full time residency and 200 additional hours of internship, with required assessments. The proposed administrative rules will require all programs to be resubmitted and approved under the new standards. These new rules for school leader preparation and certification will be a major step toward improving the capacity of our schools and districts.

New Teacher Induction & Mentoring

Providing high quality mentoring and induction for new teachers has been a state priority since 2003. Since 2004, Illinois law has defined requirements for mentoring and induction programs and identified the criteria for selecting mentors. Since the 2003-04 school year, the State has also provided funding assistance on a competitive basis to Illinois public schools to establish induction and mentoring programs. Sixty-five State supported induction and mentoring programs have been established in districts throughout the State, primarily within the last three years. In 2009, Chicago began providing intensive mentoring through the New Teacher Center (NTC) to all first and second year teachers. RTTT provides an opportunity to build upon the success of the existing new teacher support by using new teacher evaluation data to better inform mentor support and to ensure that the most effective teachers are selected as mentors.

Establishing Intervention Systems in Low-Performing Districts

In several districts with systemic non-compliance issues, ISBE has engaged in intensive interventions to improve district operations, support student learning, and address areas of non-compliance. These interventions rely on a number of authorities existing under state and federal law, including the intervention authority in Section 2-3.25f of the School Code, NCLB corrective action rights, and authority to withhold funds and address noncompliance relating to specific student populations. *(See **Appendix E1-1** for further information and specific examples of State initiatives in this area).*

Charter School Reform

Public Act 96-0105, signed into law by Governor Quinn in July 2009, increases charter school options throughout the State by doubling the total number of permitted charter schools from 60 to 120: 70 in Chicago, 45 in the remainder of the State, and an additional 5 devoted exclusively to re-enrolled high school drop-outs. In addition, P.A. 96-0105 establishes the

Independent Charter School Authorizer Task Force for the purpose of studying the need, if any, for an independent charter school authorizer in Illinois. The Task Force will submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly in early 2010.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—

* * *

(ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — *(25 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

Improving Student Outcomes

In addition to the progress identified above, the State has improved student outcomes overall and by subgroup since 2003.

ISAT: Since 2006, the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) has been administered to students in grade 3 through 8 in reading and math. Before 2006, only students in grade 3, 5, and 8 took ISAT reading and math tests. Starting in 2001, the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) has been administered to students in grade 11 in reading and math.

Since 2003, the overall ISAT achievement results have shown significant increases for all tested grades in both reading and math. In addition, the achievement gaps between several subgroups are decreasing. For example, the achievement gap between Black and White subgroups decreased around 10% in reading and 15% in math over the past 7 years. For the economically disadvantaged subgroup, the achievement gap between low-income and non-low-income subgroups has also shown a decrease of at least 5% in reading and 10% in math over 7 years. From 2003 to 2007, the achievement gap between Hispanic and White subgroups decreased 10%-15% in both reading and math. Starting in 2008, Limited English Proficient

(LEP) students took the ISAT or PSAE (with accommodations) instead of the IMAGE test. Therefore, any comparisons with prior year's achievement levels for LEP students (mainly, Hispanic students in Illinois) should be made with appropriate caution.

PSAE: The Prairie State Achievement Examination is a two-day test. Day one includes the national ACT exam and day two includes Illinois Science and Work Keys tests. During the past 7 years, the overall PSAE achievement results remained the same in reading and slightly decreased in math. From year 2003 to 2007, the achievement gap between Hispanic and White remained the same in reading and decreased 3% in math. As for the other subgroups, the achievement gaps increased slightly in reading and remained the same in math.

ACT College Entrance Examination: According to ACT, since Illinois began incorporating the ACT college entrance examination in the PSAE in 2001, Illinois has experienced the following results:

- Academic achievement on the ACT has increased in all four subject areas across all racial/ethnic groups. Average Composite scores for Illinois students have increased at a rate twice that seen nationally.
- Improvements in students' overall college and career readiness benchmark attainment exceed those seen nationally.
- Many more Illinois students are now in the college pipeline, particularly underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students and lower-income students.

Graduation Rate: The graduation rate has increased 1.1% since 2003 (see table below).

Illinois Graduation Rate						
2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
86.0%	86.6%	87.4%	87.8%	85.9%	86.5%	87.1%

Illinois will implement a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education (34 CFR 200.19(b)(1)), with reporting following the 2010-11 school year.

NAEP: On the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the math assessment results showed dramatic improvement for grades 4 and 8 between 2003 and 2009. In reading, the assessment results showed no significant gain for grade 4 students and a significant

decrease for grade 8 students between 2003 and 2007. The achievement gap between the low-income and non-low-income subgroups has decreased slightly in grade 4 reading and math. The achievement gap between Hispanic and White students decreased in grade 4 math for those at or above Basic. Achievement gaps for other subgroups remained unchanged.

Advanced Placement Examinations: The State of Illinois has seen increases in the number of students taking and passing AP exams, including increased participation among subgroups. According to the 5th Annual AP Report to the Nation, Illinois ranked 18th in the United States in percentage of seniors posting a 3 or higher on an AP exam in 2008, with 15.2% of students attaining this level. This percentage has increased since 2003, when 13% of Illinois students scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam.

Illinois has also seen an increase in the number of African American, Latino, American Indian, low-income, and female students taking AP exams. The number of Latino students taking an AP Exam in 2008 increased 19.4% from the previous year, and the number of Latino students scoring a 3 or higher also increased by 19%. The percentage of African American students taking an AP exam in 2008 grew by 9.3% from the previous year. More than 56% of students taking an AP test in 2008 were women, a 9.6% increase over the previous year. Female students scoring a 3 or higher grew by 7.4% from the previous year. Low-income students comprised 19% of seniors taking AP exams in Illinois in 2008, a notable increase over the 12.3% during 2003. Chicago's Whitney M. Young Magnet High School was singled out in the AP Report for having the greatest number of African American students in the country from the class of 2008 scoring a 3 or higher on the AP English Language exam.

While none of these measures come near meeting the State's expectations, the general progress on nearly all the measures is an asset on which it can build with RTTT. Higher standards combined with improved formative and summative student assessments, increased focus on measurement, and the use of data, performance evaluation, and interventions in the lowest performing schools will dramatically accelerate progress of Illinois students.

Evidence for (A)(3)(ii):

- NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test was given or data was collected. Note that this data will be used for reference only and can be in raw format. In the narrative, provide the analysis of this data and any tables or graphs that best support the narrative.
    - Appendix A3-1 Data on State Progress (NAEP, ISAT, PSAE, high school graduation)

B. STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards *(40 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B)—

(i) The State's participation in a consortium of States that— *(20 points)*

(a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and
(b) Includes a significant number of States; and

(ii) — *(20 points)*

(a) For Phase 1 applications, the State's high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way; or

(b) For Phase 2 applications, the State's adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.[1]

(B)(1) Illinois Reform Conditions
Developing and Adopting Common Standards

The State of Illinois is committed to adopting the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts through a revision to the Illinois Learning Standards by no later than August 2, 2010. Illinois is part of the Common Core State Standards Initiative involving 48 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia, and has executed the Memorandum of Agreement among participants in the Initiative. *(See **Appendix B1-1** for list of participants. See **Appendix B1-2** for copy of Memorandum of Agreement.)* The states and territories participating in this initiative are collectively developing and will adopt a core set of internationally-benchmarked academic standards in mathematics and English language arts. *(See **Appendix B1-3** for a copy of the current draft standards. See **Appendix B1-4** for documentation*

[1] Phase 2 applicants addressing selection criterion (B)(1)(ii) may amend their June 1, 2010 application submission through August 2, 2010 by submitting evidence of adopting common standards after June 1, 2010.

of international benchmarking.) The Common Core State Standards Initiative will also create economies of scale around areas such as curriculum development and common assessments. The Common Core State Standards Initiative is being jointly led by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with Achieve, ACT, and the College Board.

In October 2008, in anticipation of adopting revised Illinois Learning Standards, ISBE, in partnership with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Office of the Governor, and the Illinois Business Roundtable, joined 33 states in the American Diploma Project ("ADP"). This effort has involved both an external and internal review of the Illinois Learning Standards in English/Language Arts and Math. Teams of secondary and postsecondary educators compared the Illinois learning standards to the ADP exemplary standards in order to clarify what it means to best prepare to succeed in college.

Beginning in early 2010, the Illinois State Board of Education will commence the process to revise the Illinois Learning Standards to adopt the Common Core State Standards and incorporate the analyses performed through the American Diploma Project and Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network. *(See Section (A)(3) of this application for information regarding Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network.).* The revised Standards will also address the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) that are guiding supportive technology investments, and must be properly articulated to the State's early learning content standards. Illinois will ensure that the revised Learning Standards incorporate at least 85% of the content of the Common Core State Standards, as expected in the Initiative's Memorandum of Agreement.

Below is a description of the legal process for adoption of the revised Illinois Learning Standards. ISBE's rulemaking process must be undertaken in accordance with the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, 5 ILCS 100/1-1 *et seq*. *See* School Code, 105 ILCS 5/2-3.6. The Illinois Learning Standards are incorporated into the State Goals for Learning set forth in Title I, Part 23, of the Illinois Administrative Code, 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1, Appendix D, and therefore adoption of the Common Core State Standards will require revision of the State Goals for Learning. Assuming finalization of the Common Core State Standards in late January/early February 2010, Illinois is committed to adopting the Common Core Standards in mathematics and English language arts by August 2, 2010 through the following actions:

Illinois Timeline for Adoption of Common Core Standards	
Action	**Date**
Adoption of the Common Core and Initiation of Rulemaking: The State Board of Education will adopt the Common Core State Standards, subject to any amendments resulting from the administrative rulemaking process, and authorize the State Superintendent to initiate the rulemaking process to revise the State Goals for Learning through formal Board action. The State Superintendent will authorize the rulemaking and authorize the solicitation of public comment.	March 25, 2010
First Notice Period: ISBE will give the general public at least 45 days' notice of the intended amendment. Notice is published in the Illinois Register and must contain certain required information. During this first notice period, ISBE must accept comments from any interested person. A public hearing may be required. *See* 5 ILCS 100/5-40(b).	April 9 – May 24, 2010
Agency Response/Adoption: ISBE reviews comments received and revises the proposed amendment to the State Goals for Learning as appropriate. A recommended version of the proposed amendment is vetted and presented to the State Board of Education for adoption.	May 25, 2010 – June 15, 2010
Second Notice Period: ISBE must file written notice with the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules ("JCAR"). JCAR's notice period is 45 days, with one possible 45-day extension. ISBE and the Governor's office will advocate for a single 45 day period to ensure the timelines are met. After commencement of the second notice period, no substantive change may be made to the proposed amendment unless made in response to an objection or suggestion of JCAR. After expiration of the second notice period and notification from JCAR that no objection will be issued, or after a response by ISBE to a statement of objections issued by JCAR, ISBE files a certified copy of the proposed amendment.	June 15, 2010 – July 30, 2010
Final Adoption. After expiration of the second notice period and notification from JCAR that no objection will be issued, or after a response by ISBE to a statement of objections issued by JCAR, ISBE files a certified copy of the proposed amendment.	August 1, 2010

Evidence for (B)(1)(i):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium.
  - Appendix B1-2 Common Core State Standards Initiative Memorandum of Understanding
- A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the standards.
  - Appendix B1-3 Common Core Standards
- Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers.

- Appendix B1-4 Outline of International Benchmarking of Common Core Standards

- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.
  - Appendix B1-1 Common Core Standards Initiative Consortium Participants

Evidence for (B)(1)(ii):

For Phase 1 applicants:

- A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.
  - Contained in narrative

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments *(10 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) the State's participation in a consortium of States that—

(i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and

(ii) Includes a significant number of States.

(B)(2) Illinois Reform Conditions

Developing and Implementing Common, High-Quality Assessments

The State of Illinois is committed to improving the quality of its assessment systems, as evidenced by its participation in five consortia that are working to develop and implement common, high-quality benchmark and summative assessments. All of the assessments being contemplated for implementation in Illinois will be aligned with the Common Core Standards that Illinois will adopt, as described in Section (B)(1) of this application.

The State's ability to successfully participate in an assessment consortium is not without precedent. Over the last several years, Illinois has been a leader within the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, a group of 22 states that have developed and implemented English language proficiency standards and a corresponding statewide proficiency assessment aligned with content area standards. Illinois has the largest number of English Language Learners in the WIDA Consortium, but recognizes that it is the cooperative effort forged with a significant number of other states that has positioned Illinois to forge a strong link between English language proficiency standards, English language arts, and Spanish language arts.

The consortia in which Illinois is participating will provide not only summative assessments, but also benchmark assessments, curriculum-embedded assessments, and assessments measuring higher-order skills that are linked to the Common Core Standards and that support and reinforce each other. Through participation in these consortia and the assessment strategies proposed in this Plan (see Section (B)(3)), Illinois intends to shift the focus of the State assessment system from primarily measuring student proficiency to a system that is directed toward measuring student growth throughout the school year, measuring teacher and

school impact on student learning, and supporting alignment of instruction to college and work-ready expectations.

Below are summaries of the consortia in which Illinois is participating. Although it is early in the process, preliminary timelines indicate that the consortium of states led by Florida ("Florida Consortium") will provide participants with formative assessments for mathematics and reading for the 2012-2013 school year and interim assessments for the 2013-2014 school year, and will rollout operational summative assessments for select grades and subjects as early as 2012-2013 school year. Because of Illinois' focus on development of interim and formative assessments as part of the statewide assessment system, Illinois will focus significantly on the Florida Consortium. These new assessments are anticipated to provide a valid and reliable manner to measure student growth that will be incorporated into the State's reformed performance evaluation systems described in Section (D)(2) of this application.

Florida Consortium

On January 11, 2010, Illinois signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Florida Consortium. Participants in this consortium are collectively developing internationally-benchmarked summative, formative, benchmark, and interim assessments. *(Please see **Appendix B2-1** for a copy of the Florida Consortium MOA and **Appendix B2-2** for a list of Florida Consortium participants.)* The Aspen Institute has pledged funding to support the Florida Consortium's work around policy, management, and assessment design goals. All Florida Consortium participants will adopt the Common Core Standards (see Section (B)(1)), and assessments will measure these common standards. The Florida Consortium will utilize technology for efficiency of delivery and scoring. It is projected that verified student results will be available within two weeks of assessment administration.

Other Assessment Consortia

1. MOSAIC. On January 8, 2010, Illinois signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium ("MOSAIC"). *(Please see **Appendix B2-3** for a copy of the MOSAIC MOU and **Appendix B2-4** for a list of MOSAIC consortium participants.)* MOSAIC participants will adopt the Common Core Standards (see Section (B)(1)), and the MOSAIC assessment system will develop benchmark assessments that will complement the use of summative assessment systems aligned to these standards. The MOSAIC consortium incorporates development of professional development materials around

instructional integration of the Common Core Standards, a computerized instructional support system, and development of hands-on training and workshop modules for educators focusing on strategies to make data-informed instructional decisions based on formative, benchmark, and summative assessment results.

2. Balanced Assessment Consortium. On January 8, 2010, Illinois signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards ("Balanced Consortium"). *(Please see **Appendix B2-5** for a copy of the Balanced Consortium MOU and **Appendix B2-6** for a list of Balanced Consortium participants.)* Balanced Consortium participants will adopt the Common Core Standards (see Section (B)(1)). The consortium would work to create a common reference examination that includes selected-response, constructed response and performance components aimed at higher-order skills. The assessment will incorporate more rigorous and analytic multiple-choice and open-ended items that could be used as part of a summative evaluation, while also providing formative information, and will emphasize student growth over time.

3. SMARTER. On January 8, 2010, Illinois signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers ("SMARTER") Consortium. *(Please see **Appendix B2-7** for a copy of the SMARTER MOU and **Appendix B2-8** for a list of SMARTER consortium participants.)* The purpose of the SMARTER consortium is to develop a high-quality summative assessment system aligned to the Common Core Standards (see Section (B)(1)). The assessment system will use online adaptive tests, innovative item design, and open-ended items, and will include teachers, school and district administrators, state departments of education and institutions of higher education in the design, administration, scoring and reporting of assessments. States will report student, school, district and state results based on a common set of rigorous standards, and may also report student achievement benchmarked to a variety of other achievement standards. The summative assessments developed through the SMARTER consortium are intended to complement formative and benchmark assessment systems.

4. Achieve Consortium. On January 14, 2010, Illinois committed to participation in a consortium organized by Achieve ("Achieve Consortium") and dedicated to development and implementation of summative assessments aligned to the Common Core Standards. *(Please see **Appendix B2-9** for a copy of a letter confirming Illinois' participation in the Achieve consortium,*

*and **Appendix B2-10** for a list of Achieve consortium participants.)* The assessments developed will enable benchmarking performance against NAEP and international standards and cover grades 3 – 8 and high school, including college and career readiness measures at the end of high school. The summative assessments will be designed to be consistent with comprehensive assessment systems that include interim and formative assessments.

Evidence for (B)(2):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards; or documentation that the State's consortium has applied, or intends to apply, for a grant through the separate Race to the Top Assessment Program (to be described in a subsequent notice); or other evidence of the State's plan to develop and adopt common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice).
    - Appendix B2-1 Florida Consortium MOA
    - Appendix B2-3 MOSAIC MOU
    - Appendix B2-5 Balanced Consortium MOU
    - Appendix B2-7 SMARTER Consortium MOU
    - Appendix B2-9 Achieve Consortium Letter of Intent

- The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.
    - Appendix B2-2 Florida Consortium Participants
    - Appendix B2-4 MOSAIC Consortium Participants
    - Appendix B2-6 Balanced Consortium Participants
    - Appendix B2-8 SMARTER Consortium Participants
    - Appendix B2-10 Achieve Consortium Participants

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments *(20 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) tied to these standards. State or LEA activities might, for example, include: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; in cooperation with the State's institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments (including, for example, formative and interim assessments (both as defined in this notice)); developing or acquiring and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students (as defined in this notice).

(B)(3) Illinois Reform Plan

Supporting the Transition to Enhanced Standards and High-Quality Assessments

The Illinois Learning Standards do not constitute a state curriculum; LEAs and schools still must determine how to provide curriculum, instruction, and local assessments aligned to the expectations set forth in the Standards. Participating LEAs, with State support, will undertake a series of actions during the first two years of the RTTT grant period that will improve classroom instruction, align instruction to the Common Core and across P-20 transition points, and prepare for the implementation of improved State assessment systems. These actions will establish the foundation for accelerating student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, and increasing graduation rates and college attainments over the course of the RTTT grant period and beyond.

To support an accelerated transition by Participating LEAs to the Common Core State Standards and high quality assessments, this Plan relies on two central strategies:

(1) Establishing an action framework so that Participating LEAs can effectively implement the Common Core State Standards in every classroom, and for every student, by the end of the second year of the grant period. The core elements of this framework include (a) aligning curriculum, (b) implementing interim and formative assessments, (c) ensuring Response to Intervention plans are aligned to the Common Core State Standards, and (d) implementing Programs of Study in middle and high schools that define clear student pathways, related to

student academic and career interest, that help students successfully transition to high school, college, and the workforce.

(2) Providing LEAs with comprehensive State supports to implement the elements of the action framework. The State will focus its supports on (i) assisting LEA implementation of assessment systems to inform classroom instruction and promote instructional alignment, and (ii) creating a statewide network of partners delivering high quality instructional resources supporting Programs of Study in key STEM application areas.

GOAL I. Participating LEAs Deliver Standards-Aligned Instruction in Every Classroom, and for Every Student.

GOAL I. KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Standards Aligned Instructional Systems in All Schools. As Illinois moves to adopt revised Learning Standards that are internationally bench-marked and focused on college- and career- readiness, the Participating LEA MOU ensures that these LEAs will establish the instructional systems necessary to implement these standards in every classroom and for every student by the end of the second year of the grant period. Specifically, Participating LEAs must undertake a process during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years that includes all of the following:[4]

1. **Aligning curriculum** to the revised Illinois Learning Standards, through activities including: (i) the development of learning targets and "pacing" to connect the Standards to classroom instruction in each grade level; (ii) unit planning aligning instruction plans to learning benchmarks; and (iii) assisting teachers with training in the alignment of instruction with the revised Standards.
2. **Implementing Assessments for Learning** in at least grades K – 10 aligned to the learning benchmarks in English/language arts and math. As revised Learning Standards are adopted by the State in science, Assessments for Learning should be implemented in science as well. The term "Assessments for Learning" is defined in Section (I)(A) of the Participating LEA MOU in a manner aligned to the U.S. Department of Education's definition of interim and formative assessments.[5]
3. Ensuring the district's **Response to Intervention (RtI) plan provides for targeted interventions and differentiated supports,** aligned to the revised Learning Standards, for students that are not on pace to meet college- and career-ready expectations. As

Illinois requires all LEAs to implement an RtI-based instruction, intervention, and assessment process, RtI is a critical component of the State's framework for ensuring all students can access a rigorous, standards-based curriculum. *(See **Appendix B3-1** for a further description of RtI and the Illinois RtI system.)*

B. Programs of Study as a Framework for High School Reform. In high schools, the development of standards-aligned instructional systems will require comprehensive reforms that seek to re-shape the current high school delivery model – a key objective of this Plan and a critical need for the State, as discussed in Section (A)(1). Programs of Study serve as a model for restructuring high school instructional systems by (1) enabling students to choose a focused Program of Study related to their academic or career interests that they can continue into postsecondary education; (2) assisting teachers, parents, students and counselors in creating individualized plans of study for a diverse student body; and (3) promoting public-private partnerships between schools, communities, and businesses/industries.[6] Generally, Programs of Study address student transitions from middle into high school, commence a specific course sequence in the 9th grade, and then continue through post-secondary education including community colleges and universities.

Building on a multi-year high school reform strategic planning process (further described in **Appendix B3-2**), the Illinois Programs of Study model provides recommended sequences of courses aligned to particular Career Pathways, which include opportunities to earn dual credit, secondary or post-secondary credentials or certificates, and an associate or bachelor's degree, promoting integration and application of academic and technical content and providing valuable information and experiences to help students make better choices regarding their education and future career goals. The Participating LEA MOU includes clear expectations for the development of Programs of Study at both the middle and high school level based on design principles adopted by the State.[7] For Participating LEAs serving grades 9 through 12, the LEA must establish a broad range of Programs of Study as a structural approach to high school reform, with a specific focus on establishing at least two Programs of Study promoting critical Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) application areas. As specified in the MOU, LEA action to establish Programs of Study must include:

1. Development of Program of Study course sequences in a broad range of academic and career areas;

2. Strengthen academic integration within all Programs of Study to promote stronger linkages between core academic disciplines and technical content;
3. Support professional development for academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructors to implement these Programs of Study and provide opportunities for instructors to gain additional professional certifications;
4. Support real-world connections with adult mentors outside of the school building through strategies such as work-based learning opportunities, problem-based learning projects, and mentoring programs;
5. Implement education and career guidance systems, in coordination with feeder middle schools, to provide students with the opportunity to develop career and education plans; and
6. Form collaborative partnerships with postsecondary education institutions to increase dual credit opportunities and develop structured programs to improve the transition to postsecondary education. These programs must include early identification of students who may need remedial assistance before transitioning, particularly in math, and programs to address the needs of these students before high school graduation.

Recognizing that high school reform requires an intensive focus on the middle to high school transition, Participating LEAs serving grades 6 through 8 must (i) establish systems for educators to align curriculum with high schools and feeder middle schools to support Programs of Study implementation; and (ii) implement education and career guidance systems to provide students with the opportunity to develop career and education plans starting in middle school that align to a Program of Study model at the high school level. Implementing a comprehensive STEM talent pipeline will require elementary schools to participate in aligning curriculum and instruction and will be explored upon successful implementation of LEA requirements at the middle and high school level.

Illinois will work with Participating LEAs to provide all students with a wide variety of options ranging from academic Programs of Study (e.g., humanities) to more career focused areas (e.g., Health Science) based on the Illinois Career Clusters Programs of Study model. However, because the Illinois Programs of Study model is critical to the State's efforts to prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM areas, Race to the Top resources will be focused on expanding Programs of Study promoting critical STEM application areas. The model

provides a wide set of highly flexible options for students to enter STEM-related pathways, especially for students that have not performed well in traditional science and math courses and other underrepresented groups in STEM fields (including women and minorities). Illinois Performance Measures for this Section (B)(3) reflect the State's commitment to addressing the needs of underrepresented groups, including women and girls, in STEM areas. Specifically, the State has set targets of 55% of students and 65% of underrepresented students in Participating LEAs participating in STEM-related Programs of Study by the final year of the RTTT grant period (SY 2013-14). (See Performance Measures for Section (B)(3).) Under the Participating LEA MOU,[8] Participating LEAs must establish two or more Programs of Study in key STEM application areas using the resources of the "STEM Learning Exchanges" described later in this Section.

GOAL II: The State Delivers Comprehensive LEA Supports for Standards Implementation, With a Focus on (i) Assessment Tools to Inform Classroom Instruction and Promote Instructional Alignment, and (ii) High Quality STEM Instructional Resources.

GOAL II: KEY ACTIVITIES.

A comprehensive system of State supports is critical to Participating LEAs' ability to effectively implement the elements of the State's Standards implementation framework. Coordinated by ISBE and the Statewide System of Support, the State will provide Participating LEAs with a full continuum of supports that address: (i) alignment of curriculum to the revised Learning Standards, including curriculum mapping, aligning instruction plans to learning targets, assessment frameworks and pacing guides; (ii) technology upgrades for low-cost laptops/netbooks, on-line assessments, and other technological infrastructure needed to deliver world-class instructional systems; and (iii) an extensive array of Response to Intervention supports *(See **Appendix B3-1**)*. While these programs are critical, the State must develop new capacities and undertake new investments if all schools in Participating LEAs are to effectively implement the revised Learning Standards incorporating the Common Core on an aggressive timeline, as described in the remainder of this Section.

A. LEA Assessment Systems that Measure Growth and Student Readiness. As described in Section (B)(2) of this Application, Illinois has joined consortia of states to jointly develop and implement common, high quality assessments aligned with the Common Core K-12

standards. Through these consortia, Illinois will move as quickly as possible to invert the current system of State assessments – which are focused on annual summative determinations of student proficiency – and instead focus State assessment resources on tools designed to measure student growth and support classroom instruction. While Illinois will move expeditiously to adopt new State assessments, Participating LEAs cannot wait for new State assessments to aggressively align instruction to the Common Core State Standards. Nor can they rely on existing State assessments due to their lack of alignment with college- and career-ready expectations and their limited usefulness for measuring student growth. Therefore, the State will focus its efforts over the remainder of State Fiscal Year 2010 and during the first two years of the RTTT grant period on:

(1) Establishing new capacities to assist LEAs with the adoption and implementation of Assessments for Learning during the first year of the RTTT grant period;

(2) Building off of the strengths of the current State high school assessment to promote alignment of middle and high school instruction with college- and work-ready expectations; and

(3) Developing and implementing a kindergarten readiness measure to promote the alignment of PreK – 3 instruction and student supports.

The new State capacities and local systems developed during the first two years of the RTTT grant period will, as new State assessments are developed and implemented, transition into a comprehensive State and local system of high quality assessments for the remainder of the RTTT grant period and beyond.

1. Statewide Contract and Supports for Assessments for Learning. During the spring and summer of 2010, the State will launch a new program to support LEA integration of Assessments for Learning into Standards-aligned instructional systems. ISBE will procure a statewide contract to ensure best available pricing and a simplified procurement/contracting process for districts seeking to purchase commercially available Assessments for Learning, including end-of-course assessments for middle and high schools. All procured assessments must be able to measure student growth in a manner aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Through the guidance of the panel of technical experts and practitioners, discussed below, ISBE will define minimum criteria for validity, reliability, and usability. Assessments meeting this criteria will be made available through the statewide contract.

As part of the statewide contract, in addition to alignment to the Common Core, ISBE will establish certain other "non-negotiables" for vendors to ensure that the assessments:

a. are coupled with appropriate training and professional development linked to the use of the assessment;
b. can be incorporated into an RtI-based instruction, intervention, and assessment process;
c. where appropriate, permit the integration of data from these assessments with data from the State's standardized tests and the ACT Education Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) assessments in order to measure student growth; and
d. can be integrated with and delivered on the Learning and Performance Management System platform, upon this System's development (see Section (C)(3)).

As part of ISBE's process to procure the statewide contract, ISBE will convene a panel of technical experts and practitioners to provide guidance and expertise on, at minimum, the following areas: (i) alignment to the Common Core State Standards, as integrated within the Illinois Learning Standards; (ii) appropriate use of the assessments, including for instructional purposes, evaluative purposes, predictive purposes, or multiple purposes; (iii) the demonstrated technical quality of the assessment, including item quality; (iv) the design of reporting systems ensuring accessibility to actionable data relating to appropriate uses; and (v) recommendations for professional development necessary to effectively use the assessments and results. For assessments that are appropriate for evaluative purposes, ISBE will work in consultation with the vendors and the panel of technical experts and practitioners to differentiate student growth reporting into four categories consistent with the State's performance evaluation framework: (i) high rates of growth (equivalent to one and one-half grade levels in an academic year); (ii) effective rates of growth (equivalent to at least one grade level in an academic year); (iii) "needs improvement" growth; and (iv) unsatisfactory growth.

Race to the Top funding sub-granted to Participating LEAs can be used to adopt and administer Assessments for Learning, including the purchase of commercial systems available through the statewide contract or the development of locally-developed or customized approaches to Assessments for Learning. ISBE will also integrate into the Statewide System of Support professional development for educators to ensure effective use of data from Assessments for Learning and State assessments (as further discussed in Section (C)(3), Goal II).

2. Build off of the Strengths of the Current State High School Assessment to Promote Immediate Alignment of Middle and High School Instruction with College- and Work-ready Expectations.[9] While the current State assessment system has many significant limitations, it also has a key strength—its incorporation of the ACT college entrance examination into its statewide high school assessment, the Prairie State Achievement Examination (or "PSAE"). The ACT has been administered to all public high school juniors as part of the PSAE since 2001, making Illinois one of the first states in the nation to recognize that a state test could serve multiple purposes of measuring state standards, advancing college readiness, and providing value to students, parents, and postsecondary institutions. A recent study by ACT concluded that ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks match well with the Common Core State Standards for College and Career Readiness in multiple subject areas,[10] thereby making the ACT and its College Readiness Benchmarks appropriate foundational tools for supporting LEA alignment of middle and high school instruction. The State will use ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks as a primary outcome indicator of the Measurement Plan (see Section (A)(2)) to determine whether this Plan's comprehensive high school focus is preparing more students for college and careers.

In addition to including the ACT college entrance examination, the PSAE also includes other components that can be used to confirm whether high school graduates have achieved the foundational skills needed for success in workforce training programs and success in employment. The State will build on these strengths to ensure Participating LEAs can immediately access tools necessary to promote the alignment of middle and high school instruction with college- and work-ready expectations.

a. *Strengthen EPAS as a Tool to Address Middle and High School Alignment.* For all Participating LEAs, the State will establish a consistent, rigorous measure of high school readiness to address alignment of expectations across middle and high school instruction. Since the 2007-08 school year, the State has funded the cost for school districts to implement the EXPLORE test in 8th or 9th grade and the PLAN test in 10th grade. Collectively, EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT constitute the Educational Planning and Assessment System ("EPAS"). The EPAS system assessments are scored on a common scale, and can be used to identify a lack of alignment in instruction resulting in student achievement falling short of college- and work-ready expectations.

The State will continue to fund the cost for all LEAs in the State to implement the

EXPLORE and PLAN assessments, and will strengthen EPAS as a tool for Participating LEAs to address middle and high school alignment with college and work-ready expectations through the following actions:

a. Commencing in the 2010-11 school year, the State will: (i) require that Participating LEAs administer EXPLORE during 8th grade; and (ii) establish a consistent testing window for administration of the EXPLORE and PLAN by Participating LEAs.
b. ACT has agreed to partner with the State of Illinois to enhance the timeliness and functionality of EXPLORE and PLAN reporting, commencing with the 2010-2011 assessment administration.
c. As an outgrowth of the State's participation in the American Diploma Project, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will adopt standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in public community colleges. ICCB, working with its member postsecondary institutions, will implement standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in advance of the 2011-12 School Year. IBHE has also pledged to work with its member postsecondary institutions to implement standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in the State's public universities. With standardized ACT placement scores "back-mapped" to corresponding EXPLORE and PLAN scores, LEAs will have the tools to measure and clearly communicate whether a student is on-track for credit-bearing postsecondary coursework as early as 8th grade.

Under the Participating LEA MOU,[11] Participating LEAs must make a series of commitments to effectively use the EPAS system by (i) clearly communicating to students that a student's scores are a predictor of the student's readiness for non-remedial coursework; (ii) establishing systems for educators to discuss patterns and instructional needs identified through EPAS data; (iii) aligning school improvement activities and targeted student intervention systems across high schools and feeder elementary/middle schools; and (iv) creating intensive instructional programs and student support services to increase the number of students prepared for non-remedial coursework. Similar to the State's use of the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, 8th grade EXPLORE performance will be a primary outcome indicator in the Measurement Plan (see Section (A)(2)) to determine whether Participating LEAs are effectively addressing the middle to high school transition.

b. *Establish a Statewide Career Readiness Certificate Program Validating Student Readiness for the Workplace*. In addition to including the ACT college entrance examination, the PSAE includes ACT WorkKeys assessments that can be used to confirm whether high school graduates have achieved the foundational skills needed for success in workforce training programs and success in employment. The use of WorkKeys assessments in Illinois high schools can be enhanced, however, through implementation of ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate program and promotion of access to the National Career Readiness System. ACT has developed the National Career Readiness Certificate program in conjunction with the WorkKeys assessments to validate that an individual has developed key job skills relevant to a wide range of employment sectors.[12] The National Career Readiness Certificate demonstrates students' mastery of "career-ready" skills recognized by employers throughout the nation.[13]

In order for Illinois to launch a statewide National Career Readiness Certificate program, the State must offer the WorkKeys Locating Information assessment in addition to the WorkKeys Applied Math and Reading for Information assessments already included within the PSAE. Through Race to the Top funding, Illinois will provide funding for high schools in Participating LEAs to implement the Locating Information assessment and participate in the National Career Readiness Certificate program, commencing with the 2010-11 school year. Participating LEAs that elect to participate in the National Career Readiness Certificate program will be required to implement the Locating Information assessment prior to the PSAE (either in the spring of the sophomore year or fall of the junior year) so that students can obtain a Certificate as the direct result of performance on the WorkKeys assessments included within the PSAE. As reflected in the letters of support included in **Appendix A2-8**, the statewide business community has agreed to partner with the State in the implementation of the National Career Readiness Certificate program and to work with individual businesses to promote the Certificate as a tool to verify workplace skills.

3. Develop and Implement a Kindergarten Readiness Measure to Promote PreK – 3 Instructional Alignment. Research indicates that a significant percentage of the achievement gap opens up well before children even enter kindergarten.[14] Having a robust and reliable snapshot of where students are developmentally as they begin kindergarten allows parents and educators to address student deficiencies at an early stage in a child's development and promotes alignment of instruction and student supports across early learning and grades K-3. Given

Illinois' national leadership and considerable investment in pre-kindergarten access and expansion (see Section (F)(3)), deployment of a kindergarten readiness measure is especially critical in Illinois to better understand the impact of early childhood education programs.

With Race to the Top funding, the State will develop and implement a kindergarten readiness measure for all Participating LEAs. Data from the kindergarten readiness measure will then be used to support alignment and create joint and integrated professional development across State-funded early learning programs and grades K-3 in Participating LEAs. Cross-sector discussions can improve teaching and practice in both areas, and ensure alignment of instruction and student supports to both the State's early learning content standards and the revised Learning Standards. Under the Participating LEA MOU,[15] following development and piloting of the measure, Participating LEAs are expected to administer the kindergarten readiness measure and integrate and align professional development across early learning and grades K-3.

B. Investing in High Quality STEM Instructional Resources Supporting Programs of Study in Key STEM Application Areas. To support LEA implementation of comprehensive high school reforms, the State must invest in high quality instructional resources that will support expansion of the Programs of Study best practices model. These investments are particularly necessary in key sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) application areas that are critical to the future Illinois economy. Illinois currently has a wide variety of STEM-related educational initiatives sponsored by industry and professional organizations, museums, universities and colleges, community-based non-profit organizations, and state agencies.

Illinois recently convened public and private partners to develop an approach to K-12 STEM education in Illinois that incorporates a stronger technology and engineering component, which resulted in a common vision that focuses on addressing authentic real-world problems and integrated approaches to teaching and learning across multiple disciplines using leading technological tools, equipment, and procedures. These authentic, real-world problems could range from basic research and development to more applied problems in specific application areas such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction, information, transportation, and medical technologies.

These partners developed a common vision of STEM education consistent with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Framework in Technological Literacy that integrates the National Education Technology Standards (NETS) and International Technology

Education Association (ITEA) standards and builds on national and state science standards, such as the Illinois science standards, that emphasize technological design and the impact of technology on society. This Illinois STEM approach provides a strong platform for STEM education because it integrates and vertically aligns STEM standards at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels that can be assessed across multiple ITEA application areas such as medical, agricultural, and transportation technology applications.

Building off of this common vision for STEM education, Illinois will use Race to the Top Fund funding to establish "STEM Learning Exchanges" through partnerships among public and private entities working together to expand access to STEM opportunities. The statewide partnerships for the STEM Learning Exchanges will be modeled after a long-standing, successful model for Illinois agricultural education,[16] and will include representatives from school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry experts, museums, research centers, and other community partners. Each partnership will be required to form a nonprofit corporate entity or other formal organizational structure with representation from all of the partner entities responsible for overseeing and implementing the grant.

A separate STEM Learning Exchange will be developed in each of the following nine critical STEM application areas, as further defined in **Appendix B3-3**:

1. Agriculture and Natural Resources;
2. Energy;
3. Manufacturing;
4. Information Technology;
5. Architecture and Construction;
6. Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics;
7. Research and Development;
8. Health Sciences; and
9. Financial Services.

STEM Learning Exchanges will provide the curricular resources, assessments tools, professional development systems, and IT infrastructure necessary for LEAs to develop STEM-related Programs of Study in these application areas. Each STEM Learning Exchange will be housed on the Learning and Performance Management System (as described in Section (C)(3) of this Application), and will create an open collaborative cloud computing-based learning platform that:

- Provides e-learning curriculum resources including on-line courses, assessment and feedback systems, reference materials, interactive computational tools, data bases, and software tools (e.g., engineering design software), including interactive computational

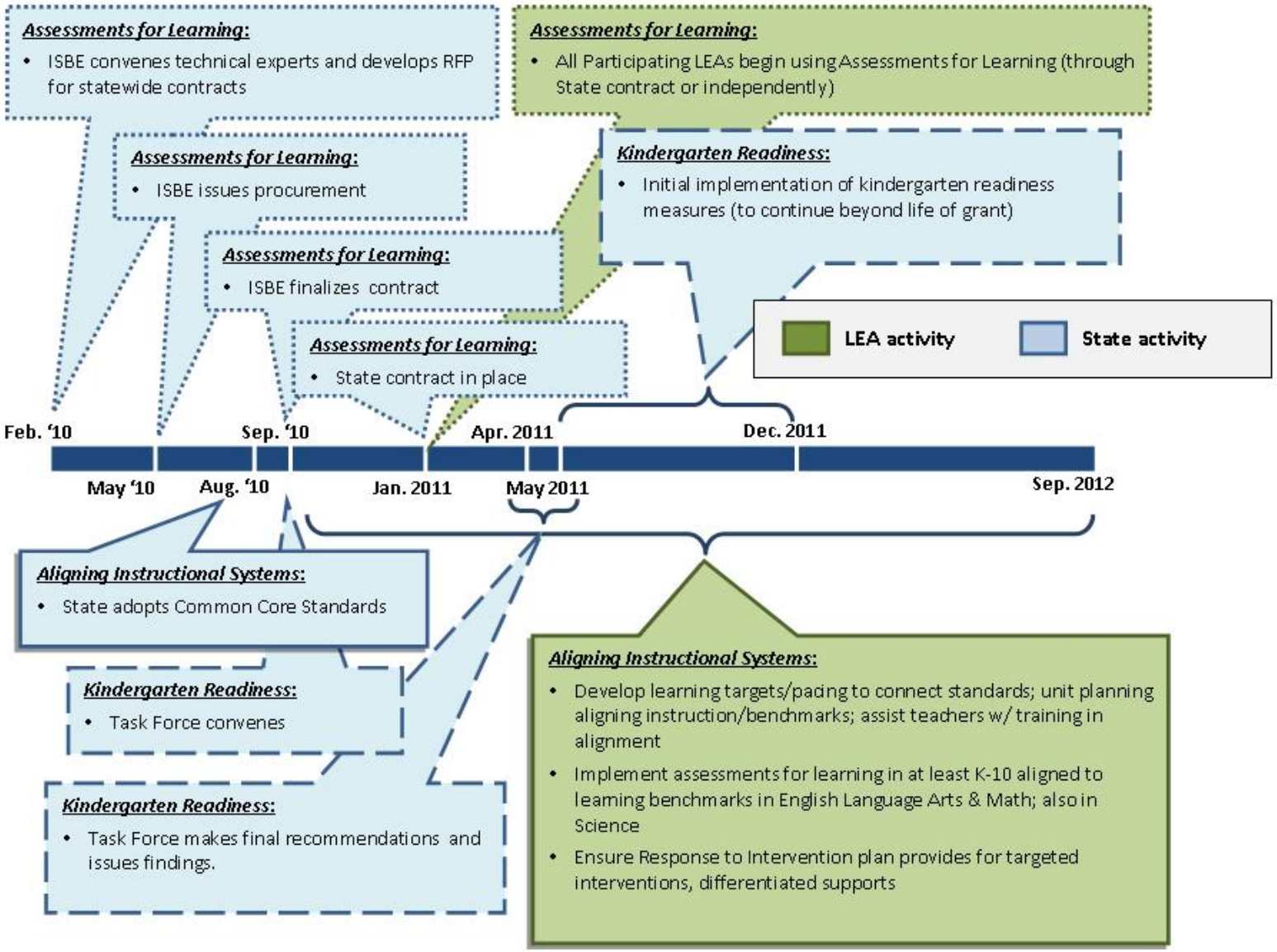
tools across all areas of science inquiry-based education delivered through the Blue Wave project supported by the NCSA's state-of-the-art petascale computing project *(see **Appendix B3-4**)*;

- Provides internships and other work-based learning opportunities that connect students with adult mentors;
- Provides career development and outreach resources to expand awareness of STEM-related programs and careers to K-12 students;
- Provides sponsored challenges and project management resources for students to work in collaborative teams addressing real-world interdisciplinary problems;
- Provides robust professional development resources for teachers and school administrators in STEM disciplines, including support for web-based networks and a Virtual Professional Learning Community developed to exchange best practices and developments in STEM fields; and
- Works with government, education and private sector partners to review the performance of STEM-related programs of study and work with school partners to continuously improve performance.

The STEM Learning Exchanges will also play an important role in the State's efforts to increase the number of effective teachers teaching mathematics and science by providing externship programs offering educators real-world experience *(see Section (D)(3) of this Application for further discussion of STEM externships)*.

The following page contains a timeline identifying responsible parties and key activities relevant to implementation of standards-aligned instructional systems in Illinois.

Timeline for Implementation of Standards-Aligned Instructional Systems



(B)(3): Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments
Evidence for (B)(3) [*optional]: Any performance measures to be used by the State re: this criterion, and baseline data for current school year or most recent school year.

RESPONSE: Please complete the data table below; list performance measures for Criteria (B)(3), baseline data, and annual targets through end of SY 2013-2014. (This table only needs to be completed if the State has identified the performance measures for (B)(3). If such indicators have not yet been selected, the table does not need to be completed at this time.)

Performance Measures (B)(3) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/ most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Aligning curriculum to revised IL Learning Standards	% of Participating LEAs implementing revised IL Learning Standards via curricular supports	NA	65%	100%	100%	100%
Implementing Assessments for Learning	% of Participating LEAs implementing articulated district Assessments for Learning plan for at least grades K-10 in English and math	NA	85%	100%	100%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs implementing articulated district Assessments for Learning plan for at least grades K-10 in science	NA	85%	100%	100%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs with a student-growth metric in place to track progress year to year	NA	85%	100%	100%	100%

Performance Measures (B)(3) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/ most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Response to Intervention Plans	% of Participating LEAs implementing an RtI plan aligned to the Common Core Standards (as defined by the MOU)	NA	100%	100%	100%	100%
Alignment of PreK-20 Supports	% of Participating LEAs implementing alignment supports for PreK-3 (as defined by MOU)		50%	75%	100%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs implementing alignment supports for grades 6-8 (as defined by MOU)		60%	75%	100%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs implementing alignment supports for high school to post-secondary transitions (as defined by MOU)		50%	65%	85%	100%
Programs of Study	% of Participating LEAs implementing required Program of Study elements in grades 9-12 (as defined by the MOU)		100%	100%	100%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs with grade 6-8 education and career guidance systems that aligns to a specific Program of Study model at the high school level		30%	50%	75%	100%

Performance Measures (B)(3) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/ most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
	% of Participating LEAs implementing a National Career Readiness Certificate program	NA	45%	80%	80%	80%
STEM implementation	% of students in Participating LEA participating in STEM Program of Study	10%	20%	30%	40%	55%
	% of underrepresented students in Participating LEAs participating in STEM Program of Study		30%	40%	50%	65%

C. DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system *(24 points – 2 points per America COMPETES element)*

The extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice).

Evidence:

- Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice) that is included in the State's statewide longitudinal data system. **(Contained in Narrative)**

(C)(1) Illinois Reform Conditions

Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system

As described in Section (A)(3) of this Plan, the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act (Public Act 96-0107) establishes the requirements and framework for the development of the State's longitudinal education data system. This legislation requires the State to implement all of the America COMPETES Act elements. Currently, the State of Illinois has all of the America COMPETES Act elements in place other than:

- A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; and
- Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.

Both of these elements will be added to the State's longitudinal education data system by September 30, 2011 in accordance with the plans set forth in the State's Application for Phase 2 of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program. Furthermore, to fully leverage funds available through the ARRA, the State has also applied for the Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. As specified in the Participating LEA MOU, all Participating LEAs must fully cooperate with ISBE on data collections necessary for the longitudinal data system, including efforts by ISBE to ensure data quality.

In regard to the twelve elements of the America COMPETES Act, the chart below provides relevant documentation of each element in Illinois, including the current status of each element.

America COMPETES Act and Illinois' State Longitudinal Data System Documentation and Status of Elements		
System Elements (12)	**Current Status**	**Relevant Documentation/Outcomes**
Pre-K – 12 and postsecondary		
A unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system.	Implemented.	ISBE, in order to improve accountability and better respond to federal and state reporting requirements, has developed and implemented a state-level student information system (SIS). Through SIS, each student is now assigned a unique identification number that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system. All data to and from the state now uses that unique identifier. *See **Appendix C1-1**, ISBE SIS webpage indicating inclusion of data.*
Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information.	Implemented.	Through SIS, ISBE gathers student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information. *See Appendix C1-1, ISBE SIS webpage indicating inclusion of data.*
Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs.	Implemented.	Through SIS, ISBE gathers student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-12 education programs. Separate data systems on these points for community colleges and 4 year institutions of higher learning are maintained by Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Consortium (ISEG). All P-20 data is linked and made available through intergovernmental data sharing agreements.
Capacity to communicate with higher education data systems.	Implemented.	ISBE, IBHE, and ICCB have existing statutory authority and an intergovernmental data sharing agreement to link P-20 data.
A State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.	Implemented.	ISBE's systems include data edit checks that compare data to prior years' data to identify discrepancies. ISBE has also implemented a data steward system within the agency to improve data quality, validity, and reliability.

America COMPETES Act and Illinois' State Longitudinal Data System Documentation and Status of Elements		
System Elements (12)	**Current Status**	**Relevant Documentation/Outcomes**
		The responsibilities of the data stewards including working with both LEAs and agency staff to make sure that the data collected are current, reliable, and of high quality. The stewards will also undertake a data audit process developed by ISBE.
Pre-K – 12		
Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA.	Implemented.	Through SIS, ISBE gathers yearly standardized assessment results, including the ISAT and PSAE. *See Appendix C1-1, ISBE Student Assessment webpage indicating inclusion of data.*
Information on students not tested, by grade and subject.	Implemented.	Through SIS, ISBE has gathered information on students not tested, by grade and subject. *See Appendix C1-1, ISBE SIS webpage indicating inclusion of data.*
A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students.	To be implemented with the SLDS Grant.	To be developed through the SLDS Grant, provided such grant is received. Through the SLDS Grant, ISBE will redesign its teacher and administrator data collection systems to permit the integration of student level data with teacher and administrator data.
Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.	To be implemented with the SLDS Grant.	To be developed through the SLDS Grant, provided such grant is received. Through the SLDS Grant, ISBE will establish a Statewide Transcript System for Middle and High School Students.
Student-level college readiness test scores.	Implemented.	Through SIS, ISBE collects student-level college readiness test scores from the EPAS assessments (including ACT data). *See Appendix C1-1, ISBE Student Assessment webpage indicating inclusion of data.*
Postsecondary		
Data that provides information re extent to which students transition successfully from secondary to postsecondary education,	Implemented.	ICCB and the Illinois Shared Enrollment & Graduation File (ISEG) collect remediation data. ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, and ISEG have established a High School Feedback Report as further discussed in Section (C)(2). This

America COMPETES Act and Illinois' State Longitudinal Data System Documentation and Status of Elements		
System Elements (12)	**Current Status**	**Relevant Documentation/Outcomes**
including whether students enroll in remedial coursework.		Report includes data which will allow an assessment of the extent to which students successfully transition from secondary to postsecondary education, including data on enrollment in remedial coursework.
Data that provides other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.	Implemented and ongoing.	The Illinois longitudinal data system includes student-level college readiness test scores that can be used to determine alignment of K-12 curriculum with postsecondary expectations. Further, CTE program completion data included within ISBE systems and dual credit data captured by ICCB systems is used to address alignment and preparation for postsecondary.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data *(5 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (*e.g.*, parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.[2]

(C)(2) Illinois Reform Plan
Accessing and Using State Data

GOAL I. Ensure that data from the State's longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, key stakeholders.

GOAL I – KEY ACTIVITIES.

The State has developed, and is in the process of augmenting, a number of robust and relevant reporting tools that can be used to make data accessible and inform and engage key stakeholders at the district, school, and classroom level. In addition to the tools outlined below, the State will enhance human capital reporting and data accessibility through the requirements in Section (D)(3).

i. The Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC), administered by Northern Illinois University through a partnership with ISBE, provides publicly available data on test results and accountability information on all Illinois public schools and students, and provides school districts with access to student-level data for analysis and planning;

ii. High School-to-College Success Reports that utilize 9-12 and postsecondary data from the state's longitudinal data system to report on how well public high school students transition into the first two years of college; and

iii. Through the SLDS Grant program, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and (IBHE) are seeking funding to develop publicly accessible web portals that will provide useful and transparent performance and accountability information for community colleges and institutions of higher education.

[2] Successful applicants that receive Race to the Top grant awards will need to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including 34 CFR Part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

(*See* ***Appendix C2-1*** *for a further description of these reporting mechanisms*.) Illinois has also created the legal framework to ensure that data can be accessible to key stakeholders through the statutory framework in the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act, and an intergovernmental data sharing agreement among the State education agencies that establishes a framework and streamlined process to allow P-20 data to be made available to outside researchers and organizations. (*See* ***Appendix C2-1-B*** *for a further description of the State's legal framework for data sharing*.)

With the tools and legal framework in place and underway to provide data accessibility, the State's actions under this Plan are targeted to making data from the State's longitudinal data system available to support continuous improvement of the State education system. Two activities are central to this focus: (i) establishment of the Illinois Collaborative Education Policy Research; and (ii) an independent evaluation of teacher and principal evaluation reform.

A. Establishment of the Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research: To further guide the use of longitudinal data to support State policymaking and continuous improvement, the State will establish the Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research (ICEPR) as an independent organization with a governance structure linking it closely to State agencies, participating universities, and other educational stakeholders in Illinois. The ICEPR will:

- Help identify and define the key policy issues in the State;
- Communicate research priorities and recruit researchers to address these priorities;
- Facilitate the data-sharing agreements and administrative aspects of research projects;
- Communicate research findings and develop recommendations for policy and practice;
- Assist practitioners in developing research capacity for data collection and analysis; and
- Seek and secure external funding for additional projects aligned with state priorities.

ICEPR's Steering Committee will consist of seven members: the ICEPR executive director and the directors of the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC) at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago, the Center for the Study of Education Policy (CSEP) at Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Forum on the Future of Public Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The ICEPR

Board will consist of 15-20 members, including the Steering Committee and representatives from state education agencies, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), practitioner organizations, Chicago Public Schools (CPS), regional public universities, private universities, and independent research and policy organizations.

The State of Illinois has initiated priority setting for the ICEPR research agenda with a major event on November 17, 2009 attracting over 80 state agency leaders, university researchers, policy makers, and analysts. To align its work with the key objectives of this Plan, the primary focus areas for the ICEPR research agenda will include: (1) P-20 alignment and college- and work-readiness; (2) systems to attract, develop, and support effective teachers and leaders; (3) innovations and interventions in low-performing schools and districts; (4) assessment and management of learning (formative vs. summative); and (5) approaches to teaching math and science (including STEM education), language, and literacy, and enhanced outcomes for traditionally low-achieving student groups.

The ICEPR will manage a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to produce research proposals designed to answer key questions. The ICEPR will also coordinate external funding solicitations and facilitate project implementation by addressing administrative hurdles. Specifically, ICEPR will work with State agencies to establish data sharing agreements that include a comprehensive license for the ICEPR to access State educational data, with a structure for granting sub-licenses to institutional researchers. Statewide, the ICEPR will work hand-in-hand with districts and other practitioner organizations to analyze local issues and evaluate interventions for their own students, including outreach, consulting, technical assistance, and coordination. Multisite projects will allow researchers to isolate school, student, and neighborhood effects and explain a greater proportion of variance in student outcomes. These projects will also allow the ICEPR to implement experimental and quasi-experimental designs and draw firmer causal conclusions. Under the Participating LEA MOU, these LEAs will cooperate with the ICEPR to build local capacity to support policy research and development activities and share data in a manner consistent with all State and federal privacy protection laws.

As part of the Measurement Plan addressing LEA and State partner capacity (see Section (A)(2)), the State will measure and report on the extent to which the ICEPR is undertaking

research and development activities that support the continuous improvement of the components of this Plan and the State's actions to manage and provide resources to Participating LEAs. A timeline for establishment of the ICEPR and its related activities is set forth below.

ICEPR: TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES	
Time Period	**Activity**
02/01/10 – 07/01/10	Formalization of organizational structure and research agenda.
07/01/10 – 12/31/10	• Research Requests for Proposals (RFPs) issued; • Establishment of research agenda, including selection of specific research/reform projects with LEAs. *Note*: There will be a greater initial focus on research/reform projects targeting Super LEAs and Priority Schools due to accelerated commitment schedules/increased needs of these LEAs/schools.
01/01/11 – 06/30/14	• Additional RFPs issued • Continuance of research/reform projects • Selection and development of new research/reform projects with LEAs.

B. Independent Analysis of Performance Evaluation Implementation. The State longitudinal data system will also provide the core data to inform implementation and evaluation of the state's new teacher and principal evaluation (described in Section (D)(2)). The Performance Evaluation Reform Act specifically requires that the State contract for a research-based study of performance evaluation reform by no later than September 1, 2011 (a year later if the State does not receive an RTTT grant), and issue the analysis by no later than September 1, 2014 to support continuous improvement of the system in future years.[17]

In order to ensure fidelity of implementation and measure impact across hundreds of districts, the State will need individual data on students, teachers, and principals that until now has only existed in individual LEA data systems and school and district file cabinets and storage boxes. By September 30, 2011, the State will collect and report on teacher and principal practice and student growth ratings (as described in the State's SFSF Phase II Application) and be able to link this data to student achievement data maintained with the State longitudinal data system. The Performance Evaluation Reform Act reinforces the State's data collection authority, ensuring

that the State can collect data including, but not limited to, performance ratings for teachers and principals and data on district recommendations to renew or not renew non-tenured teachers.

Illinois will enter into an agreement with a national, independent evaluator who will work with ISBE and stakeholders to: (1) Identify and report on progress toward annual and long-term goals; (2) Use data on teacher and principal evaluations from the State longitudinal data system and other sources to track fidelity of implementation and encourage continuous improvement and learning; (3) Produce an annual report that objectively describes progress, identifies challenges and makes recommendations for moving forward; and (4) Link teacher evaluation work in Illinois with similar work in other states. The model for this independent implementation evaluation is the Consortium on Chicago School Research's work with the Excellence in Teaching pilot in Chicago. The Consortium has partnered with CPS on every element of the design, implementation, and reporting, while retaining the ability to deliver an independent assessment of successes and challenges. Extensive access to individual student and teacher data has been a critical element of the success of the Consortium's evaluation. The State's longitudinal data system will provide the evaluator of the Statewide effort with access to comparable state-wide data. The successful development and implementation of this evaluation will be a major focus of the State during the RTTT grant period, and as with the Consortium's relationship with CPS, will rely on the partnership with the evaluator to inform design and implementation and not simply back-end reporting of results. The State intends for this evaluation to serve as a model for using data from the State longitudinal data system for supporting local and statewide decision-making in support of improved school performance.

(C)(2): Assessing and using State data

Evidence for (C)(2) [*optional]: Any performance measures to be used by the State re: this criterion, and baseline data for current school year or most recent school year.

RESPONSE: Please complete the data table below; list performance measures for Criteria (C)(2), baseline data, and annual targets through end of SY 2013-2014. (This table only needs to be completed if the State has identified the performance measures for (C)(2). If such indicators have not yet been selected, the table does not need to be completed at this time.)

Performance Measures (C)(2) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/ most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
IL Collaborative for Education Policy Research	% of Participating LEAs with systems in place to incorporate research and development into ongoing improvement efforts (as defined by the MOU)		15%	25%	40%	50%
	% of Participating LEAs with Illinois Priority Schools with systems in place to incorporate research and development into ongoing improvement efforts (as defined by the MOU)		25%	40%	60%	75%

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction *(18 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan to—

(i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;

* * *

(C)(3) Illinois Reform Plan
Using Data to Improve Instruction

GOAL I. Ensure that all Participating LEAs can implement local instructional improvement systems that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness.

GOAL I – KEY ACTIVITIES.

A State-District Partnership for a Learning and Performance Management System

At the heart of the State's RTTT strategy is a shared environment for LEAs, principals, teachers, and students to quickly access critical data and information, instructional tools, and resources that are central to the key reforms described in this Plan. While the Participating LEA MOU requires all Participating LEAs to implement instructional improvement systems (as defined in the RTTT application), the State firmly believes it would be a massive waste of resources and a missed opportunity to foster the development of more than 350 separate LEA systems, all of which require their own data centers, hardware and software, and equipment. Instead, the State can leverage recent federal and state investments in the State longitudinal data system, expansion of broadband access, and advances in cloud computing technology to develop statewide platform housing integrated State and local data. Off of this platform, applications can be efficiently built, innovations can quickly spread, and all educators and students can access information and tools to improve student outcomes. The State proposes to partner with its school districts (with an emphasis on Participating LEAs) to develop a centrally hosted "Learning and Performance Management System" (LPMS) that serves as a platform upon which instructional

improvement tools and systems can be delivered at economies of scale beyond what districts can achieve with their own systems.

In developing the vision and requirements for the LPMS, the State has engaged in an extensive discovery and requirements development process that has progressed over the last 6 months. (*See* ***Appendix C3-1-A***, *LPMS Engagement and Information Gathering*.) Through extensive engagement with stakeholders, analyzing an existing Illinois multi-district proof of concept project, and using multiple Requests for Information processes with vendors, ISBE has validated that the State's strategy, while ambitious, is both achievable and necessary.

A. Enabling the Cloud Environment

The clear consensus of the stakeholders involved in the LPMS requirements development was that a "cloud" environment is necessary to allow LEAs to focus resources and effort on the use of data, rather than technology infrastructure, and to position the LPMS and its users for the next generation of information technology advancements. The "Cloud" generally refers to an approach to computing where hardware infrastructure management, software upgrades, and physical location are independent from users who can access the centrally hosted capabilities through a web-based interface. (*See* ***Appendix C3-1-B***, *Cloud Computing Infrastructure*). Business is undergoing an information technology transformation, where increasing numbers of businesses are transitioning from the complexities and inefficiency of a client-server computing model to a centrally hosted cloud environment.[18]

Illinois is uniquely positioned to apply this same transformative model to education. The State is an embarking on an expansion of its longitudinal data system and the development of its data warehouse—a multi-year, multi-million dollar investment that can be implemented in parallel to the LPMS. In addition, the State can use the Illinois Century Network (ICN) as the telecommunications backbone ensuring low-cost, high-speed access to the LPMS by all Illinois school districts. Presently, ICN is the largest broadband network in the nation, serving nearly 8,000 local governments, school districts, and nonprofit entities throughout all 102 counties in Illinois. The ICN is transitioning to a State-owned, 1700 mile fiber network that will ensure network access by all public schools seeking to use the System. The State of Illinois has allocated $26 million in State capital funding for the project, and is requesting $104 million in ARRA broadband funding.

Finally, the State has the opportunity to partner with the National Center for Supercomputing Application (NCSA) at the University of Illinois through an intergovernmental agreement between ISBE and the University. NCSA has extensive, world-class expertise in cloud computing concepts and methods of implementation and can also leverage the intellectual capital of the University of Illinois through collaborations with other campus departments and units. As described in its Letter of Support for this application, the NCSA has offered to provide at cost a world-renowned team of computer scientists and educators to acquire, deploy, and operate a cloud computing environment for the LPMS, as well as develop and retool software applications needed to effectively use the data. (*See* ***Appendix C3-1-C*** *for further information on NCSA.*) In addition, multiple LEAs in Illinois have formed a grass-roots collaboration among a consortium of districts and Regional Technology Centers focused on sharing and leveraging all information and technology resources needed by districts at the school, educator, and parent level. Member districts have also engaged in extensive collaboration with NCSA in their initial development process. By drawing upon the existing collaborative partnerships between LEAs and the NCSA at the University of Illinois, the State is able to leverage the resources and expertise of the P-20 system.

As the State is expanding its data, broadband, and supercomputing infrastructure, resource pressures are leading districts to seek greater efficiencies in the delivery of instructional improvement and technology services. The LPMS, hosted in a cloud computing environment, can help achieve these efficiencies by freeing school districts from the client-server computing model and allow districts to retire redundant systems and direct resources to classroom instruction that are currently spent on hardware, software, and IT maintenance. The LPMS will also remove the financial and technical barriers that keep many Illinois school districts from developing high quality local instructional improvement systems.

B. Core System Features

As illustrated in the diagram in ***Appendix C3-1-D***, the core LPMS systems residing in the cloud environment will be: (i) a portal platform upon which applications and systems can be delivered; (ii) a data integration platform that defines and creates a core dataset sourced from the State and LEAs; and (iii) high-value applications that can be easily and cost-effectively implemented at the LEA level.

1. Portal Platform: The portal platform will provide authentication, role-based authorization, and permission management (with permissions for LEAs administered at the LEA level). It will also serve as the mechanism for page layout, content management, and collaboration features. The "must have" foundational components to support the LPMS vision include:

- "Single Sign-on"; Personalization: A user must be able to log in once and gain access to all features, including third party applications hosted on the system. Standard pages should expose different layouts and functions depending on the role of the authenticated user.
- Open and Transparent APIs: An open and transparent application programming interface (API) for content access and a common policy for governing the creation, sharing, and editing of content.
- Common Navigation and Search Features: The search features must be "search engine" fast so that, for example, teachers can quickly find information about a particular student across multiple data-sets.
- Structured Content Management: The LPMS must support a content management life cycle that includes collecting, standardizing, classifying, storing, publishing and maintaining content across an LEA, the State, or pre-defined user groups. In particular, the content management system must allow for the metadata tagging of content to the Common Core State Standards, as incorporated into the Illinois Learning Standards.
- Collaboration System: Collaboration among educators within an LEA, in various user groups, and across the State is central to the LPMS vision. The portal platform must permit the addition of collaboration tools to support an integrated social knowledge and collaboration environment that allows educators to connect through profile pages, create communities to share information and knowledge, create blogs, and share common interests through tagging and bookmarking.

2. Data Integration Platform: The data integration platform will define the core dataset necessary to support system applications; the mechanisms for integrating data from the LEAs, State, and third party applications; and the standards for moving data into and out of the LPMS. (*Generally, see* ***Appendix C3-1-E****, LPMS Data Integration Requirements and Challenges.*) Critically, this platform must integrate data within the LPMS to support robust

reporting of actionable data to teachers, students, and parents. The reporting must be both fresh (containing data that is refreshed daily, or continuously) and fast (neither teachers nor students will have patience for slow report generation).

3. High-Value Applications: To drive Participating LEA integration with the LPMS, it must offer instructional support systems and high-value applications that the LEA could not otherwise obtain, or only obtain at a higher cost. The State will therefore prioritize implementation and integration of a few key high-value applications, while developing an extensible framework that can later support a much broader application set. Through this approach, the phasing of the system's development will promote early integration as the more disruptive features of the system mature.

Priority Implementation: Integration of Assessments for Learning. As described in Section (B)(3), the State intends to procure Statewide contracts for Assessments for Learning that will ensure that commonly used interim and formative assessments can be integrated with and delivered on the LPMS. By leveraging its purchasing power to make Assessment for Learning easily accessible, the State can offer a key incentive for LEAs to integrate with the LPMS.

Priority Implementation: Common Core Instructional Supports & STEM Learning Exchanges. The State will include within the LPMS an array of supports developed by the State and its multi-state partners to assist LEAs with the implementation of a Common Core aligned curriculum. The development of common tools for Illinois schools to align instruction to the Common Core will allow greater collaboration between schools facing comparable challenges in student achievement. In particular, the instructional resources developed by the STEM Learning Exchanges will be specifically designed for delivery through the LPMS.

Secondary Implementation: Student Vault. The LPMS data integration platform will support student- and parent-facing reporting that consolidates information about the student across the student's educational history and State and local programs. After the data integration infrastructure is in place, Illinois will seek to expand this reporting into a more dynamic "Student Vault" that can enable students to develop an electronic portfolio of their work, allow teachers to use student portfolios to demonstrate the outcomes of lessons that were implemented and as a component of a balanced assessment system, and support college and career planning and

application processes. (*See* ***Appendix C3-1-F*** *for a more complete description of the Student Vault*).

Secondary Implementation: Applications Exchange. As a later phase of the project, the LPMS will expand its suite of initial applications into a broader "Applications Exchange" that can host a range of tools developed by third-party entities, including school districts, universities, nonprofits, and vendors. The Applications Exchange will be vendor neutral – any entity can develop an application that can be hosted on the System, provided the application is web-based, cloud ready, and able to abide by the LPMS Service Level Agreement addressing hosting, operability of data, and, if applicable, payment for access.

As part of the initial implementation, ISBE will work with a consortium of a limited number of LEAs to migrate to the cloud environment through a "Software as a Service (Saas)" model to provide student information and instructional improvement applications. Through SaaS solutions external service providers will own and remotely manage the software without a costly local integration, and LEAs will access the services on a subscription or usage basis. As the Applications Exchange matures in later stages of the project, a variety of application types can be made available to LEAs through a SaaS model hosted on the cloud.

While a pilot SIS integration will be a part of the initial implementation, the LPMS will generally need time to mature before the Applications Exchange can be expanded to include other SaaS applications. Many applications potentially hosted on the cloud – particularly SIS, HR, and financial management systems – are mission critical to LEAs and the LPMS must be able to deliver extremely reliable services with no outages and scale up during peak periods. The LPMS must have staff with appropriate skill sets to manage and administer these applications and ensure they can be integrated within the cloud without harm to other LPMS components. A possible partnership with NCSA is a leading option ISBE will explore to develop an Applications Exchange with highly-skilled, cost-efficient integration, maintenance, and support services.

C. Governance

One of the most critical factors to the success of the LPMS is not a technology or data integration challenge. Rather, the State and participating districts must develop a governance structure for the LPMS that establishes a partnership approach to data use and management, fully addresses student and educator privacy, and clearly defines decision rights, processes, and

relationships between LPMS applications and accessibility to data. If LEAs do not have adequate trust in the State's use of data maintained within the LPMS, they will not use it. As described in ***Appendix C3-1-G***, the State has established initial parameters for a governance structure that will be further defined in the next stage of the design requirements.

*Please see **Appendix C3-1-H** for a description of timelines, key activities, and responsible parties for the procurement and development of the LPMS. Professional development for use of the System is discussed under Goal II, below.*

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction *(18 points)*

* * *

(ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and

* * *

Goal II. Teachers, principals, and administrators receive effective professional development and training on how to use Assessments for Learning, the LPMS, and other local instructional improvement systems so that the resulting data supports continuous instructional improvement.

A. Statewide System of Support and Assessments for Learning: A core component of the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) has been, and will continue to be, improving local use of data to improve instruction. For LEAs that choose not to integrate with the LPMS, the State will continue to provide these supports. In addition, as part of its establishment of the State contracts for Assessments for Learning, the State will integrate into the SSOS direct assistance with the implementation of Assessments for Learning as part of a data-driven, continuous improvement model. This assistance will supplement vendor professional development support, which will be a "non-negotiable" element of the statewide contract. Assistance through the SSOS will include:

- Assisting districts with establishing the goals and visions for the Assessment for Learning system, as part of an overall Standard-aligned instructional system;
- Assisting the district with aligning the assessments to its goals and vision and to learning targets aligned to Common Core State standards;

- Integrating the assessment into the district's databases and systems that support RtI;
- Aligning growth measurements on Assessments for Learning with the growth measurement methodology developed by the State; and
- Training educators on effective use of data from Assessments for Learning and State assessments.

B. LPMS Professional Development and Training. Ensuring effective professional development and training on the use of the LPMS and its various features will be a central focus of the system's development. Training will need to be differentiated for various types of LPMS users, including classroom teachers, principals and coaches, media specialists, district and state leadership, and parents and students. With the scale and scope of this project, ISBE assumes that a training of trainers model will be used for professional development for district and school personnel. The LPMS developer will train a cadre of ISBE, regional, and district professional developers who will work with districts and individual schools. At the district level, the trainers will work with district tech directors to guide the change management process involved with moving district systems to the cloud. At the school level, the professional development model will incorporate direct training of 2-3 teacher implementation leaders from each school, who can work with their principal to ensure that all teachers in the building receive the necessary support to become effective users of the LPMS. More than one building-level champion is critical to ensure accessibility to the system. Once the LPMS is implemented, these trainers will continue to serve as support references for users in their location.

Training must also be provided for non-traditional LPMS users—particularly students and parents. On-line training modules and support will be leveraged to the extent possible to lower cost and permit large-scale implementation; however, the training of trainers model should also provide for direct in-person training of these user groups. Finally, training should also be provided to in-State teacher and principal preparation programs so that pre-service teachers and administrators are prepared to effectively access the System's resources.

The State's performance measures for Section (C)(3) and its process indicators under the Measurement Plan will track each Participating LEA's implementation of professional development relating to instructional improvement systems.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction *(18 points)*

* * *

(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (*e.g.*, students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).

Goal III. Data from instructional improvement systems, together with statewide longitudinal data system data, is available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students.

As has been demonstrated by the Consortium on Chicago School Research, researchers can move beyond after-the-fact analysis to turn data into actionable tools that drive LEA policy, school improvement, and classroom instruction. The ICEPR, described in Section (C)(2), will extend this same model of applied research and development to a broader number of Participating LEAs, using data obtained from the State and LEAs through data sharing agreements. (The Participating LEA MOU ensures that Participating LEAs will enter into such data sharing agreements.) Given the accelerated, comprehensive reforms that will be undertaken by the Super LEAs, ICEPR's focus during the first two years of the grant period will be on building the local capacity of these LEAs to support research and development activities that can be directly applied to the implementation of their reform strategies.

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

Evidence for (C)(3) [*optional]: Any performance measures to be used by the State re: this criterion, and baseline data for current school year or most recent school year.

RESPONSE: Please complete the data table below; list performance measures for Criteria (C)(3), baseline data, and annual targets through end of SY 2013-2014. (This table only needs to be completed if the State has identified the performance measures for (C)(3). If such indicators have not yet been selected, the table does not need to be completed at this time.)

Performance Measures (C)(3) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/ most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Learning and Performance Management System (LPMS)	% of Participating LEAs relying on either the LPMS system as their primary data platform or a locally developed platform pre-approved by the State	NA	35%	55%	77%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs relying on the State LPMS as the primary data platform	NA	0%	5%	20%	33% (with continu-ing growth after end of grant period)
	% of Participating LEAs relying on a locally developed data platform	NA	35%	50%	57%	67%
	% of Participating LEAs identifying key technical support personnel in district to champion LPMS or locally developed system implementation	NA	35%	55%	77%	100%
	% of teachers in Participating LEAs with daily access to the LPMS or a locally developed instructional improvement system	NA	35%	55%	77%	100%
	% of principals in Participating LEAs with daily access to the LPMS or a locally developed instructional improvement system	NA	35%	55%	77%	100%

D. GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals *(21 points)*

The extent to which the State has—

(i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;

(ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and

* * *

(D)(1) **Illinois Reform Conditions**
Providing High-Quality Pathways for Aspiring Teachers and Principals

A. Overview: Illinois currently has a variety of alternative certification programs for teachers, administrators and principals, which are described below in Section B. These programs were designed to meet shortages and to shorten the time to become certified for individuals who currently hold four-year degrees. Each program has specific entrance requirements, an intensive course of study, and a year long teaching or administrative requirement.

On January 15, 2010, Public Act 96-0862 was signed into law by Governor Quinn to allow the following alternative certification programs described below to be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education: The Alternative Teacher Certification Program, the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification, the Alternative Route to Administrative Certification, and the Alternative Route to Administrative Certification for National Board Certified Teachers. Public Act 96-0862 has an immediate effective date. The full Public Act is available on the Illinois General Assembly Website: www.ilga.gov. Any and all programs, regardless of provider type, must be approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, in accordance with generally applicable program approval requirements and held accountable to the same standards.

B. Legal Framework and Program Elements:

Teacher Alternative Certification Programs

1. The Alternative Teacher Certification Program. This program is authorized by Section 21-5b of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. While the Alternative Teacher Certification Program was designed specifically to address the shortage of teachers in Chicago Public Schools, the program may be offered statewide. This program complies with all the requirements set forth in the definition of "alternative routes to certification" contained in the application notice. Specifically, the Alternative Teacher Certification Program may be provided by both not-for-profit institutions as well as certain 4 year institutions of higher learning.[19]

In addition, all candidates complete an intensive course of study and an academic year internship while holding a provisional teaching certificate. A provisional certificate will not be issued unless the candidate has: a bachelor's degree; successfully completed the program's course of study; passed the basic skills and content knowledge tests; and been employed for at least 5 years in an area requiring application of the candidate's education.[20] For programs preparing teachers for the Chicago Public Schools, the requirement for five years of work experience is waived. As demonstrated through these requirements, the Alternative Teacher Certification Program is selective in accepting candidates for this accelerated teacher certification program. After completing the academic year internship, the candidate's teaching performance is thoroughly assessed by school officials and the partnership participants.[21] As a result, through this program design, each candidate is provided supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support throughout the program.

Successful completion of this program satisfies any other practice or student teaching and subject matter requirements established by law. Consequently, this program significantly limits the amount of coursework required and allows participants to bypass certain otherwise required courses. Similar to traditional teacher preparation programs, upon program completion, an "Initial" Alternative Teaching Certificate valid for four years is issued.[22]

2. Alternative Route to Teacher Certification. This program is authorized by Section 21-5c of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification complies with all requirements set forth in the definition of "alternative routes to certification" contained in the application notice. Specifically, the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program may be provided by a not-for-profit institution, certain 4 year institutions of higher learning, or a combination thereof.[23]

Under this program, like the Alternative Teacher Certification Program, all candidates complete an intensive course of study and are assigned to a full-time teaching position for a full school year while holding a provisional teaching certificate. During this school year, each candidate is assigned a mentor teacher to advise and assist the candidate.[24] A provisional certificate will not be issued unless the candidate has: a bachelor's degree; been employed for at least 5 years in an area requiring application of the individual's education; successfully completed the program's course of study; and passed the required basic skills and content knowledge tests.[25] As demonstrated through these requirements, the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification is selective in accepting candidates for this teacher certification program.

After completing the full-time academic year teaching position, the candidate's teaching performance is thoroughly assessed by school officials and the program participants. As a result, through this program design, each candidate is provided supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support and mentoring throughout the program. Successful completion of this program satisfies any other practice or student teaching and subject matter requirements established by law.[26] Consequently, this program significantly limits the amount of coursework required and allows participants to bypass certain otherwise required courses. As with traditional teacher preparation programs, upon program completion, an "Initial" Teaching Certificate valid for four years is issued.[27]

3. Illinois Teachers Corps. This program is authorized by Section 21-11.4 of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. The Illinois Teachers Corps Program is designed to encourage the entry of qualified professionals into teaching as a second career and provide them with an accelerated means to certification. This program substantially complies with the definition of "alternative routes to certification" contained in the application notice. The Teachers Corps Program is selective in accepting candidates. As set forth in Section 21-11.4 of the School Code, program candidates must hold a bachelor's degree, a GPA of 3.0 or higher, proof of five years of professional work experience in the area the applicant wishes to teach, passage of the Illinois basic skills and content test, and enrollment in a Master's of Education degree program approved by the State Board of Education.[28]

The program may be offered by a regionally accredited institution that offers an approved Master's Degree in Education program in partnership with a school district. A school district may hire an Illinois Teacher Corps candidate after he/she receives a resident teacher certificate.

The requirements for obtaining a resident teacher certificate are set forth in Section 21-11.3 of the School Code 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. The Teachers Corps. program is specifically designed to ensure resident teachers have the opportunity to earn an initial certificate within three summers and two academic years and the program in general must be completed within four years.[29] Program participants must be mentored by a teacher within the district throughout the program. With this program design, candidates are provided supervised, school based experiences and ongoing support and mentoring throughout the program. The holder of a resident teacher certificate is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for the issuance of a "Standard" Teaching Certificate if the candidate has completed 4 years of successful teaching, has passed all appropriate tests, and has earned a master's degree in education.[30] As a result, the Illinois Teacher Corps. program significantly limits the amount of coursework required and allows participants to bypass certain otherwise required courses.

Administrator/Principal Alternative Certification Programs

1. Alternative Route to Administrative Certification. This program for administrators is authorized by Section 21-5d of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. The Alternative Route to Administrative Certification is designed to be a "fast-paced" program to obtain the Superintendent's certificate. As set forth in Section 21-5d of the School Code, it requires a master's degree in a management field or a bachelor's degree and life experience equivalent to a master's degree in a management field. The candidate completes an intensive course of study and then completes a full-time administrative position in a school for one year. Upon successful completion an individual earns a "Standard" Administrative certificate.[31] This program substantially complies with the definition of "alternative routes to certification" contained in the application notice. As described above, the program may be provided by a not-for-profit institution or certain 4 year institutions of higher learning; is selective in accepting candidates; provides supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support throughout the program; significantly limits the amount of coursework required to obtain the "Standard" Administrative certificate; and upon completion, the program awards the same level of certification as is awarded in traditional preparation programs.[32] While this program does not apply to principals, it does provide administrators with an accelerated route to certification.

2. Alternative Route to Administrative Certification for National Board Certified Teachers. Illinois enacted Section 21-5e of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq.*, authorizing the

creation of alternative routes/programs for administrative certification for National Board Certified Teachers. Although no programs have been approved to date, this statute substantially complies with the definition of "alternative routes to certification" contained in the application notice. Programs approved under this statute may be provided by a not-for-profit institution or certain 4 year institutions of higher learning**.**

In order to participate in this program, the "teacher leader" must be a certified teacher who has already received National Board certification and who has a teacher leader endorsement as further described in the statute.[33] The program content and skills must meet the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for State certification, with the exception of content and skills that the candidate demonstrates she/he has already attained through National Board certification or a teacher leaders master's degree program. In order to complete the program, a candidate must complete a master's degree in a teacher leader program; 15 hours of coursework in which the candidate must show competency in content and skills aligned to the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards; and obtain a passing score on the Illinois Administrator Assessment.[34] As a result, this program significantly limits the amount of coursework required to obtain the "Standard" Administrative certificate. Upon completion of the program, a "Standard" Administrative certificate is awarded.[35]

3. National Louis University/New Leaders for New Schools (CPS). Illinois has authorized programs for principals that include the elements for alternative routes to certification, as defined in the Race to the Top Application, under the statutory authority that governs traditional principal preparation programs. The New Leaders Program administered by the New Leaders for New Schools Chicago, a not-for-profit organization, in partnership with National Louis University. The New Leaders fifteen month program consists of rigorous coursework delivered by nationally recognized experts, a full-time year-long residency in a Chicago Public School, and intensive work with successful veteran principals. Through this program, New Leaders earn a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision and an Administrative Certificate.

Upon program completion, New Leaders for New Schools offers placement support and provides the new leaders with ongoing support and networking. New Leaders commit to serving in their school districts for 4 years as an urban public school principal. In return, New Leaders receive more than $100,000 in coursework, instruction, and support at no cost to them. New Leader applicants must meet rigorous selection criteria, and Chicago applicants must have a

minimum of 2 years of full-time experience teaching in a K-12 classroom, a bachelor's degree, and a valid teaching certificate. The New Leaders program, as described above, satisfies most of the criteria set forth in the definition of an "alternative route to certification" as defined in the application notice. The New Leaders Program is selective in accepting candidates, provides supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support to its program participants, and upon completion awards a "Standard" Administrative certificate.

Alternative Certification Programs in Illinois

The chart below lists the alternative certification programs operating in the State under the State's alternative routes to certification; the elements of the program; the number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year; and the total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year.

Alternative Teacher Certification Programs			
Type of Program	**Institution**	**Teachers completing program in SY 2008-09**	**Program elements**
Alternative Teacher Certification Program (CPS) (5/21-5b)	Dominican University, National – Louis University, Northwestern University, Quincy University, University of Illinois at Chicago	500	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and e.
Alternative Route to Teacher Certification (5/21-5c)	Benedictine University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University (Discontinued), McKendree University, Rockford College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale	172	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and e.
Resident Teacher Certification (5/21-11.3)	Chicago State University and Northern Illinois University (Discontinued)	0	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and partially e.
	Total	**672**	

*For a breakdown of participating numbers by offering institution, please see **Appendix D1-1**

Alternative Administrator/Principal Certification Programs			
Type of Program	**Institution**	**Administrators completing program in SY 2008-09**	**Program elements**
Alternative Route to Administrative Certification (Superintendents) (5/21-5d)	Western Illinois University	15	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and e.
Alternative Route to Administrative Certification for National Board Certified Teachers (Principals) (5/21-5e)	Programs to be developed	0	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and e.
National Louis University/New Leaders for New Schools (CPS)	National Louis University/New Leaders for New Schools Chicago	23	Complies with definition criteria: a, b, c, d, and e.
	Total	**38**	

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(1) <u>Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</u> *(21 points)*

* * *

(iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

Under Section 2-3.11c of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq.*, ISBE is required to provide a report that addresses the relative supply and demand for education staff in Illinois public schools. Specifically, this report, provides information on: (1) the relative supply and demand for teachers, administrators, and other certificated and non-certificated personnel by field, content area, and levels; (2) state and regional analyses of fields, content areas, and levels with an over/under supply of educators; and (3) projections of likely high/low demand for

educators in a manner sufficient to advise the public, individuals, and institutions regarding career opportunities in education.[36] ISBE makes this report publicly available on its website and uses this report to inform decision making regarding teacher/principal shortages and preparing teachers/principals to fill these areas of need.

EVIDENCE: CONTAINED IN NARRATIVE

(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals *(21 points)*

Evidence for (D)(1)(i), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents, including information on the elements of the State's alternative routes (as described in the alternative route to certification definition in this notice).

Evidence for (D)(1)(ii), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- A list of the alternative certification programs operating in the State under the State's alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice), and for each:
    - The elements of the program (as described in the alternative routes to certification definition in this notice).
    - The number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year.
    - The total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance *(58 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to ensure that participating LEAs (as defined in this notice)—

(i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; *(5 points)*

(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; *(15 points)*

(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; *(10 points)* and

* * *

(D)(2) Illinois Reform Plan
Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance

GOAL I: Build robust teacher and principal evaluation systems that focus on both effective practice and student growth.

GOAL I – KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Statewide Reform of Performance Evaluation Systems:

1. *The Need for Statewide Reform and the Performance Evaluation Reform Act*. Teacher and principal evaluation in Illinois is broken. A recent study of evaluation systems in three of the State's largest districts found that out of 41,174 teacher evaluations performed over a five-year period, 92.6% of teachers were rated "superior" or "excellent", 7% were rated "satisfactory", and only 0.4% were rated "unsatisfactory."[37] While there is less data on the evaluation of Illinois principals, it likely tells a similar story; many principal evaluations are not performed regularly and—anecdotally—those that are have a similar distribution of ratings as teacher evaluations.

For both teachers and principals, too many of the State's current evaluation systems do not clearly define effective practice, identify those professionals that utilize it and those that do not, or provide meaningful and actionable feedback to educators. Moreover, the current systems

do not promote the consideration of student outcomes in the evaluation of teacher and principal performance.

Recognizing that the problems of Illinois' teacher and principal evaluations hinders statewide improvement in student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap, the State of Illinois is committed to evaluating 100% of teachers and principals based on robust performance evaluation systems that measure both professional practice and student growth, with clear expectations for both professional practice and student growth, meaningful feedback on performance, and an actionable plan for building on strengths and addressing short-comings. Toward these objectives, the State recently enacted the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 ("PERA"), far-reaching legislation that builds the foundation for reforming evaluation systems in all LEAs and building the necessary State supports (Public Act 96-0861, attached as **Appendix A1-4-A**). PERA includes the following key reforms to the State's performance evaluation systems for teachers and principals: (1) All systems must include student growth as a significant factor in all teacher and principal evaluations, with the establishment of a State "default" model for teacher evaluations basing 50% of the rating on student growth that will apply if an LEA and its union cannot reach agreement. (2) A broader range of properly trained evaluators can undertake teacher evaluations, including "peer" evaluators. (3) PERA establishes four rating categories for tenured teacher and principal evaluations (instead of the current three for teachers), with the addition of a "Needs Improvement" category that leads to professional development informed by performance evaluation data. (4) PERA also ensures that the State establish a number of data collection and support systems to effectively implement evaluations (further discussed below). (5) PERA mandates evaluations that include student growth for <u>all</u> principals and for all teachers in participating LEAs (approximately 70% of the state's teachers) by the 2012-13 school year. By enacting the framework for performance evaluation reform into law, Illinois has ensured that from this point forward the key elements of the framework will not be restricted by local collective bargaining agreements.[38]

PERA requires that local teacher performance evaluation plans be developed in good faith cooperation with the local collective bargaining unit. As part of each Participating LEA's final plan for Race to the Top funding, ISBE will require the LEA to demonstrate how teacher and principal evaluation systems will be designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

2. *Illinois' challenges and advantages*. Illinois begins this work with challenges to overcome and intends to confront them directly through the components of this Plan. The alignment, credibility and usability of the existing annual state assessments are the largest obstacle to implementing consistent state-wide measures of year-to-year student growth.

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) has a difficult history. A catastrophic failure in the vendor's 2006 administration of the test has continued to impact its credibility in the field. The Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) which includes the ACT and is among the most robust state high school exams in the nation, is misaligned with the expectations of the 8th grade ISAT. A recent well-publicized study by the Consortium on Chicago School Research indicated that Chicago students who "met expectations" on the 8th grade ISAT had virtually no chance of meeting the college readiness standards on the ACT or the 11th grade proficiency standards on the PSAE.

The ISAT also presents technical challenges. The tests lack a consistent vertical scale extending across grade levels making it more difficult to use as a measure of year-to-year student growth. Chicago Public Schools has invested approximately $2.5 million over three years to develop an ISAT-based annual growth measure for grades 4-8 which it intends to use as part of its teacher evaluation system. Rather than undertaking a similarly expensive and multi-year statewide effort with the ISAT to not only overcome the technical, but also the public perception hurdles, ISBE has decided to working with multiple consortia of states to develop state-wide K-12 growth measures using the new assessments aligned with the Common Core Standards, some of which will be in place as early as the 2012-13 school year. Illinois will focus on providing Participating LEAs with credible and well-aligned student growth measures for individual teachers based on those assessments by no later than the 2013-14 school year, and earlier if possible.

In the short term, Illinois will focus its efforts and resources on: (1) Assisting and working with LEAs in the meaningful use of locally developed measures of student growth in the evaluation of teachers and principals; and (2) Leveraging the unique strength in Illinois of practice-based evaluation tools already in use by LEAs around the state to ensure all teachers and principals are provided meaningful and reliable feedback on their professional practice. Examples of these strong practices include:

- The Danielson Framework for Teaching is the basis for evaluation of teacher practice in at least 15 Illinois districts including Chicago, Elgin, Evanston, and Peoria, which are some of the largest districts in the State.
    - Evanston's Danielson-based system uses equal measures of teacher practice and student growth for evaluation teachers.
    - Early evidence from an ongoing evaluation by the Consortium on Chicago School Research of the Excellence in Teaching pilot program using the Danielson Framework in roughly 100 Chicago schools demonstrates that CPS principals are effectively differentiating teacher performance using the Framework.[39] Principals in the pilot rated 35% of the observed teachers in the two lowest categories—basic (32%) or unsatisfactory (3%).[40] Chicago principals using the old rating system placed less than 6% of teachers in the two lowest categories between school years 2003-04 and 2007-08.[41]
- The Teacher Advancement Program in 30 Chicago schools has been successful in linking student growth to teacher professional development and compensation.
- Teach Plus, a national organization that works to retain great teachers in urban schools, has convened meetings with Chicago Public School teachers and policymakers to help Chicago identify its best measures of student growth, and will continue to do so throughout 2010.
- A DuPage County Regional Office of Education principal evaluation program that uses multiple data collection tools based on Marzano's 21 leadership characteristics and the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (Val-Ed) to evaluate principal practice.

To build upon these strong existing practices, a broad range of stakeholders and national experts have agreed to participate in an ongoing working team to support the development of effective performance evaluation processes (see **Appendix D2-1** for membership). As new State assessments are implemented during the latter years of the RTTT grant period, the working team will assist ISBE to integrate these assessments into the State's support system for performance evaluations.

Because Illinois recognizes the significant challenges to providing effective evaluations for all teachers and principals, the State intends to learn from both mistakes and successes, and

from others doing similar work in other states. To that end, Illinois will partner with a national, independent evaluator who will work with ISBE and stakeholders to monitor and report on system implementation, identify and help address challenges, connect, and inform the work in Illinois with RTTT-funded evaluation in other states, and ultimately determine the impact of the initiative on student learning (see Section (C)(2) for a further description of this evaluation).

3. *Phased Approach to Statewide Implementation*. The State will undertake a phased approach to implement redesigned performance evaluation systems in all Illinois schools and LEAs.

- First, by the start of the 2011-12 school year, 12 "Super LEAs" (see Section (A)(1)) have committed with their union leadership to implement performance evaluation systems meeting the requirements of this Plan in "Illinois Priority Schools," defined as the bottom 5% of Illinois schools in terms of student achievement. By initially focusing on Illinois Priority Schools, the redesigned performance evaluation systems will build a foundation for comprehensive school interventions and identify lessons for broader Statewide implementation. In addition, as over 80% of Illinois Priority Schools are high schools, the first phase will aggressively confront the challenge of developing student growth measures for the full range of high school faculty.
- In the second phase, by the start of the 2012-13 school year: (i) all LEAs participating in Race to the Top *and* LEAs receiving new School Improvement Grant awards must implement redesigned teacher evaluation systems; and (ii) under PERA, every LEA in the State must implement redesigned principal evaluation systems. Under the Participating LEA MOU, at least 50% of teacher and principal performance evaluations must be based on student growth.
- Finally, PERA requires that all remaining LEAs implement redesigned performance evaluation systems in two subsequent phases: (i) for the lowest performing 20% of remaining districts, by the start of the 2015-16 school year; and (ii) for all remaining districts, by the start of the 2016-17 school year.

In addition to timeframes for LEA implementation, PERA also establishes timeframes for the development of necessary State support systems. PERA ensures that State systems will be available to assist LEAs by September 2011 if Illinois receives a Race to the Top grant, and

otherwise no later than September 2012. (Generally, see the timeline for implementation at the end of this Section (D)(2)).

4. *Multiple Rating Categories to Differentiate Effectiveness*. Under PERA, by the start of the 2012-13 school year, all LEA evaluation systems for both tenured teachers and principals will include the rating categories of Excellent, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory (even if the full redesign of the teacher evaluation system is not occurring until later years, as described above). The "Needs Improvement" category will permit the identification of specific deficiencies and lead to a plan for improvement for those deficiencies, without requiring full remediation. While the Illinois School Code currently requires three rating categories for teachers (Excellent, Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory), over 60 school districts have obtained "waivers" of the three rating category requirement, many to implement a binary rating system.[3] PERA eliminates the ability to obtain waivers to ensure that all tenured teacher and principal rating systems include the four rating categories specified above. Participating LEAs must also undertake an evaluation of non-tenured teachers using the State framework with four performance levels and must report data to the State based on the four performance levels. For non-tenured teachers, Participating LEAs need not use these specific rating categories to document retention decisions, but must complete evaluations and report to the State on teacher performance using the four rating categories. Extensive feedback from district stakeholders indicated that a binary final summative determination for non-tenured teachers (e.g., recommended to "renew" or "non-renew") decreases the likelihood of challenges to non-renewal decisions.

5. *Annual Evaluations that Include Timely and Constructive Feedback*. All principals and non-tenured teachers must be evaluated annually. Each tenured teacher must receive at least (i) a non-summative assessment of student growth in every year, and (ii) a summative evaluation, with equal measures of practice and growth, in the course of every 2 school years. If the non-summative assessment of student growth demonstrates a failure to meet targets, it would trigger additional evaluation of the teacher's performance to determine whether intervention and/or supports are necessary. In addition, if a tenured teacher's summative evaluation rating is either "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory," that teacher must receive a summative evaluation at

[3] Section 2-3.25g of the Illinois School Code establishes a procedure for waiving statutory requirements. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.25g.

least once in the school year following the receipt of such rating. Each Participating LEA's evaluation system must ensure that, each year, every teacher and principal has a regular, serious, structured conversation about his/her performance with his/her evaluator that centers on the student growth measurements in the evaluation plan, developed consistent with Subsection B below.

6. *State-wide, Research-based Frameworks for Measuring Teacher and Principal Professional Practice*. Core assumptions of the Illinois plan for evaluation system reform are that (i) teacher practice can be measured by well-trained observers using observation-based frameworks that define and describe the elements of effective teaching practice, and (ii) principal practice can also be measured by well-trained observers, school climate surveys, 360 surveys and other tools.

a. Teachers: The State will adopt the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the framework for teacher practice to be used in the practice portion of summative evaluations of Illinois teachers. (Districts may request state permission to use an alternate research-based framework that is substantially equivalent in both expectations and reporting.) Participating LEAs will then adopt evaluation systems consistent with the models. The teacher framework will be the basis for all teacher preparation, induction and mentoring, professional development and formative and summative evaluation of practice in the State. The State will also define the essential elements of an assessment of teacher practice to at a minimum include at least one observation, a post-observation conference between the evaluator and the teacher, and a written report on the observation using the framework. At the same time that the evaluation process is being defined, the State will begin building tools and processes to support districts in ensuring inter-rater reliability both within and across districts including training for evaluators and a video-based observation and assessment process (see Subsection C, "Creation of Extensive State Supports," for more details). All evaluators will have to be certified in the use of the framework prior to conducting any evaluation-related observations. The State will also work with all of the State's teacher preparation programs to align pre-service education with the framework. The framework and the minimal procedural requirements for teacher and principal evaluations will ultimately be adopted by ISBE in administrative rule.

b. Principals: The State will also define the essential elements of an assessment of principal practice and identify and/or build tools to incorporate into the principal evaluation

system. These may include 360 evaluations, school climate surveys, and parent surveys. The State will consider the work of the DuPage Regional Office of Education and the experience of several districts with Val-Ed evaluation tools and processes. The framework for principal practice will be the basis for all principal preparation, mentoring, professional development, and formative and summative evaluation in the State.

B. LEA Development of Clear and Rigorous Methods for Measuring Student Growth. A core principle of the redesigned Illinois evaluation system is that individual student growth can be measured over time with multiple measures that include standardized formative and summative tests, curriculum- and course-based assessments and individual student work. The State recognizes that until new State student assessments aligned with the Common Core are implemented, there is great difficulty in using annual state assessments as a significant measure of student growth in teacher performance evaluations due to the data reliability concerns discussed in Subsection 2. However, the use of current assessments to measure growth is not expressly prohibited. Because LEAs cannot rely solely on the annual state tests to measure student growth, LEAs will need to identify local measures of student growth that meet state-established parameters for validity and reliability. As detailed in Section (B)(3) of this Plan, describing the State process for procuring Assessments for Learning, and in the implementation timeline included at the end of this Section (D)(2), the State will develop parameters for measures of student growth for both teachers and principals through collaboration with teachers, principals, superintendents, teacher unions, the principals association, technical experts, and other stakeholders. As described in Section (B)(2), new State assessments will be developed as expeditiously as possible and will be aligned with this work so that they can be incorporated into student growth measures as soon as they are available. Finally, the State will also work with its partners in the multi-state collaborative efforts to address rigorous and appropriate methods for measuring growth, particularly in high school courses and subjects not traditionally tested. *(See Section (D)(2)(d)).*

The State parameters for measuring student growth will help to ensure that measures are as comparable as possible across classrooms, grades, schools, and LEAs. Without a consistent state-wide assessment in place, the nature and quality of growth measures will vary from teacher to teacher, school to school, and LEA to LEA. With that limitation in mind, the State will focus

its immediate efforts and resources on helping LEAs to include valid and reliable measures of student growth in evaluations while new State assessments are being developed.

a. Teachers: Every teacher evaluation must include at least two measures of student growth. For these measures, LEAs may use, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interim, formative, and end-of-course assessments that are appropriate for measuring growth, including those available through the statewide contract for Assessments for Learning (see Section (B)(3)).
- Student class work and performance. The "Student Vault," developed as a component of the Learning and Performance Management System (see Section (C)(3)), will facilitate the development of portfolios of student work that can assist with evaluations of student growth.
- Assessments designed at the school, grade, department, and individual teacher levels, particularly in non-core subjects.

Analysis of the performance of the students enrolled in a teachers class will result in a measure of annual student growth for every evaluated teacher. The student growth measure for each teacher will be reported to the State as part of the State's data collection systems. In Participating LEAs, student growth must comprise at least fifty percent of a teacher evaluation.

b. Principals: Every principal evaluation will include at least two measures that report on the growth of the students enrolled in the school. The two measures must include annual student growth on one of the following: state-, district-, or school-administered interim, formative and summative assessments, and progress from pre-tests to end-of-course on district or school developed course exams. The other measure could be a measure of improvement such as student attendance, discipline, grades, or credit accumulation. The LEA superintendent, in consultation with the principal, is responsible for defining the measures that are appropriate for each principal. The student growth measure for each principal will be reported to the State as part of the State's data collection efforts. For participating LEAs, student growth must comprise at least fifty percent of a principal evaluation.

C. Creation of Extensive State Supports for LEA Implementation of Redesigned Systems. State support for the implementation of redesigned teacher and principal evaluation systems will be critical to the ability of Participating LEAs to undertake these significant changes. The State's redesign of the Statewide System of Support, described in Section (A)(2),

will include a new significant focus on providing direct support for the implementation of local performance evaluation systems.

The components of the State support system will include the following:

a. Teacher and principal practice frameworks that describe the elements of good practice and provide rubrics and other tools for assessing practice. The State will also provide guidelines for the processes for collecting, reflecting on, and reporting evidence of practice with teachers and principals.
b. A model for combining evidence of practice with evidence of student growth into a summative rating. The model will incorporate the requirements established by the State, but allow customization by districts in a manner that does not conflict with such requirements.
c. An evaluator pre-qualification program aligned with the State evaluation model.
d. An evaluator training program based on the State evaluation model. The training program will provide multiple training options that account for the prior training and experience of the evaluator.
e. A superintendent training program based on the State principal evaluation model.
f. Multiple instruments to collect evidence of principal practice, including school climate surveys, "360 evaluations" providing a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of school leader behaviors, and parent surveys.
g. A State provided or approved technical assistance system that supports districts with the development and implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems.
h. A voluntary LEA survey on evaluation instruments that identifies best practices and directs LEAs to areas for system improvement. This survey instrument will be developed in collaboration with various stakeholders and national experts, and will be integrated with the mandatory performance evaluation data collection process required by the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program.
i. Web-based systems and tools and video-based observation processes supporting implementation of the model templates and the evaluator pre-qualification and training programs. Many of these systems and tools can be hosted on the

Learning and Performance Management System upon its development, as described in Section (C)(3) of this Plan.

j. A process for measuring and reporting correlations between local principal and teacher evaluations and (i) student growth in tested grades and subjects, and (ii) retention rates of teachers. In particular, the data collection and reporting systems the State will develop to meets its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund obligations will provide greater transparency on the design and usage of performance evaluation systems.

Under PERA, if the State receives a Race to the Top grant, the State must develop its comprehensive systems of support for new performance evaluation systems on or before September 30, 2011. If the State does not receive a Race to the Top grant, PERA requires the State to develop its evaluator pre-qualification and training program above on or before September 30, 2011, while other components will be developed on or before September 30, 2012. If the State does not develop a comprehensive system of support by the defined date, in recognition of the importance of State support for LEA action, the obligation of Participating LEAs to implement redesigned performance evaluation systems will be postponed for as long as it takes the State to implement these systems.

Finally, because the State is committed to a transparent process for fairly and rigorously evaluating our teachers, the State will seek foundation support for a professionally-developed statewide communications campaign to educate teachers and principals about performance evaluation reform. The campaign will include a video, web site and brochure that answer the following questions: Why are we making this change? Why is it important to me? To my school? To my district? How will this process work? What do I need to do? When do I need to do it? More specifically, the campaign will describe the state-level changes, and districts will be able to add to the campaign with specific information about how the initiative is being implemented locally. The campaign will also include materials for principals to communicate with teachers and for superintendents to communicate with principals.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance *(58 points)*

* * *

(iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— *(28 points)*

(a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;
(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;
(c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and
(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

GOAL II: Redesigned teacher and principal evaluation systems will inform the allocation of professional development resources and key decisions such as compensation, career advancement, certification, tenure conferral, and dismissals.

GOAL II – KEY ACTIVITIES.

The goal of rigorous teacher and principal evaluations is twofold. First, the evaluation of teacher and principal practice will serve as the basis for educator improvement plans in all LEAs. Educators in Illinois will become more effective over time because they will receive professional development that is carefully and thoughtfully aligned to observed strengths and weaknesses. Second, evaluations that incorporate measures of both professional practice and student growth—as is required in Illinois by the new Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA)—will inform human resources decisions and policies in all LEAs and at the State level. Utilizing new evaluations in decisions about promotion, compensation, certification, conferral of tenure, and/or dismissal—the decisions that must be made to shape the best possible workforce for Illinois' students—is imperative for system-wide improvement. As part of its human capital strategy, Illinois is dedicated to using new evaluation systems in high-stakes decisions to drive both continuous improvement in educators' practice and the development of more effective accountability systems.

At the present time, Illinois is in a better position to pursue some of these aggressive policy changes than others. Specifically, the State's PERA now requires all LEAs in Illinois to develop professional development plans, based upon new evaluations, for any teacher given a

"Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" rating. The State also intends to use data from local performance evaluations to determine whether teachers move from the probationary license to full licensure, and for certification renewal decisions. At the same time, however, as Chicago is the only district in Illinois currently experimenting with performance pay for teachers, the State has made the strategic decision not to implement an untested alternative compensation system statewide. Instead, Illinois will apply for a statewide Teacher Incentive Fund grant that can be used to encourage more piloting of performance pay at the local level.

Furthermore, Illinois is deeply committed to getting right the high-stakes decisions around tenure conferral, certification, and dismissal, and the State's goal—as is required of Participating LEAs under the RTTT MOU—is that evaluation data be used to inform these decisions statewide. Currently, however, Illinois is not prepared to immediately build a framework of statewide policies of such monumental consequence upon a still developing evaluation system. Instead, the State believes that its first and enabling step toward this policy goal is for each LEA to have a strong and rigorous evaluation system. The State will support LEAs in developing these systems—with their teachers and principals as partners—which will generate reliable data about effectiveness. The design will be informed by the overwhelming success and support among teachers and principals of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) and the Danielson-based Excellence in Teaching Project in Chicago Public Schools. Once the State has these new systems in place by 2012-13 (with 100 percent of principals and more than 70 percent of teachers being evaluated under the new system by that school year), the State will pursue more comprehensive statewide policies on tenure and dismissal by the 2013-14 school year.

Prior to that, as Illinois' more substantive evaluations are rapidly implemented and State systems quickly come online providing additional tools and resources to educators, Illinois will engage in the following activities with Participating LEAs that lay the foundation for more comprehensive statewide policies.

a. Use of evaluations for developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development. Participating LEAs will use evaluation data to directly inform support and professional development resources allocated for teachers and principals. First, under PERA, all LEAs are required upon

implementation of new teacher evaluations to develop professional development plans and remediation plans that are directly informed by deficiencies identified by the State framework of teaching practice for teachers rated "Needs Improvement" and "Unsatisfactory," respectively. Second, as part of teacher and principal induction and mentoring programs, evaluation data will be shared with mentors so that new teacher and principal weaknesses can be addressed early. (This process has already begun in Chicago's Excellence in Teaching Project, as all new teacher induction and mentoring programs are already using Danielson's Framework for Teaching to align supports.) Third, in Participating LEAs, teacher evaluation data will be provided to instructional coaches to help target supports to teachers' specific needs. Similarly, principal evaluation data will be used to inform and target district supports and professional development, particularly for new principals. Lastly, the use of evaluations to inform professional development, and the impact of professional development on teacher and principal practice and student growth, will be tracked by the State through the Participating LEAs' Final Plans, annual reports for RTTT funding, and the Measurement Plan (see Section (A)(2), and (D)(5), Goal III).

b. Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities. As mentioned above, the State will pursue a grant under the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund program on behalf of all Participating LEAs that develop compensation systems that differentiate compensation based on performance, as measured by new evaluation systems. The State will also make other requirements of LEAs that encourage the use of evaluation data in these human capital decisions. First, Participating LEAs will use both teacher and principal evaluation data to identify future school and district leaders and for implementation of "career ladder" systems. The selection of mentors, instructional coaches, department chairs, and principals will also be made in consultation with evaluation results. By providing the most effective teachers with additional responsibilities—and where appropriate, compensation—Illinois will incent high performers to share their knowledge, skills, and expertise. Second, by requiring Participating LEA reporting through the RTTT Measurement Plan, the State has added a much-needed level of transparency that will ensure that Participating LEAs either account for evaluation ratings in compensation and promotion decisions, or are prepared to justify their rationale for not doing so to their local community. Finally, as described in Section (D)(3) of this Plan, certain

Participating LEAs will receive funding to provide stipends and incentives to attract highly effective teachers and principals—as rated by new evaluation systems—to Illinois' Priority Schools, as well as reward any highly effective teachers and principals currently working at a Priority School. Through the Exhibit II commitments, additional funding and funding priority will also be given to "Super LEAs" if the district and local teachers' union leader provide autonomy in Illinois Priority Schools to undertake staffing decisions based upon local measures of effectiveness.

c. Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures. Under the Participating LEA MOU, Participating LEAs must incorporate evaluation data into all determinations of whether to renew or non-renew teachers (including decisions to grant tenure at the conclusion of the statutory probationary period) and in decisions to renew the contracts of principals. Additionally, as further described in **Appendix A2-1**, Illinois will participate in a multi-state consortium to develop a statewide assessment of teaching practice, aligned to the State framework for teaching, to inform future State certification policy changes. The State will use this assessment—along with data from local performance evaluations (including both student growth and teacher practice data)—to establish criteria that determine whether teachers move from the probationary license to full licensure, and for certification renewal decisions. Once new evaluation systems are in place across most of Illinois in 2012-13, the State will evaluate revising laws to base tenure decisions on the number of strong performance ratings a teacher accumulates over a certain number of years—rather than merely the number of years served. Lastly, the State will use evaluation data, as required under PERA and obtained through SFSF data collection procedures, to independently analyze whether local renewal decisions are made in a manner consistent with performance evaluations. These analyses will be publicly reported as part of the State's Educator Effectiveness Scorecards (See Section (D)(3)), enabling focus on those LEAs continually making poor human capital decisions and/or not differentiating teachers through evaluations.

d. Removing ineffective tenured and non-tenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures. Under current law, unsatisfactory evaluation results lead to remediation and, if the completion of remediation does

not result in sufficient improvement, dismissal by the school district. PERA has streamlined this process to provide less focus on the procedural mechanics and more on the substantive aspects of remediation. Specifically, instead of remediation requiring evaluations once every 30 days during a 90 day period, the remediation process now consists of a mid-point and final evaluation and LEAs and unions can agree to a shortened remediation timeline.

Illinois recognizes, though, that the streamlining of the remediation process in PERA does not sufficiently address the barriers to the **dismissal of tenured teachers** at the local level. The same Illinois education stakeholder groups that successfully drove the enactment of PERA will consider a legislative change that would statutorily tie poor evaluation ratings to the dismissal of tenured teachers after the implementation of the more substantive evaluation systems. The State is confident that, through the work of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee established under PERA, this legislative goal can be achieved by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.

Local school district dismissal, however, is not the only means by which the State's poorest educators can be removed from Illinois schools. Under Section 21-23 of the School Code, the State Superintendent has the authority to **initiate the suspension or revocation of an educator** certificate as a result of "incompetency." Indeed, as early as the 2010-11 school year, the State Superintendent plans to use poor results by educators on performance evaluations as evidence of such "incompetency." Specifically, the State Superintendent recommends that the assumption of "incompetency" be triggered by two years of an unsatisfactory evaluation rating or three years of a combination of an unsatisfactory/needs improvement evaluation rating. The State Superintendent will continue to collaborate with stakeholders to refine this triggering assumption. Using this process, the State Superintendent action can prevent an educator with multiple unsatisfactory ratings from transferring from LEA to LEA without improving performance. With PERA's improvement of evaluation systems across the State, the State Superintendent will be able to initiate action more consistently and thereby better ensure that the State's worst educators no longer cause harm to students.

The State's process for monitoring Participating LEA implementation of Race to the Top, including the implementation of the Measurement Plan described in Section (A)(2), will require each LEA to demonstrate how the redesigned evaluation systems are used to inform decision-

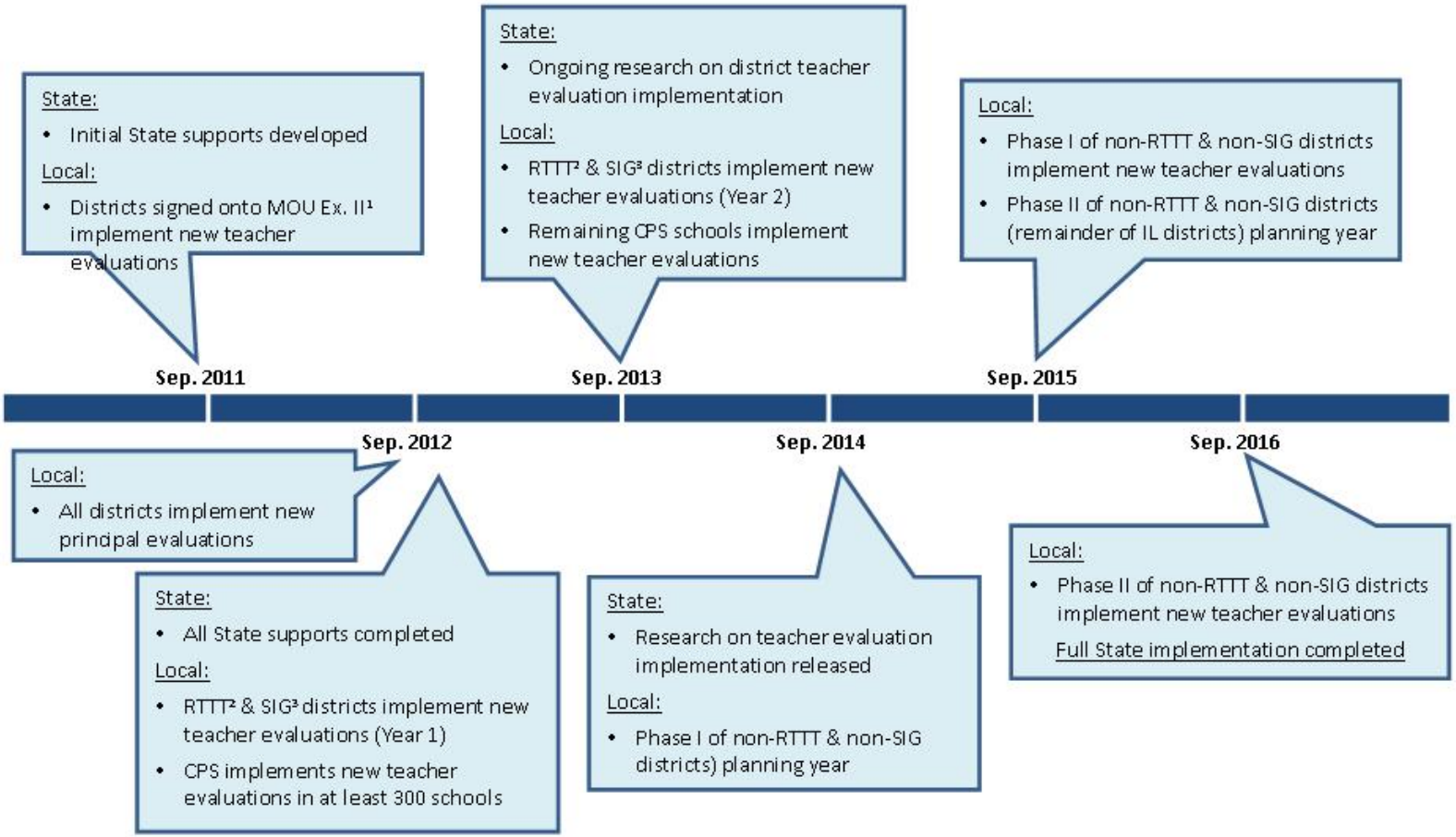
making in each of the above areas and will provide transparency and facilitate a public dialogue around the use of these systems. While the State would like these teacher and principal evaluation systems to be developed in a lower-stakes environment, especially since they will be incorporating student growth for the first time, it is committed to ensuring they have important consequences for staffing decisions once they are in place and working well. In fact, the State's development of more comprehensive statewide tenure and dismissal policies for the 2013-14 school year will follow a similar strategy as other sections of this application. First and foremost, the State's most reform-minded districts (the 12 "Super LEAs") will serve as proof points, determining innovative changes to tenure and dismissal decisions in their local contexts. Second, an evaluation will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of these local reforms, and this information will be shared widely in an effort to be transparent with stakeholders. Third, the State will learn from other leading states and national organizations that work to increase the effectiveness of teachers and principals. In particular, two projects will help the state determine both bold and implementable statewide policies around certification, tenure, and dismissal.

The first is a multi-state collaborative (with at least Florida, Illinois, Indiana, and Louisiana participating) for great teachers and leaders (see Appendix A2-1 for more information) that will provide a network for states to lead the nation on improving key policies related to teacher and leader effectiveness. These states have been selected because they require at least 50 percent of a teacher and principal's evaluation to be based on student growth, and they want to use their new evaluation systems to drive key decisions such as certification, tenure, and dismissals. States that move in bold policy directions will be engaged for a period of years in building new capacity at the state and local level. In many policy areas, states will find few useful precedents and best practices and will be required to start from scratch in building and implementing systems to drive and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness. States working toward the same goals will progress more quickly and with greater success if they pool intellectual resources and design capacity. States working together in the collaborative will seek technical support funded by the Joyce Foundation from organizations with expertise in teacher and leadership effectiveness.

The second project will partner The New Teacher Project (TNTP) with the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC), which helps many Illinois districts and schools become

collaborative, high-performing systems and fosters a more progressive approach by union leaders. Although the CEC is affiliated with the Illinois Education Association, the largest teachers union in the state, it is a stand-alone nonprofit organization and has its own relationship with Illinois Federation of Teachers locals as well. These non-traditional partners will work together to support the "Super LEAs" who are implementing strong new teacher and principal evaluation systems by 2011-12. Shortly after the development of these systems, the partnership will support interested Super LEAs in developing new tenure and dismissal policies using the new evaluation systems discussed above. Additional policy reforms from the multi-state collaborative described above (which includes TNTP) addressing professional development, certification, tenure, and dismissal can also be tested and piloted in the Super LEAs where there is a high level of union-management collaboration, as demonstrated by their willingness to sign onto the bolder reforms outlined in Exhibit II of the MOU. The State can then determine how success in reforming tenure or dismissal decisions at the local level best translates into new statewide policy proposals on certification, tenure, and dismissal. This project will also be supported by a grant from the Joyce Foundation and begin in April 2010.

Performance Evaluation Reform Act Implementation Timeline



[1] Race to the Top MOU Exhibit II asks districts, alongside their union partners, to accelerate their implementation of new teacher evaluations systems to incorporate student growth data

[2] RTTT districts are those that receive Race to the Top grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

[3] SIG districts are those that receive 1003(g) School Improvement Grants after the effective date of this Act; the 1003(g) School Improvement Grant federal flows, through ISBE, to local school districts that have persistently low-performing schools, as defined by the State, to support robust and comprehensive school reforms.

Performance Measures Notes: Data should be reported in a manner consistent with the definitions contained in this application package in Section II. Qualifying evaluation systems are those that meet the criteria described in (D)(2)(ii).		Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
Criteria	**General goals to be provided at time of application:**	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).				99%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	3%	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	6.8%	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	• Developing teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Compensating teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Promoting teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Retaining effective teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	• Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	• Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.	N/A	5%	60%*	99%	100%

[Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data]

Participating LEAs must have in place qualifying evaluation systems for teachers and principals in accordance with the following:

- By the beginning of School Year 2011-2012, Super LEAs must have in place qualifying evaluation systems.
- By the beginning of School Year 2012-2013, all Participating LEAs must have in place qualifying evaluation systems.
- Under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010, Chicago Public Schools District #299 may implement qualifying evaluation systems in half of its schools by the beginning of School Year 2012-2013 and in all schools by the the beginning School Year 2013-2014.

Performance Measures listed for Criterion (D)(2)(ii) are designed to reflect implementation of evaluation systems consistent with Super LEA and Participating LEA obligations under the Participating LEA MOU.

*Although performance evaluation systems may not be in place at the end of the 2011-2012 school year, they must be finalized over the 2012 summer and implemented at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

General data to be provided at time of application:		
Total number of participating LEAs.		364
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.		364
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.		96,475
(D)(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform compensation decisions in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iii)[4]	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	

(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better and were retained in the prior academic year.	[redacted]
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.	[redacted]
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform tenure decisions in the prior academic year.	[redacted]
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.	[redacted]

Note: This data assumes one principal per school.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals *(25 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students; *(15 points)* and

* * *

(D)(3) Illinois Reform Plan
Ensuring Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals

GOAL I. LEAs are held accountable for providing equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals through transparent data and reporting, and supported by State policy to boost the effectiveness of all educators.

GOAL I. KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Transparent Educator Effectiveness Data Informing LEA Action: To adequately address teacher and principal quality across schools, the State, LEAs, and the public must have access to transparent data on the disparities in educator effectiveness. As the State continues to develop this capacity by enhancing teacher and principal evaluation systems, the State will ensure that effectiveness data is used to address the systemic barriers to recruiting and retaining highly effective educators in Illinois Priority Schools and other high poverty/high minority schools. Until full statewide implementation of new evaluation systems is in place and effectiveness—as judged by evaluations—can be used to drive State methods of ensuring equitable access to great teachers and leaders, the State will require LEAs to report proxy measures of effectiveness, as identified by research, at the district and school level, such as education and experience. With the implementation of the data systems necessary to meet its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund obligations, Illinois will have access to a number of core human capital metrics. Also, through the nationally recognized work of the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC), Illinois can rely on a research-based index of teacher "academic capital" (further described below) for determining whether at-risk students have access to effective teachers.[42]

As a primary outcome of the Measurement Plan used across this application, data collected by the State and the IERC will be used by ISBE to establish State-, LEA-, and School-level Educator Effectiveness Scorecards addressing key human capital metrics including the equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and principals. As required by Section (III)(B) of the LEA MOU, data included on the Scorecards must be used by Participating LEAs to perform a comprehensive review of institutional policies and constraints that may prevent high-poverty and/or high-minority schools from attracting top talent, and to develop strategies to address these constraints over the course of the grant period.

The design process of the Scorecards and pilot testing will be carried out during the 2010-11 school year, with full publication of the Scorecards in the 2011-12 school year. Two key metrics that will be included on the Scorecards include:

1. Index of Teacher Academic Capital: The Index of Teacher Academic Capital (ITAC) developed by IERC statistically combines teacher-level attributes that research indicates are linked to student achievement—certification, basic skills test performance, ACT scores, and the competitiveness ranking of the teacher's undergraduate institution. *See* ***Appendix D3-1*** *for a further description of the ITAC.*
2. School-level Average Salaries: While Illinois presently requires districts to report average salaries on school and district report cards, individual schools generally list only the average salary for the LEA as a whole, even when the school's average salary is much higher or lower. An analysis of the twelve LEAs serving the largest ten cities in Illinois, other than Chicago, found startling disparities in average teacher salary at high-poverty and low-poverty schools *within the same district*, with the average teacher at a low-poverty school earning almost $18,500 more than his/her counterpart at a high-poverty school.[43] Making this type of data transparent can shine light on the need to address disparities in resource allocation within an LEA.

Sections (D)(2) and (D)(5) of this Plan discuss other key metrics that will be included on the Educator Effectiveness Scorecards--the consistency of LEA human capital decisions with performance evaluation results, and effective deployment of LEA professional development resources. ISBE will collaborate with stakeholders to analyze other key metrics, such as induction and mentoring outcomes and the scheduling of common planning time.

B. State Policy to "Level Up" the Quality and Effectiveness of All Educators: While LEAs must design strategies specific to needs and deficiencies identified by data, the State can play a critical role in improving the effectiveness of teachers and principals by continuing to increase the overall quality of the State's educator workforce. In its 2008 report "Leveling Up: Narrowing the Teacher Academic Capital Gap in Illinois," the IERC found that Illinois has made improvements in hiring teachers with stronger academic backgrounds, and that these improvements have improved the "teacher academic capital" in Illinois' most disadvantaged schools.[44] The IERC found that "raising standards for teacher qualifications pays off," and that schools have benefitted from the teacher quality provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the introduction in Illinois in 2001 of a more rigorous basic skills test needed for certification, and the 2002 state requirement that all prospective teachers in Illinois pass that enhanced basic skills test before entering preparation programs.[45]

Illinois is undertaking a series of actions to further strengthen teacher and principal qualifications which will result in a further "leveling up" of the caliber of the Statewide teacher and principal workforce with benefits for Illinois' most disadvantaged schools. Specifically, the State Board of Education took action in late 2009 to raise the cut score on the basic skills test required for entrance into teacher preparation programs, and adopted rules to strengthen content knowledge for secondary teachers seeking certification endorsements. During 2010, the State intends to address content knowledge at the elementary and middle school level, revising the Illinois Professional Teacher Standards to place greater emphasis on differentiated instruction and meeting the needs of students with disabilities and English language learners, and overhauling principal preparation programs. These actions are further described in ***Appendix D3-2.***

GOAL II. Top talent is attracted to and retained by the State's lowest-performing schools through supportive conditions and aggressive, multi-faceted State and LEA actions.

GOAL II – KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Eliminate Collective Bargaining Agreement Barriers to Attracting and Retaining Highly Effective Staff in Low-performing Schools: Exhibit II of the Participating LEA MOU includes strong incentives for Participating LEAs and their unions to establish autonomy for the leadership of Priority Schools to select and assign teachers to the school in order to establish an effective teaching staff as quickly as possible. The 12 Super LEAs and

their local teachers' union leader have committed to negotiate in good faith to provide autonomy for the principals of Illinois Priority Schools to select and assign teachers to the school in order to establish an effective teaching staff as quickly as possible through options including intensive professional development, filling of existing vacancies at the discretion of site-based leadership, relocation of staff through voluntary transfers, and involuntary transfers. As part of interventions in Illinois Priority Schools, the LEA must use locally adopted competencies to measure the effectiveness of staff who can work within the turnaround environment to meet the needs of students, screen all existing staff, and provide the principal with autonomy to determine which applicants will be accepted. In their Final Scope of Work for Race to the Top funding, these LEAs will specifically describe how such autonomy will be provided and include a waiver or memoranda of understanding (MOU) providing flexibility from any inconsistent provisions in its collective bargaining agreement.

B. Support Aggressive, Multi-faceted LEA Plans to Attract and Retain Highly Effective Educators in Illinois Priority Schools: Research on teacher recruitment and incentive programs demonstrate that financial incentives are not a "silver bullet solution" – while money is necessary, administrative support, working conditions, and adequate preparation are equally important.[46] Through Race to the Top funding, Illinois will establish the Ensuring Effective Educators for All Schools Program (the "E3 Program") to provide resources to Participating LEAs with one or more Illinois Priority Schools to implement aggressive, multi-faceted plans for attracting highly effective teachers and principals.

The E3 Program will provide a grant to Participating LEAs that can be allocated over the four-year Race to the Top grant period for a variety of staffing incentives for an Illinois Priority School (*see **Appendix D3-3** for a listing of authorized incentives*). By providing flexible funding that can be used over multiple years, the E3 program will allow Participating LEAs to engage in multi-year planning and engage in recruitment and hiring processes at the earliest possible stage. ISBE will establish parameters for how each LEA must determine "highly effective" for purposes of the E3 Program, in a manner consistent with the definition in the Race to the Top notice and the performance evaluation reforms described in Section (D)(2) of this Plan.

Participating LEAs must structure their E3 program plans to address all of the criteria detailed in Appendix D3-3. The criteria in Appendix D3-3 address, among other requirements: (i) the need for an effective principal serving as an instructional leader; (ii) the working condition

issues that have been found to be critical for the success of incentive programs (including a safe and orderly environment, implementation of a distributed leadership model, ongoing job-embedded professional development, and more time for teachers to collaborate); (iii) the establishment of a cohort model for attracting new staff to an Illinois Priority School; and (iv) the development of "pipeline" programs to ensure that highly effective teachers and leaders can continue to support Illinois Priority Schools after the expiration of the grant period.

Implementation Timeline and Funding Allocation: The E3 Program will be launched upon the announcement of an RTTT award to the State, and ISBE will seek to administer funding to eligible Participating LEAs during the first half of the 10-11 school year. Participating LEAs receiving E3 funding will be required to have a plan extending throughout the RTTT grant period, with annual updates. As further described in the Budget Narrative (Appendix A2-3), half of E3 funding will be allocated to Super LEAs and the other half will be allocated through ISBE's grant administration procedures to Participating LEAs with one or more Priority Schools that provide a high quality plan for the use of such funding.

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i) *Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	**See Note below.**				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).					
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).					
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).					
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					

Note: The determination of "highly effective" will be impacted by the State's implementation of new performance evaluation systems, as described in Section (D)(2) of this Plan. The State will collect all data needed for Table (D)(3)(i) from Participating LEAs. However, annual targets will need to be created on an LEA- by LEA-basis to ensure an equitable distribution of highly effective educators based on data from that specific school district.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	1,062
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	919
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	37,581
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	34,803
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	1,062
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	919
[Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data] This data assumes one principal per school.	
Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals *(25 points)*

* * *

(ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers (as defined in this notice) teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA); and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA. *(10 points)*

Plans for (i) and (ii) may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.

GOAL III. The number of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas in Participating LEAs are significantly increased through targeted supports.

GOAL III – KEY ACTIVITIES.

Through Race to the Top, Illinois will expand existing programs and will create new programs to increase the number of effective teachers in the areas of math, science, special education, and language instructional programs. When targeting these supports, the State will prioritize funding for educators and pre-service candidates who agree to work in Participating LEAs with shortages identified through the Educator Supply and Demand in Illinois Annual Report (see Section (D)(1)). The State will ensure all programs take into account an educator's prior record of effectiveness and a pre-service candidate's academic credentials when accepting candidates.

STEM Educator Support Programs: Race to the Top will support the development of STEM externships for teachers with a prior record of effectiveness. The STEM externships will be offered through partnership organizations within each STEM Learning Exchange (see Section (B)(3) for a description of the STEM Learning Exchanges), and will provide a summer paid externship opportunity for educators to experience real world subject-matter application, enhance technology skills, and bring career awareness to STEM teaching and learning.

In addition to the STEM externships, the State will enhance and expand its existing Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnership Program (IMSP) to increase the math and science expertise of teachers with in Participating LEAs. The IMSP includes two programs—the IMSP Graduate Program offers a master's degree in math and/or science with a focus on K-12

instruction, and the IMSP Summer Workshop/Institute offers teachers specific professional development in math and science content matter and effective pedagogy in focused areas of math and/or science. The current IMSP supports 33 projects reaching 775 teachers designed to enhance their expertise in the areas of math or science education. Each existing partnership project requires the collaborative efforts of high-need LEAs and institutions of higher education as well as regional offices of education and business partners to bring together scientists, mathematicians, and engineers to improve teaching skills through use of sophisticated laboratory equipment and workspace, computing facilities, libraries, and other resources. Twenty-four of the IMSP projects provide low-cost or no-cost tuition rates for graduate study to teachers in high-need LEAs who wish to attain additional teaching endorsements in science and mathematics. These and the other IMSP projects also offer opportunities for teachers to enhance or update their current content and pedagogical knowledge through intensive summer workshops which require on-going coaching and study during the following school year. Action research and an expectation of increased teacher leadership opportunities are embedded requirements of each of the existing projects.

A significant percentage of the Participating LEAs also qualify as high-need LEAs under the requirements of the IMSP. By leveraging Race to the Top funding with existing IMSP funding, Illinois will be able to provide additional openings for teachers wishing to participate in the training provided by IMSP. Projects may be expanded and additional projects may be created to serve teachers who are presently on wait lists for openings. With the support of Race to the Top, Illinois can increase the number of participating teachers to 1,600 each year.

Illinois Special Education Tuition Waiver Program: The Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver program encourages current teachers and academically talented students to pursue careers as Illinois preschool, elementary, or secondary school teachers in any area of special education. The demand for this program is in excess of current funding levels. (In 2006-07, for example, there were 742 applications for 250 slots). Race to the Top funding will expand the slots available for educators with a prior record of effectiveness agreeing to work in Participating LEAs.

Language Instruction Educational Programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA). ISBE oversees the Bilingual Transition-to-Teaching (BTTT) program (which currently has more than 200 participants/students) and the Bilingual Early Childhood Certification Assistance

(BECCA) program (which currently has 18 participants/students). These programs are specifically aimed at recruiting career-changers into the field of bilingual education. To be eligible for BTTT, an applicant must have a bachelor's degree in a field *other* than education, have at least a 3.0 GPA, and be a permanent resident or citizen of the United States. Through Race to the Funding, focus will be placed on making the BTTT program more convenient and affordable for participants. Online coursework and more intensive paths that result in certification more quickly will be explored and developed.

EVIDENCE: SEE DIRECTLY BELOW.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals *(25 points)*

Evidence for (D)(3)(i):

- Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.

- **"High-minority school"** means a school with a minority population that is within the top quartile of minority student membership in the state.
- **"Low-minority school"** means a school with a minority population that is within the bottom quartile of minority student membership in the state.
- **"High-poverty school"** means a school in the top quartile in the state as measured by the percentage of low-income students.
- **"Low-poverty school"** means a school in the bottom quartile in the state as measured by the percentage of low-income students.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs *(14 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—
(i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and

* * *

(D)(4) Illinois Reform Plan

Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

GOAL I: Link student achievement and student growth data to students' teachers and principals, link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State.

GOAL I – KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Strengthening Preparation Program Requirements.

1. Teacher Preparation. With the strengthening of the Illinois Learning Standards by incorporating the Common Core, it is also necessary for the State to strengthen the content area expectations applicable to the State's standards for certification in specific teaching fields.[47] ISBE will establish working teams that include a broad range of stakeholders, including credentialing programs, to provide recommendations for strengthening the content standards. The initial focus of the working teams will be on programs for the elementary and middle grades, with the objective of making final recommendations in Fall 2010. (Currently there are no content area standards for middle grades, and they will be developed as part of this process.) The mathematics and science content standards for high school will be later reviewed and revised.

One source of analysis to inform the work of the agency and working teams will be a qualitative, comprehensive assessment of 49 of Illinois' teacher preparation programs by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). This project will be the first in the nation to go as deep and wide in its analysis of teacher preparation programs, evaluating programs on 25 criteria covering selectivity, coursework, field experiences and outcomes. NCTQ began the research phase of this project in September 2009 and will analyze admissions requirements, course

content, and rigor as determined by syllabi, faculty information, and many other factors. In Spring 2011, Advance Illinois and NCTQ will issue a public report summarizing the findings of the assessment. This new information will help inform potential teacher candidates, districts that hire program graduates, and policymakers that accredit and fund these programs.

2. Principal Preparation. As discussed in Section (A)(3) of this Plan, the State has already undertaken an extensive process to develop comprehensive reforms in principal preparation, and proposed administrative rules to overhaul the State's administrator preparation program requirements will be presented to the State Board of Education in the first half of 2010. Recommendations from the elementary and middle grades teacher preparation working teams will be brought to the State Board to initiate administrative rulemaking in spring 2011. All teacher and principal preparation programs will be required to be resubmitted and approved under the new standards.

B. Establishment of a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students. At the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, the State will establish a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students in accordance with the plans set forth in the State's Application for Phase II of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program. For Participating LEAs, new teacher and principal evaluation systems will be in place for the 2012-13 school year that incorporate student growth as a significant factor. These new data collection and performance evaluation systems will provide the State with the tools necessary to link student growth data to students' teachers and principals, and link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing.

As new data collection and performance evaluation systems are established, ISBE will work in continued collaboration with both the teacher and principal preparation working teams to provide recommendations to ISBE and IBHE on public reporting mechanisms based on the linkage of student growth data to credentialing programs. The agencies and working teams will rely on the Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research (ICEPR) (see Section (C)(2)) to analyze the data, develop recommendations for modifying data collection and reporting processes to account for appropriate factors that may impact the outcomes, and suggest approaches to policy and practice based on this information. Specific data points that will be enabled by the new State data collection system and that can be used to evaluation programs include:

1. Aggregate statewide student growth information, based on State assessment performance in tested grades and subjects, for teachers and administrators from each credentialing program (with comparisons to other programs, and a statewide average);
2. The average teacher and administrator practice rating assigned in summative evaluations, based on the four practice performance levels, compared to the state-wide average;
3. The average student growth rating assigned in summative evaluations, based on student growth performance quartiles, compared to the state-wide average; and
4. Student achievement and growth data from new State assessments implemented as part of the State's participation in multi-state consortia (see Section (B)(2) of this Plan).

By no later than the end of the 2013-14 school year, ISBE and IBHE will establish the public reporting mechanisms that link student achievement and student growth data for each credentialing program in the State.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs *(14 points)*

* * *

(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).

GOAL II: Expand preparation credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals.

GOAL II – KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Linking Student Outcome Data to Program Renewals. In parallel to the development of the public reporting mechanisms, ISBE and IBHE will work in collaboration with the working teams to recommend changes in program renewal requirements that relate to data on student growth outcomes for program graduates. Other information that may be incorporated into determinations on program renewal includes:

- The percentage of students passing at certain levels on State content tests;

- Information on student employment and retention; and
- Results of a statewide teacher performance assessment, such as the assessment that will be developed as part of the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (*see* ***Appendix A2-1***).

Recommendations will be presented to the State Board of Education for the initiation of an administrative rulemaking during the 2013-14 school year.

B. Using Student Outcome Data to Expand Internship Opportunities in Illinois Priority Schools. In addition to factoring this data into program renewals, ISBE will use data on student growth outcomes for program graduates to establish placement sites in Illinois Priority Schools for pre-service teachers and principals that are successful at producing effective teachers and leaders. The Participating LEA MOU requires that Participating LEAs cooperate with ISBE and IBHE to develop placement opportunities for such programs. As described in **Appendix E2-2**, the Associated Colleges of Illinois (ACI), a group of 23 private colleges and universities located throughout the State, has been prequalified as a Supporting Partner in the Illinois Partnership Zone to establish a High-Need School Internship (HNSI) program to develop a pool of highly qualified teachers prepared specifically for placements in Illinois Priority Schools. As soon as the necessary State data collection mechanisms are in place, ISBE will work with ACI to use data on student achievement and growth for program graduates as a tool to identify those member institutions that are successfully preparing teachers in high need schools and to expand their involvement in the HNSI program, while retracting the participation of those institutions with less successful outcomes.

Evidence for (D)(4): The chart below provides timelines for making data on student achievement and growth in relation to teacher and principal preparation programs publicly available as well as general information regarding the number of credentialing programs currently available for teachers and principals in Illinois.

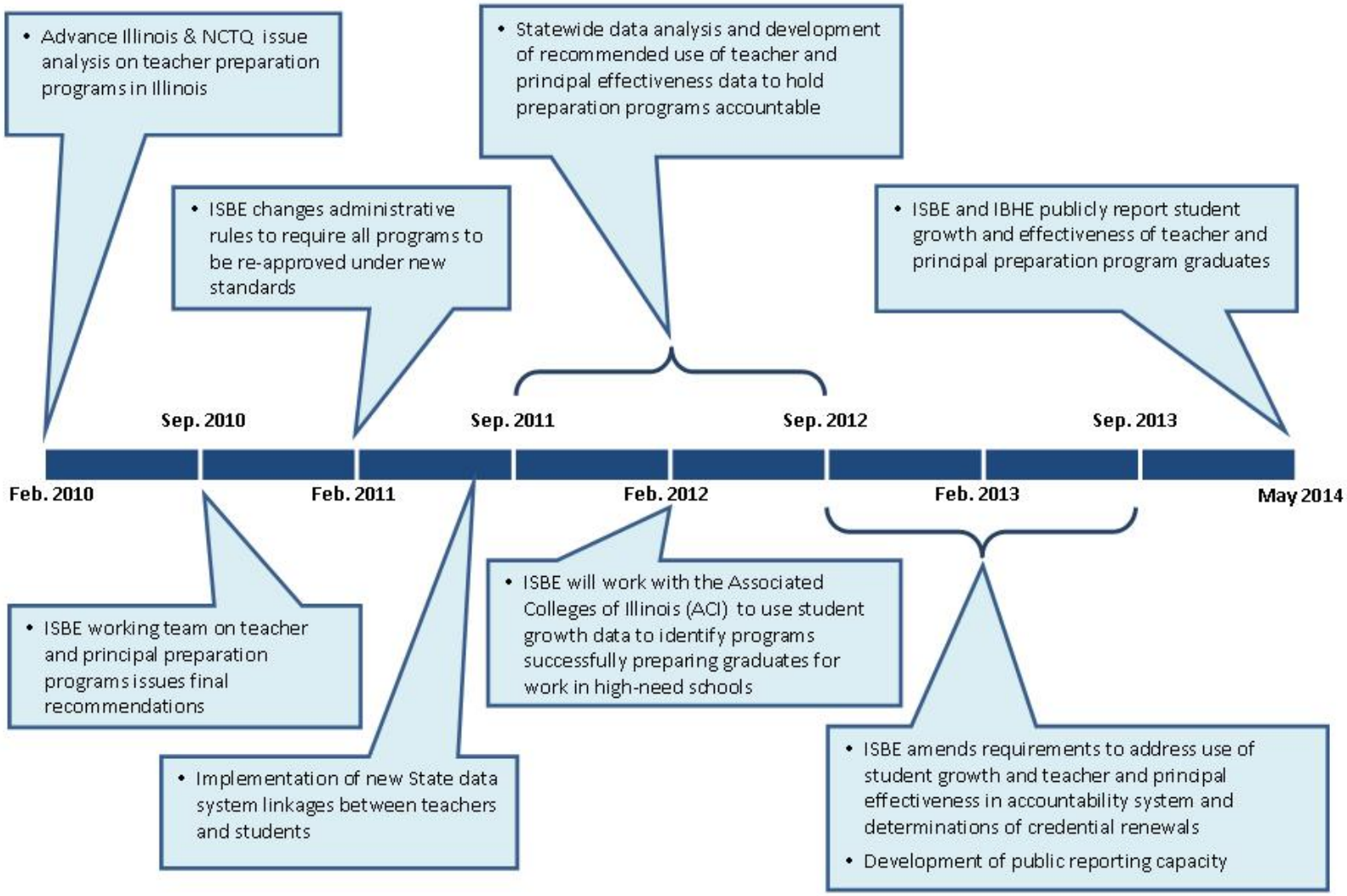
Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (current SY or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline**	**Data**	**And**	**Annual**	**Targets**
% of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice of the graduates' students.	0	0	0	0	100
% of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0	0	0	0	100

For further information, see Goal II, Section A.

General data to be provided at time of application:	Actual data: Baseline (current SY or most recent)
Total no. of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	796[5]
Total no. of principal credentialing programs in the State.	33
Total no. of teachers in the State[6]	510,297
Total no. of principals in the State [7]	48,982

The timeline on the following page identifies key activities and responsible parties for development of new preparation program credentialing.

Timeline for Developing New Preparation Program Credentialing



RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals *(20 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to—

(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high need students (as defined in this notice); and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and

* * *

(D)(5) Illinois Reform Plan
Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals

GOAL I. All Beginning Teachers and Principals in Participating LEAs Are Supported Through High Quality Induction and Mentoring Programs.

GOAL I. KEY ACTIVITIES.

A. Scale Up Induction and Mentoring Programs to Support all Beginning Teachers. Nearly half of all new teachers leave the classroom within their first five years of service and in some Chicago schools, that figure is as high as 75 percent. These repeated vacancies cause school districts significant expenses for advertisement, recruitment, orientation, and professional development. According to one estimate, Illinois school districts now spend more than $224 million annually because of turnover among teachers. Induction, a menu of professional support services for beginning teachers that typically includes mentoring, professional development, and assessment of teaching practice, has proven to be one of the most effective tools in retaining new teachers and improving their skills. The New Teacher's analysis of its induction and mentoring support in Chicago has found that intensive, high quality induction and mentoring increases teacher-reported intent to remain in teaching by 45% (from 49 to 94%), and has led to in-district retention rates of new teachers within these programs of 85.1%.[48]

B. Establish the Statewide Infrastructure Necessary to Build and Maintain Induction Program Quality. The State will continue and expand partnerships with The New Teacher Center (NTC), the nation's premier organization focused on accelerating new teacher development, the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative, and numerous other partnership

organizations (*see* ***Appendix D5-1***) to build the State systems necessary to ensure high quality induction and mentoring programs. The Teacher Induction Advisory Team, comprised of diverse stakeholders (*see Appendix D5-1*), will advise the direction and implementation of the statewide strategic plan for induction and the policies and infrastructure needed to sustain it.

Technical Assistance: Key components of the technical assistance system will include:

- Tailored Program Improvement: ISBE, working with one or more partnership organizations, will assemble a team of staff who will provide tailored technical assistance to individual program leadership teams in Participating LEAs. Each technical assistance provider will have a caseload of approximately 15-18 programs, and their focused and consistent coaching and support for individual induction programs will serve as the cornerstone for improving program quality.
- Formative Assessment and Mentoring Materials: Technical assistance providers will provide guidance and support to programs around the use of formative assessment protocols and alignments with other coaching efforts and local teacher evaluation procedures.
- Online Mentoring for Math, Science, and Special Education Teachers: The technical assistance system will provide enhanced mentoring services in math, science, and special education content areas. These services are particularly important for new teachers in rural and/or many urban settings who may not have access to a qualified experienced teacher in one of these high-need subject areas.

Program Accountability: The State infrastructure for induction and mentoring will also establish and maintain a strong focus on program quality and accountability. Key components of the program accountability system will include:

- Accountability for Program Improvement: ISBE, working with its partnership organizations, will develop and implement a process of ongoing program improvement based upon the Illinois Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs, the Illinois Continuum of Induction Program Development, and data of implementation and impact.
- Mentor Accountability and Growth: The accountability system will include a program of mentor accountability and growth based upon mentor standards.

- Data Collection: ISBE will work with its partnership organizations to lead the design of a system to collect and synthesize program impact data that includes teacher effectiveness, teacher retention, student achievement, and teacher efficacy.

C. Individualized Mentoring Support for all New Principals. The purpose of the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program is to provide new principals with the individualized mentoring support they need to successfully transition into effective leaders, and to improve the retention rate of principals in Illinois schools. ISBE contracted with the Illinois Principals Association to manage and implement the program during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. Services were provided to 425 new principals statewide, which includes 65 new Chicago Public School principals, and 360 new principals outside the Chicago Public School District. Through the mentoring process, new principals are matched with an experienced principal who provides on-the-job guidance and helps principals develop competencies in a broad array of leadership skills and practices aimed at improving teaching and learning in their schools. The mentoring relationship provides focused and rigorous support to the new principal that is designed to result in increased student performance. Through Race to the Top funding, the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program will be expanded to include a second optional year for principals that wish to participate.

The following table identifies timelines, key activities, and responsible parties for implementation of teacher and principal induction and mentoring.

Teacher and Principal Induction and Mentoring	
Date	Activities/Responsible Parties
SY2010-2011	**Teacher Induction and Mentoring** Participating LEAs: • Participating LEAs with existing induction and mentoring programs expand to all first and second year teachers • Participating LEAs without existing induction and mentoring programs establish such programs State: Establish State infrastructure to build and maintain quality.
	Principal Mentoring State: Expand Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program to include optional second year
SY2012-2013 and	Participating LEAs and State:

Teacher and Principal Induction and Mentoring	
Date	Activities/Responsible Parties
beyond	• Continued expansion and implementation of teacher induction and mentoring programs. • Continued expansion and implementation of principal mentoring. • Continued State provision of technical assistance and program accountability

GOAL II. Educators Engage in Common Planning Time and Collaboration to Foster School Improvement.

GOAL II. KEY ACTIVITIES.

Promote Common Planning and Collaboration Through the Illinois Partnership Zone and the National Board Certification Process for Teachers and Principals. Core elements of the Illinois Partnership Zone model for Illinois' lowest-performing schools (described in Section (E)(2) of this Plan) are: (i) the need for extended learning time to provide for more teachers to collaborate; (ii) a transition to a distributed leadership model with a highly capable leadership team working to build a cohesive, professional teaching culture; and (iii) relevant, ongoing, high-quality job embedded professional development. (*See **Appendix E2-2**; Transformation Criteria (2)(B), (2)(D), and (4)(B)*) The State will use Race to the Top funding to support common planning time and collaboration for educators in a much broader number of schools, targeting resources to secondary schools in the bottom quartile of State performance. The State of Illinois is consistently ranked among the top 10 states for the number of new teachers achieving National Board Certification[49] and will capitalize on the expertise of these accomplished teachers to provide standards-based professional learning through collaborative teams in targeted secondary schools and their feeder middle schools.

Through the support of Race to the Top funding, the State will draw together National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), classroom teachers (by grade level and content area), and school principals into collaborative teams to accelerate student achievement and create transformational change across middle and high schools. National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), the National Board Certification process, and National Board Certification process for principals will be incorporated into a comprehensive approach to school improvement for participating high schools and feeder middle schools. The program will use Illinois NBCTs as

instructional leaders for approximately 2,500 teachers and 50 principals/assistant principals in 30 high-need secondary schools and feeder middle schools (grades 6 – 12) to impact nearly 40,000 students over the next four years.

Working in partnership with the Illinois Principals' Association, principals and/or assistant principals and NBCT teacher leaders will participate in the Illinois Distinguished Principal Leadership Institute (IDLP) to effectively foster school change at each school. The plan involves a multi-year intervention that focuses on transforming the instructional work of schools by creating shared accountability for student results across school staff and implementing effective classroom practices throughout the school that are personalized, flexible based on individual students needs, and real-time longitudinal data. Working in partnership with the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA), a key component of this intervention will be to increase student achievement in STEM and literacy content areas. IMSA's math and science NBCTs will use their expertise to design and deliver professional development that centers on helping teachers in participating schools teach and assess for deep conceptual understanding.

Please see Appendix D5-2 for a further description of this program, including timelines for implementation and responsible parties.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals *(20 points)*

* * *

(ii) Measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports in order to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice).

GOAL III. Teacher and Principal Professional Development Resources in Participating LEAs are Targeted, Measured and Evaluated, and Continuously Improved

GOAL III. KEY ACTIVITIES.

ISBE will utilize the initial and annual RTTT plan reporting process and the Measurement Plan described in Section (A)(2) and **Appendix A2-2** to ensure that Participating LEAs' professional development resources align with this Plan, are measured, and continually improved. As part of each Participating LEA's Final Plan for RTTT funding and in each annual RTTT report, the LEA will be required to demonstrate that professional development resources are being deployed in support of this Plan. Commencing with its first annual report following the 2010-11 school year, each Participating LEA will also be required to demonstrate that it has established and is using indicators for measuring professional development effectiveness. While the indicators may initially include indicators such as attendance and reported levels of educator satisfaction, the indicators must transition to incorporate formative and summative student growth outcomes and improvements in teacher and principal effectiveness ratings as State and LEA data and evaluation systems are implemented to support this type of measurement.

In addition, the Required Indicators established by ISBE as part of the Measurement Plan (see Appendix A2-2) will measure and report on teacher and principal participation in professional development that supports critical objectives of this Plan. Specifically, the Required Indicators will include:

- % of teachers and % of principals participating in joint and integrated professional development around key P-20 transitions: (i) early learning – K through 3; (ii) middle to high school; and (iii) high school to postsecondary;
- % of teachers and % of principals participating in professional development associated with:

- Assessments for Learning; and
- Access and use of the Learning and Performance Management System or a locally developed instructional improvement system; and

- % of teachers and % of principals participating in professional development targeting an area for improvement identified through performance evaluations.

Participating LEA status on these indicators will be publicly reported as part of the Educator Effectiveness Scorecard, described in Section (D)(3). By tracking these percentages and ensuring transparency, ISBE will be better-equipped to assess the appropriateness of performance evaluation strategies put forward by Participating LEAs as part of their planning for RTTT and other state and federal funding sources.

Please see Appendix A2-6 for a description of timelines for implementation and responsible parties with respect to the establishment of the Measurement Plan.

(D)(5): Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Evidence for D(5) [optional*]: If State wishes to include performance measures re providing effective support to teachers/principals, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.
Evidence: See directly below.

Performance Measures (D(5) If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter in rows below, and provide baseline data and annual targets in the columns provided.		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current/most recent school year)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Scaling up support for all beginning teachers and principals	% of Participating LEAs with induction and mentoring programs for new teachers (as defined by MOU)	NA	50%	75%	90%	100%
	% of beginning teachers participating in an induction and mentoring program (as defined by MOU) that qualify for such program	NA	60%	80%	90%	100%
	% of Participating LEAs with teacher induction and	NA	40%	60%	80%	100%

	mentoring programs that include a program accountability component					
	% of Participating LEAs implementing a certified beginning principal mentoring program (as defined by the MOU)	NA	40%	55%	75%	100%
	% of beginning principals participating in a 1-year induction program (as defined by MOU) that qualify for such program	NA	90%	100%	100%	100%
	% of beginning principals participating in a 2-year induction program (as defined by MOU) that qualify for such program	NA	40%	50%	65%	75%
Common Planning and Collaboration	% of teachers in Participating LEAs participating in structured common planning time for teachers	NA	50%	60%	85%	100%
Professional Development Measurement	% of LEAs with key indicators for PD effectiveness established	NA	100%	100%	100%	100%

E. TURNING AROUND THE LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs *(10 points)*

The extent to which the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.

Evidence for (E)(1):

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.

(E)(1) Illinois Reform Conditions

Intervening in the Lowest-Achieving Schools and LEAs

ISBE has broad statutory authority to intervene in underperforming schools and districts. Section 2-3.25f of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*., gives the State Superintendent the power, following State Board authorization, to intervene in school districts or schools remaining on academic watch status for three years following placement on academic watch status. A school district or school is placed on academic watch status after not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for a fourth annual calculation.

The State Board may authorize the State Superintendent to take the following actions to intervene in a district or school:

1. Authorize the State Superintendent to direct the regional superintendent to remove the local board members;
2. Direct the State Superintendent to appoint an Independent Authority that shall exercise such powers and duties as may be necessary to operate the school or school district for purposes of improving pupil performance and school improvement, for a period of time specified by ISBE and based on the recommendation of the State Superintendent;
3. Change the recognition status of a school district or a school to "nonrecognized." A school district that is nonrecognized shall automatically be dissolved on July 1 following that nonrecognition, and its territory realigned with another school district or districts, by the regional board of school trustees. The effective date of nonrecognition of a school shall be July 1 following the nonrecognition; and

4. Authorize the State Superintendent to direct the reassignment of pupils or the reassignment or replacement of school district personnel who are relevant to the failure to meet AYP criteria.

For additional information on ISBE's power to intervene in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs, see ***Appendix E1-1***, Section 2-3.25f of the School Code, State Interventions. Of the 53 Tier I and Tier II schools, as defined under the School Improvement Grant program, 43 of these schools (81% of the total) are currently subject to the State Superintendent's intervention authority as described above.

In addition, all federal requirements apply to schools and school districts utilizing federal funds under Title I, Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.25f(c). Therefore, ISBE has the authority to exercise No Child Left Behind Act corrective action rights for any Title I district that has reached corrective action status, which include, but are not limited to, replacing district personnel who are relevant to its inability to make adequate yearly progress; appointing a receiver or trustee to administer district affairs; and/or abolishing or restructuring the district. 20 U.S.C. 6316(c)(10)(C).

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools *(40 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—
(i) Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and, at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) if they were eligible to receive Title I funds; and *(5 points)*

(ii) Support its LEAs in turning around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). *(35 points)*

Evidence for (E)(2): See Appendix E2-3

- The State's historic performance on school turnaround, as evidenced by the total number of persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) that States or LEAs attempted to turn around in the last five years, the approach used, and the results and lessons learned to date.

(E)(2) Illinois Reform Plan
Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

GOAL I. Identify and publicly report the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools.

GOAL I. KEY ACTIVITY. Identifying and Publicly Reporting "Illinois Priority Schools."

For its Race to the Top supports, Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant funds, and State Fiscal Stabilization Fund reporting, Illinois has established a list of "Illinois Priority Schools," which are those schools that are among the lowest-achieving five percent of schools statewide, regardless of Title I status, based on the performance of the "all students" subgroup in reading language arts and math combined on State assessments for the most recent three years. The list also includes any high school with a graduation rate of less than 60%, also based on three years of aggregated data. The list of schools designated as "Illinois Priority Schools" is inclusive of all schools designated as Tier I and Tier II schools under the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant and State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program, and also includes other significantly underperforming schools that fall within the bottom 5% of student achievement statewide. Tier I and Tier II designations will be used by ISBE to prioritize funding for certain federal programs, such as the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grants, to the extent required by the U.S. Department of Education. Generally, however, the State will use the broader "Illinois Priority Schools" designation for reporting requirements applicable to "persistently

lowest-achieving schools" and for the targeting of State and federal supports for such schools (including the programs and supports targeted to Priority Schools in this application).

ISBE, as required under its Phase II State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Application, has publicly posted the lists of Illinois Priority Schools and identified where these schools fall into "Tier I" and "Tier II" for federal purposes. A list of these schools is included as ***Appendix E2-1*.**

GOAL II. Dramatically improve student achievement in Illinois Priority Schools through LEA implementation of one of the four school intervention models.

Under Section (IV)(A) of the LEA MOU, Participating LEAs must undertake one of the four school intervention models identified by the U.S. Department of Education in all Illinois Priority Schools within the LEA (subject to state and federal support for such activities). The interventions must commence during the first three years of the Race to the Top grant period (i.e., the 2010-11, 2011-12, or 2012-13 school years), with no less than a proportionate cohort of schools initiating interventions in each year. Participating LEAs that can demonstrate that a prior intervention substantially aligned to one of the four school intervention models is demonstrating significant student achievement gains, as determined by ISBE, may receive funding to continue with that intervention.

GOAL II. KEY ACTIVITIES

The Illinois plan for supporting LEA implementation of the four school intervention models consists of four inter-related components:

A. The Illinois Partnership Zone: A structured, state-wide effort to coordinate the services of "Lead" and "Supporting" partners to build LEA capacity to undertake intensive interventions in Illinois Priority Schools.

B. Direct State Intervention System: If LEAs do not demonstrate the willingness or capacity to undertake the dramatic actions necessary to improve student outcomes in the lowest-performing schools, the State will leverage its legal authority and the capacity of key partners to undertake a direct State intervention.

C. School District Reorganizations for Underperforming Districts: For certain LEAs, implementation of a successful "restart" or "closure" intervention should be coupled with a broader school district reorganization to ensure student access to adequate educational opportunities.

D. Drop-out Prevention and Re-enrollment Supports. As over 80% of Illinois Priority Schools are high schools, the establishment of targeted initiatives for students that are significantly below grade level and strategies designed to re-engage youth that have dropped out of high school without receiving a diploma are necessary to improve student achievement and increase graduation rates.

Each component of the plan is discussed in greater detail below.

A. Illinois Partnership Zone

In October 2009, ISBE launched the "Illinois Partnership Zone" to turn around Illinois Priority Schools by combining intensive school interventions with a robust human capital strategy, supported by a network of strong outside organizations. To participate in the Partnership Zone, LEAs must have at least one Illinois Priority School and must make a series of commitments in support of Partnership Zone activities (further described below). To promote K-12 integration, elementary and middle schools that feed into Illinois Priority Schools can also participate.

Using Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant program funding, ISBE is aggressively implementing the Illinois Partnership Zone initiative to commence intervention planning in a cohort of LEAs in Spring 2010 with full interventions implemented in the 2010-11 school year (*see* ***Appendix E2-2****, Proposed Timeline for Implementation*). A strong cadre of Lead and Supporting Partners (discussed below) has already been procured and prequalified to support LEA Partnership Zone activities. ISBE intends to prioritize its 1003(g) School Improvement grants to support Partnership Zone activities in Participating LEAs (to the extent permitted by the requirements of the 1003(g) program). Race to the Top funding will help ISBE strengthen State capacity for implementation, and provide other related supports to Illinois Priority Schools such as the "E3 Program" (discussed in Section (D)(3)) and the Super LEA supplemental funding (see Budget Narrative Appendix A2-3).

A turnaround-focused unit will be created within the Center for School Improvement (see Section (A)(2)). By relying on Lead and Supporting Partners to carry out the on-the-ground work, the Center for School Improvement and ISBE will focus on procuring and providing oversight to the partners, performance management of LEA and partner activities, and ensuring Partnership Zone interventions are supported by ISBE agency initiatives and divisions. The State will also receive support for the Illinois Partnership Zone initiative through its participation

in the six-state Mass Insight Education Partnership Zone collaboration. Illinois has been chosen by Mass Insight Education & Research Institute to participate in a three-year, $70 million effort to create scalable and sustainable strategies for turning around clusters of low-performing schools. The State is committed to maximizing the planning, policy, budgetary, communications, and other support activities available through this multi-state project.

1. Lead and Supporting Partners. The State recognizes that for the Illinois Partnership Zone to have the desired intensity and scalability, ISBE must engage with external partners to provide on-the-ground support to participating LEAs and schools. These partners will consist of "Lead Partners" who will lead and oversee the implementation of the intervention model in selected schools, and "Supporting Partners" who will help to implement district-wide human capital and capacity-building strategies and support the school-level work of Lead Partners.

On October 15, 2009, ISBE issued a Request for Sealed Proposals for Lead and Supporting Partners with a demonstrated record of successful and effective work with underperforming schools to work in every region of the State. Based on responses to this procurement, the State Superintendent has pre-qualified Lead and Supporting Partners to work with LEAs and schools in specific regions (*see Appendix E2-2*). Pre-qualified partners will also be eligible to contract directly with ISBE to support LEA activities or as part of a direct State intervention. The pre-qualified Lead and Supporting Partners consist of organizations that have served as national leaders in school turnaround, as well as a number of Illinois-based organizations that are seeking to expand and intensify existing service models to engage in turnaround-related activities. ISBE will ensure that all Lead and Supporting Partners are able to carry out the core components of the Partnership Zone initiative, as further described in this Section and the Appendices. As necessary, ISBE will require that certain Lead Partners coordinate interventions with appropriate Supporting Partners to ensure capacity to address the teacher and school leader effectiveness components. For example, it will be critical that, before any intervention is fully developed, ISBE and the relevant Lead Partner recognize the importance of the linguistic and cultural needs of the population which attends the school; the needs and performance of the students must be grounded in best practice methods for special populations (e.g., English Language Learners) in order to ensure that the Partnership Zone work is appropriately targeted. ISBE's pre-qualification process also ensured that all Partners only committed to provide services to the extent of their capacity. In future years of the initiative,

ISBE, working with the Center for School Improvement, will undertake additional Lead and Supporting Partner procurements to expand and update the list of pre-qualified entities.

Each LEA's plan for Illinois Partnership Zone implementation, as well as contracts between the LEA and partners, must ensure shared accountability for the success of the intervention model between the LEA and the partners. LEA contracts with partners must permit termination if specified outcomes are not being achieved. The Partnership Zone model also focuses on an eventual phase-out of Lead and Supporting Partner services – ultimately, after a four- to five-year timeframe, the partners must build the capacity of the LEAs and schools to achieve sustainable student growth outcomes.

a. Lead Partners. Only one Lead Partner will be assigned to each participating school within an LEA. In general, the Lead Partner's duties will include: (i) working with ISBE and the Center for School Improvement, the LEA, and school to perform a needs assessment of the school; (ii) coordinating with all involved stakeholders on the development of an intervention plan and its implementation; and (iii) implementing a coherent, whole school intervention model in partnership with the LEA. LEAs have flexibility in selecting a specific intervention model, as identified in the proposed federal regulations, to be implemented in coordination with a Lead Partner. However, the intervention model must be comprehensive and address all of the "Transformation Criteria" identified in Appendix E2-2, which address (1) School culture and climate; (2) Developing teacher and school leader effectiveness; (3) Comprehensive instructional reform strategies; (4) Extended learning time; and (5) Providing operating flexibility. The Transformation Criteria in Appendix E2-2 address all of the required elements of the "Transformation Model" established by the U.S. Department of Education. If 50% or more of staff are replaced as part of an intervention, the Transformation Criteria also address all of the required elements of the "Turnaround Model" established by the U.S. Department of Education.

LEAs will be required to coordinate with Lead Partners to ensure appropriate and adequate autonomy over staff and leadership hiring, curriculum and instruction, scheduling, and budget in order to address each of the "Transformation Criteria" in Appendix E2-2. In many instances, these autonomies will require the negotiation and creation of waivers or memoranda of understanding providing flexibility from a collective bargaining agreement. To promote the establishment of flexibility from collective bargaining agreement restrictions, Exhibit II of the MOU for Race to the Top Participating LEAs outlines specific commitments LEAs and their

unions must make to be eligible for certain Race to the Top funds and receive priority for other programs. The LEA Superintendent and the Local Teachers' Union Leader from 12 "Super LEAs", representing more than 125,000 students, have agreed to negotiate in good faith to provide autonomy for the principals of Illinois Priority Schools to select and assign teachers to the school and to establish other flexibilities from a collective bargaining agreement to promote Partnership Zone activities. In their Final Scope of Work for Race to the Top funding, these LEAs must specifically describe how these autonomies and flexibilities will be provided and include a waiver or memoranda of understanding providing flexibility from any inconsistent provisions in its collective bargaining agreement.

b. Supporting Partners. Supporting Partners will support Lead Partners' work in selected schools, and assist participating LEAs to develop district-wide human capital strategies to increase the effectiveness of their teacher and principal workforce. In order to participate in the Illinois Partnership Zone, each LEA must demonstrate a commitment from its respective school board and district superintendent and where appropriate, union leadership, to implement human capital strategies to support the Partnership Zone (such as those identified on Appendix E2-2) in close collaboration with Lead and Supporting Partners. While these strategies will initially be targeted to the Illinois Partnership Zone schools, the objective will be to expand the strategies on a broader scale throughout the LEA. In addition to the human capital strategies, Supporting Partners may also assist LEAs to build the capacity of its school board or district administrative leadership to effectively oversee and implement Partnership Zone activities. The specific human capital and district capacity building strategies to be undertaken by Supporting Partners, as well as the Supporting Partners prequalified in each strategy area, are identified in Appendix E2-2.

2. District-level Partnership Zone Responsibilities and Commitments. In addition to the human capital commitments described above, the school board and superintendent of each LEA participating in the Partnership Zone must make the following commitments: (i) establish LEA-wide leadership for the effort reporting directly to the local superintendent; (ii) provide maximum freedom from district-wide mandates for Partnership Zone schools, particularly those that affect curriculum/professional development, schedule, calendar, budgeting, and improvement planning; (iii) provide funding for the Partnership Zone above and beyond the funding committed by the State; (iv) implement data and performance management systems that support school- and district-level Partnership Zone activities and permit necessary reporting to

the State; and (v) focus on P-20 transitions for students in Partnership Zone schools by aligning intervention and improvement strategies across PreK, elementary, middle, and high schools, and into postsecondary.

3. Data Collection, Outcomes-based Measurements, and Advisory Oversight. All LEAs, Lead Partners, and Supporting Partners will be required to participate in data collection, evaluation, and reporting activities specified by ISBE so that successful strategies can be determined and shared throughout the State. In addition, ISBE's procurement for Lead and Supporting Partners focused on the establishment of an outcomes-based measurement model and metrics for evaluating success by schools, districts, and partners. Using responses from this procurement, ISBE will develop an overall outcomes-based measurement model and metrics to ensure that every Partnership Zone intervention plan defines realistic outcomes that will be achieved as the result of the LEA's participation in the initiative. These activities will be coordinated with the State's overall Measurement Plan for RTTT, discussed in Section (A)(2) and **Appendix A2-2**.

Finally, ISBE will convene an advisory Illinois Partnership Zone Council consisting of representatives from Lead and Supporting Partners, participating districts and schools, and other key stakeholders. This Council will: (i) provide advisory recommendations to the State Superintendent, Governor, and General Assembly regarding the progress of the initiative; (ii) recommend supportive state legislative and regulatory changes; and (iii) advise on the establishment of statewide information and collaboration systems for all participants to share challenges and strategies for success.

B. Direct State Interventions

As a parallel effort to the Illinois Partnership Zone, Illinois will also establish systems to undertake necessary interventions in Illinois Priority Schools and persistently low-performing LEAs that do not demonstrate a willingness or ability to undertake the dramatic action necessary to improve student outcomes. To have a legitimate State intervention system, the State must (a) have sufficient legal authority, (b) have the political courage to directly intervene in an LEA's affairs, and (c) be able to deliver on-the-ground capacity for an intensive intervention. As described in Section (E)(1), the Illinois School Code provides the State Superintendent with a full arsenal of interventions that can be applied in underperforming schools and districts. ISBE's past record of interventions to address systematic LEA non-compliance issues, as further

described in Section (A)(3) of this Plan, demonstrate that the State is prepared to intervene locally if LEAs are not meeting obligations toward students. To establish capacity for this work, ISBE's pre-qualification process for Lead and Supporting Partners for the Illinois Partnership Zone also met the State procurement requirements for ISBE to contract directly with these entities if necessary to undertake a direct State intervention. If and when the need for a direct State intervention arises, the State can act quickly to engage Lead and Supporting Partners to provide on-the-ground resources for implementation of ISBE's selected intervention strategy. The Center for School Improvement will include a specific unit dedicated to turnaround (see Section (A)(2)). Upon this Center's creation in the second half of 2010, ISBE will coordinate State intervention planning with the Center and establish timelines for action in specific LEAs that have not responded to the need for intervention in the State's worst performing schools.

C. School District Reorganization to Improve Student Outcomes

For LEAs with low student performance outcomes, ISBE will develop metrics to determine whether such LEAs should analyze school district reorganization as a parallel strategy for undertaking a "restart" or "closure" intervention in one or more Illinois Priority Schools. School district reorganization is an umbrella term which includes consolidation, school district conversion, partial elementary unit district formation, high school deactivation, and cooperative high school attendance centers. Public Act 94-1019, enacted in 2006, created new options for school district reorganization that had not been available in the past, while retaining current existing options. Particularly for smaller LEAs, the closure of underperforming schools or the implementation of a "restart" model may require a broader district reorganization in order to ensure that students have access to the support and educational resources necessary to prepare them for success in the 21st century economy

For low-performing LEAs with one or more Illinois Priority Schools identified by ISBE as candidates for reorganization, the LEA's receipt of Race to the Top funding will be conditioned upon performing a school district reorganization study supported through State funding. If the study demonstrates financial and educational benefits, the LEA can only continue to receive Race to the Top funding if it moves forward with a reorganization option analyzed in the study. State financial incentives and technical support are available for LEAs to undertake reorganizations.

D. Drop-Out Prevention and Re-Enrollment Support

Over 80% of the Illinois Priority schools are high schools. For most of these schools, creating targeted initiatives for students that are significantly below grade level or otherwise at risk of dropping out will be critical to impacting student achievement for the school as a whole. In addition, with Illinois' implementation of a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate model, programs and strategies designed to re-engage youth that have dropped out of high school without receiving a diploma are necessary to increase graduation rates. Such programs and strategies are also necessary to address the societal impacts of high school dropouts, including increased unemployment, welfare, and incarceration costs.

In July 2009, the Governor signed into law Public Act 96-0106, establishing the Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways through Education (IHOPE) Program, resulting from the Illinois Task Force on Re-Enrolling Student's final report. The IHOPE Program develops a comprehensive system in the State to re-enroll significant numbers of high school dropouts using a regional service delivery model, where Chicago Public Schools and Regional Offices of Education establish comprehensive plans in coordination with school districts, community colleges, and community groups. Categories of programming under the IHOPE legislation may include: (1) full-time programs that are comprehensive, year-round programs; (2) part-time programs combining work and study scheduled at various times that are flexible to the needs of students; (3) dual enrollment, in which students attend high school classes in combination with community college classes, or dual credit, in which a single class counts simultaneously toward high school and college credit;[50] and (4) on-line programs for specific courses for credit leading to the receipt of a high school diploma. *See timeline of IHOPE Partnership Zones at end of this Section.* In 2009, Illinois passed separate legislation allowing structured, virtual programs delivered outside of school buildings to qualify for General State Aid, thereby expanding opportunities for virtual courses to be incorporated into re-enrollment programming.[51] In addition to the IHOPE legislation, Public Act 96-0105, signed into law in July 2009 by Governor Quinn, authorizes the establishment of 5 charter schools in the State devoted exclusively to re-enrolled high school drop-outs.

Many of the programming approaches to re-engage students that have dropped out are necessary to address the needs of students *at risk* of dropping out. While programs exist across the State to address the needs of students that are significantly below grade level, the number of

seats specifically designed to help struggling students get back on track only meet a small fraction of the need. Moreover, the reasons students are behind vary – some are disengaged, others have additional responsibility as caregivers, some are balancing school and employment, and others may be unable to attend school due to safety concerns.

Chicago Public Schools is currently working with its civic community to develop a program for a "segmentation analysis" of the district's high school population to build specific solutions for large groups (5,000 – 10,000 or more) of students based on the reasons students are struggling. For example, for students with caregiver responsibilities, simply starting school – or starting small learning communities within schools – at 10 a.m., rather than 8 a.m., could allow many of the students to attend school. For students who are disengaged because they are simply bored, digital learning labs can be established that leverage the learning styles of many teenagers: they "tinker," then "build," then "learn the underlying concepts."

Race to the Top funding will be used to support the establishment of IHOPE regional delivery systems for re-enrolling students who have dropped out of school, with funding priority given to regions of the State with a high number of Illinois Priority high schools. In addition to programs targeting students who have dropped out, the IHOPE services must also include partnering with Participating LEAs to perform a segmentation analysis of the student population in Illinois Priority high schools and develop tailored solutions for segments of the population at risk of dropping out. The timeline below identifies activities and key goals for implementation of the IHOPE initiative as described in this Section (E)(2).

IHOPE Implementation Timeline	
TIME PERIOD	**ACTIVITY/ENROLLMENT GOALS**
Year One: 2010-2011	1,800 enrolling openings will be developed, re-enrolling 3,600 students with 1,500 earning a High School Diploma.*
Year Two: 2011-2012	Phase I: 1,800 enrolling openings will continue, re-enrolling 3,600 students with 1,500 earning a High School Diploma.* Phase II: 3,600 enrolling openings will be developed, re-enrolling 7,100 students with 3,000 earning a High School Diploma.*
Year Three: 2012-2013	Phase I: 1,800 enrolling openings will continue, re-enrolling 3,600 students with 1,500 earning a High School Diploma.* Phase II: 3,600 enrolling openings will continue, re-enrolling 7,100 students with 3,000 earning a High School Diploma.*
Year Four:2013-2014	Phase I: 1,800 enrolling openings will continue, re-enrolling 3,600

	students with 1,500 earning a High School Diploma.* Phase II: 3,600 enrolling openings will continue, re-enrolling 7,100 students with 3,000 earning a High School Diploma.*

*All enrolling openings and re-enrollment programs will involve one of the four following programs: (1) full-time programs that are comprehensive, year-round programs; (2) part-time programs combining work and study scheduled at various times that are flexible to the needs of students; (3) dual enrollment, in which students attend high school classes in combination with community college classes, or dual credit, in which a single class counts simultaneously toward high school and college credit;[52] and (4) on-line programs for specific courses for credit leading to the receipt of a high school diploma.

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (current SY or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
The number of schools for which 1 of the 4 school intervention models will be initiated each year. ***(See Appendix E2-3 for further information regarding historic performance on turnaround.)***	**0***	**32**	**54**	**21**	**0**

*Planning and development of school intervention strategies/models currently ongoing during 2009-2010 SY. Implementation of first phase of school intervention models to occur during SY 2010-2011.

F. GENERAL

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(1) Making education funding a p
riority *(10 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008; and

(ii) The State's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.

Evidence for (F)(1)(i):

- Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same.

Evidence for (F)(1)(ii):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

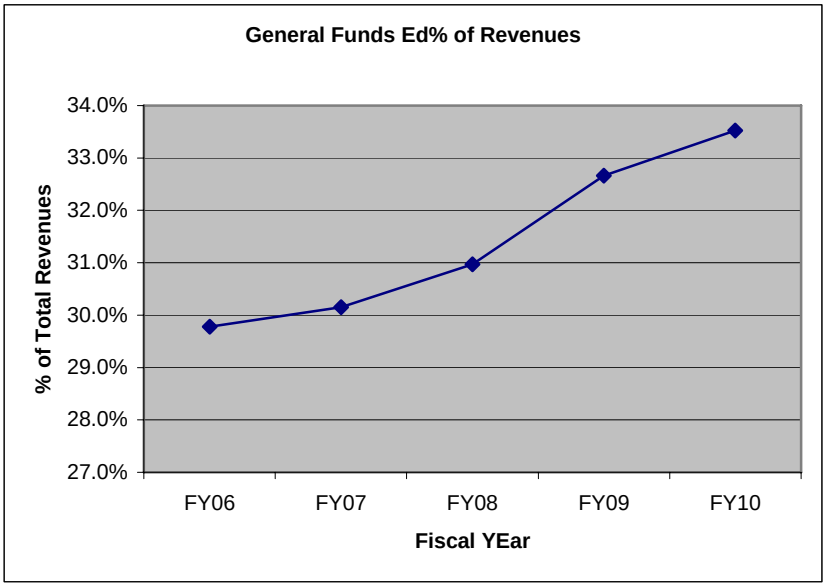
(F)(1) Illinois Reform Conditions
Making Education Funding a Priority

In State Fiscal Year 2009, the State of Illinois increased the percentage of state revenues used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education by 1.7% over FY 2008. Despite challenging economic conditions, Illinois has continued to hold education funding as a priority with steady funding increases shown from FY 2006 through FY 2010. State Fiscal Stabilization Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in FY 2009 and FY 2010 have aided the state's education funding during the recession.

Revenues used to support elementary and secondary education are measured as actual expenditures by the Illinois State Board of Education. Revenues used to support higher education are measured as actual expenditures by the various institutions of higher education including: the Illinois Board of Higher Education, nine public universities, the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the Illinois Math and Science Academy, and the State University Civil Service System. State revenues are measured as general fund revenues which include transfers in and federal revenues.

Education Spending v. State Revenues Received

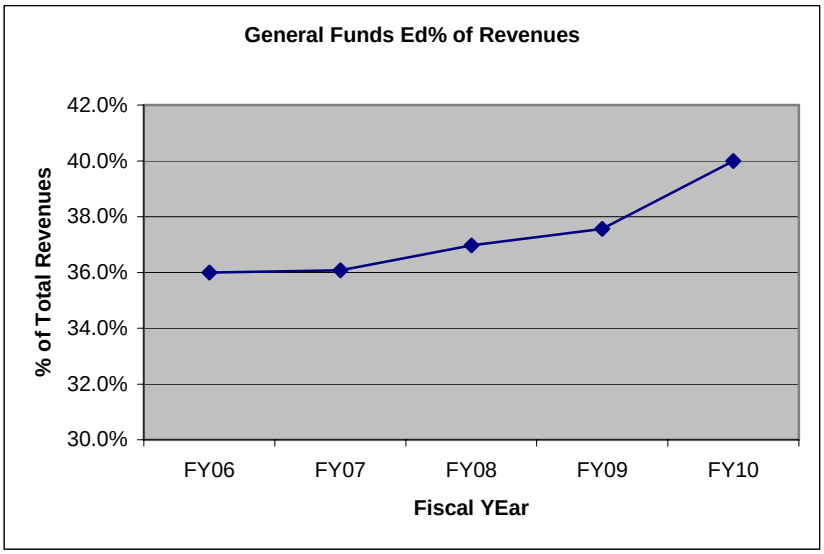
	General Funds				
Education Spending	**FY06**	**FY07**	**FY08**	**FY09**	**FY10**
ISBE	6,044,937	6,471,598	6,994,873	7,357,409	7,307,377
Higher Ed	2,103,167	2,163,825	2,190,455	2,161,971	2,207,411
Education Total	8,148,103	8,635,423	9,185,328	9,519,379	9,514,788
State Revenues					
State of Illinois	27,359,000	28,640,000	29,659,000	29,144,000	28,383,000
State Total	27,359,000	28,640,000	29,659,000	29,144,000	28,383,000
Ed % of Total	29.8%	30.2%	31.0%	32.7%	33.5%



Illinois' commitment to funding education is apparent even when excluding ARRA stimulus dollars. The graph below illustrates an increase of 0.6% in the percentage of state revenues used to support elementary, secondary, and higher education from FY 2008 to FY 2009.

Education Spending v. State Revenues Received (Excludes ARRA funding)

	General Funds				
Education Spending	**FY06**	**FY07**	**FY08**	**FY09**	**FY10**
ISBE	6,044,937	6,471,598	6,994,873	7,357,409	7,307,377
Higher Ed	2,103,167	2,163,825	2,190,455	2,161,971	2,207,411
ISBE ARRA				1,038,988	922,248
Higher Ed ARRA				-	93,936
Difference ISBE	6,044,937	6,471,598	6,994,873	6,318,421	6,385,129
Difference Higher Ed	2,103,167	2,163,825	2,190,455	2,161,971	2,113,475
State Revenues					
State of Illinois	27,359,000	28,640,000	29,659,000	29,144,000	28,383,000
Federal Revenues	4,725,000	4,702,000	4,815,000	6,567,000	7,131,000
State Total	22,634,000	23,938,000	24,844,000	22,577,000	21,252,000
Ed % of Total	36.0%	36.1%	37.0%	37.6%	40.0%



Equitable Funding Between High-need LEAs and Other LEAs. The State's primary elementary and secondary education funding formula, General State Aid (105 ILCS 5/18-8.05), and a separate supplemental grant based on poverty count address the need to provide equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs. The purpose of General State Aid is to provide general flexible state aid to schools. General State Aid represents approximately 62% of state funds for elementary and secondary education.

The General State Aid Formula is basically a foundation approach with three separate calculations, depending on the amount of property wealth of the local school district.

- The first formula is referred to as the "Foundation" formula. A significant provision of the General State Aid formula is the setting of foundation levels in statute and the guaranteed funding of those levels of support. The foundation level is $5,959 in Fiscal Year 2008-09. Most districts receive General State Aid under this formula. Districts qualifying for this formula have available local resources per pupil less than 93% of the foundation level.
- The second formula is the "Alternate" formula. Districts qualifying for this formula have available local resources per pupil of at least 93% but less than 175% of the foundation level.
- The third formula is the "Flat Grant" formula. Districts qualifying for this formula have available local resources per pupil of at least 175% of the foundation level.

The greater of the prior year best three months average daily attendance (B3MADA) or the average of this figure and the two prior years' B3MADA is used to calculate General State Aid. The formula calculation rates are 3.00% for unit districts, 2.30% for elementary districts and 1.05% for high school districts. These rates are used for formula calculation purposes only. There is no required tax rate for access to the formula. The Flat Grant in the formula is $218 per student.

The State Aid Formula has a mechanism to provide additional funding for the impact of poverty in the district. A separate supplemental grant is calculated based on the district's poverty count. It is incorporated within the GSA entitlement and allows additional funding for districts with any low-income students. The district concentration level (DCR) is determined by dividing the district's Department of Human Services (DHS) three-year average low-income count by the B3MADA. If the DCR is less than 15% then the district receives a flat grant of $355 per low-income student.

Otherwise, the following formula is used to calculate the poverty grant: [294.25 + (2700 (DCR)2)] X low-income count.

Within LEAs, Equitable Funding Between High-Poverty Schools and Other Schools. The School Code and ISBE administrative rules require LEAs to undertake planning and budgeting processes to address equitable funding between high-poverty schools and other

schools. For any school district with an average daily attendance of more than 1,000 and fewer than 50,000 pupils that qualifies for Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) (105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(H)(2.10), the district must submit a plan to the State Board annually that (i) identifies strategies for the improvement of instruction that give priority to meeting the educational needs of low-income students; and (ii) includes relevant budget information to describe the manner in which SGSA will be used to support strategies that give priority to meeting the educational needs of low-income students. 23 Ill. Adm. Code 203.10.

For school districts with an average daily attendance of 50,000 or more pupils (i.e., Chicago Public Schools), the district must submit an annual plan that details how SGSA is distributed by attendance center, and how other basic and categorical funds of the district are distributed to each attendance center. 23 Ill. Adm. Code 203.20. The district must certify to the State Board that through a process of review of school expenditure plans, the district has made a number of determinations, including that the plan components give, insofar as possible, priority to meeting the needs of low-income students, and the distribution of SGSA among attendance centers is not compensated for or contravened by adjustments of the total of other funds appropriated to any attendance center. (105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(H)(4)(b).) The State Superintendent must review the plan and expenditure reports under the plan to review compliance.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools *(40 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;

* * *

(F)(2) Illinois Reform Conditions

Ensuring Successful Conditions for High-Performing Charter Schools and Other Innovative Schools

Public Act 96-0105, signed into law in July 2009 by Governor Quinn, increases the total number of charter schools permitted in the State from 60 to 120: 70 in Chicago, 45 in the remainder of the State, and an additional 5 devoted exclusively to re-enrolled high school drop-outs. The Illinois Charter Schools Law is structured to establish separate caps in Chicago and in the remainder of the State. Since the Charter School Law's enactment in 1996, Chicago is the only area of the State where the cap has limited the establishment of charter schools. With the passage of Public Act 96-0105, Chicago now has a "high" cap, as defined in the Race to the Top review criteria, as under the cap, if filled, more than 10% of the total schools in Chicago would be charter schools. (There are currently 665 public schools in Chicago.) Outside of Chicago, the statutory cap has not been a barrier to charter school growth and the State stands ready to re-examine the cap if it becomes a barrier. Also, outside of Chicago, the Charter Schools Law has sufficient flexibility to permit an increase in the number of charter schools as if the cap were higher. In particular, outside of Chicago, the Charter Schools Law permits multiple campuses authorized under a single charter.

In addition to raising the charter school cap, P.A. 96-0105 establishes the Independent Charter School Authorizer Task Force for the purpose of studying the need, if any, for an independent charter school authorizer in Illinois. The Task Force, consisting of charter school experts and representatives of a broad variety of interest groups focused on charter school policy,

will make its recommendations for consideration by the Illinois General Assembly during the Spring 2010 legislative session.

Thirty-nine charter schools are currently operating in Illinois. The chart below lists the types of charter schools currently operating in Illinois.

Illinois Charter Schools	
Charter Schools: Grades Served	**Number of Charter Schools**
PreK-5	1
PreK-8	3
PreK-12	3
K-5	1
K-8	11
K-12	3
5-8	1
5-12	1
6-12	3
7-12	2
9-12	10

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

The extent to which—

* * *

(ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;

* * *

Charter schools in Illinois are governed by Section 27A of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*. Section 27A includes provisions governing how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. In order to establish a charter school, the charter school applicant must submit a proposal, in the form of a proposed contract between the local school board and the governing body of the charter school applicant to ISBE

and the local school board. This proposal must include, among other elements, a description of the: admission criteria; the goals, curriculum, objectives, and pupil performance standards to be achieved by the charter school; the plan for evaluating pupil performance, including the types of assessments to be employed; evidence that the proposed charter school is economically sound for both the charter school and the school district; and a description of the governance/operating structure of the proposed charter school.[53]

Upon receipt of this proposal, the local school board is responsible for reviewing the proposal and issuing a recommendation to ISBE either granting or denying the charter school application. As set forth in Section 27A-8 of the School Code, local school boards are instructed to give preference to proposals that:

- Demonstrate a high level of local pupil, parental, community, business, and school personnel support;
- Set rigorous levels of expected pupil achievement and demonstrate feasible plans for attaining those levels of achievement; and
- Are designed to enroll and serve a substantial proportion of at-risk children; provided that this consideration is not intended to limit or discourage the establishment of charter schools that serve other pupil populations.[54]

As demonstrated above, local school boards are encouraged to give preference to charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students. In addition, local school boards consider expected student achievement as a significant factor in the decision to approve or deny a charter school proposal.

Within 45 days of receipt of the charter school proposal, the local school board is required to host a public meeting to obtain information to help the board with its decision to either approve or deny the charter school proposal. After voting on the charter school proposal, the local school board then files a report to ISBE either approving or denying the proposal. ISBE then has 14 days after receiving the report from the local school board to determine whether the approved charter school proposal is consistent with the provisions of Section 27A of the School Code.[55] Charter schools are approved for a period of not less than 5 years and not more than 10 years.

In order to renew a charter, the charter school must submit a proposal to the local school board or ISBE, that includes:

- A report on the progress of the charter school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and other terms of the initial approved charter proposal; and
- A financial statement setting forth the costs of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school.[56]

As mentioned above, in renewing a charter, the local school board or ISBE uses student achievement as a significant factor in deciding whether the charter school's charter should be renewed.

The chartering entity, either ISBE or the local school board, has the power to close or not renew ineffective charter schools under Section 27A-9 of the School Code. Specifically, the chartering entity has the power to revoke or not renew charters upon clear showing that the charter school did any of the following or otherwise failed to comply with the requirements of Section 27A of the School Code:

- Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
- Failed to meet or make reasonable progress toward achievement of the content standards or pupil performance standards identified in the charter.
- Violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not exempted.[57]

Upon notice that the school's charter is subject to revocation, the charter school is given the opportunity to submit a proposal to rectify the problem and a corresponding timeline, which may not exceed 2 years. If the chartering entity finds that the charter school has failed to rectify the problem and adhere to the timeline submitted, then the school's charter will be revoked and the school will be closed. Except in the case of an emergency where the health, safety, or education of the charter school's students is at risk, the revocation and closure of the charter school will take place at the end of a school year.[58]

ISBE monitors and evaluates charter schools to ensure that the charter schools are accomplishing their missions and goals. Specifically, under Section 27A-12 of the Schools Code, ISBE is required to compile annual evaluations of charter schools from the local schools boards and prepare an annual report on charter schools for Illinois' General Assembly and the Governor. As part of this report, ISBE compares the performance of charter school pupils with the performance of ethnically and economically comparable groups of pupils on other public

schools who are enrolled in academically comparable courses.[59] In addition, ISBE provides periodic evaluation of charter schools that include evaluations of student academic achievement, the extent to which charter schools are accomplishing their missions and goals, the sufficiency of funding for charter schools, and the need for changes in the approval process for charter schools.[60]

ISBE has promulgated additional rules for charter schools, including rules related to the submission of reports from local school boards to ISBE regarding the application for, renewal of, or revocation of a charter school's charter and ISBE review of charter schools approved by local school boards.[61]

The chart below summarizes the charter school applications received by Illinois since SY 2004-05.

Charter School Applications Received by Illinois Since SY2004-2005					
Year	**SY 08-09**	**SY 07-08**	**SY 06-07**	**SY 05-06**	**SY 04-05**
No. charter school applications	9	8	14	9	37
No. charter school applications approved	5	5	11	1	4 new 3 renewal
No. charter school applications denied*	4 other; 1 financial	4 other	3 other	8 other	30 other; 1 financial
No. of charter schools closed, including not reauthorized to operate	2	1	0	0	1

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(2) <u>Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</u>
(40 points)
The extent to which—

* * *

(iii) The State's charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;

* * *

Illinois' charter schools receive equitable funding and a commensurate share of local, State and Federal revenue when compared to traditional public schools. Under Section 27A-11 of the School Code, Local Financing, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq*., charter school funding and service

agreements are not to be a financial incentive or disincentive to the establishment of a charter school.[62] Furthermore, charter school funding may not be less than 75% or more than 125% of the school district's per capita student tuition multiplied by the number of students residing in the district who are enrolled in the charter school.[63]

In addition, the Section 27A-11 of the School Code, the proportionate share of funds generated under federal or State categorical aid programs are directed to charter schools serving students eligible for that aid.[64] Charter schools may also receive, subject to the same restrictions applicable to school districts, any grant administered by ISBE that is available for school districts.[65]

The State also makes funding available to charter schools for start-up costs through the Charter Schools Revolving Loan Fund. This fund consists of federal funds, other funds as may be made available for costs associated with the establishment of charter schools in Illinois and amounts repaid by charter schools that have received a loan from this fund. ISBE uses this fund to provide interest-free loans to charter schools for the start-up costs of acquiring educational materials and supplies, textbooks, furniture and other equipment needed in the charter school's initial term and for acquiring and remodeling a suitable physical site, within the charter school's initial term.[66]

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools
(40 points)
The extent to which—

* * *

(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and

* * *

The State provides charter schools with funding and assistance with facilities acquisition through the following:

- The Charter Schools Revolving Loan Fund: As further described above in Section (F)(2)(iii), ISBE may provide loans from this fund to charter schools for the acquisition

and remodeling of a suitable physical school site, within the charter school's initial term.[67]

- Lease of School Building or Grounds from a School District: Under Section 27A-5, charter schools may contract with a school district for the use of a school building or grounds and the operation and maintenance thereof. A school district may, but is not required to, charge reasonable rent for the use of the district's buildings, grounds, or facilities. Chicago Public Schools enters into nominal value leases ($1.00) for charter schools to use the district's buildings. Any services for which a charter school contracts with a school district, local school board, or a State college or university or public community college must be provided by the applicable entity at cost.[68]
- Conversion and Use of School District Facilities: If a charter school is established by the conversion of an existing school, Section 27A-5(h) prohibits the local school district for charging rent to the charter school for the school space.[69]
- Capital Funding Available from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO): DCEO has provided funding to charter schools for school construction and related expenses. Recently, DCEO provided 148 million to 7 charter schools for school construction in Illinois.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools *(40 points)*

The extent to which—

* * *

(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

In addition to charter schools, Illinois law authorizes the use of contract schools, which serve as an innovative way of providing unique, quality educational opportunities outside the traditional and charter school contexts. A contract school is a school that is managed and operated by a for-profit or not-for-profit private entity retained by the board to provide instructional and other services to a majority of the pupils enrolled in the school.[70] Under Section 34.18(3) of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/34-18(30), Chicago Public Schools (CPS) may operate up to 30 contract schools and an additional 5 contract turnaround schools. Schools

that are on probation or that fail to make adequate progress in correcting their deficiencies after one year may be turned into a "contract turnaround" school.[71]

CPS has employed the use of contract schools as part of the Renaissance 2010 program, which began in 2004 with the goal of opening 100 new schools in Chicago by 2010. A particular goal of the Renaissance 2010 program is to open new schools in neighborhoods that historically have been served by under-performing schools and where few quality choice options have been available. The district nearly met the 100 school goal in 2009, and will exceed it when several new schools open for the 2010-11 school year. In order to reach this goal, CPS has established 15 contract schools, which are CPS schools that are operated for CPS by a private education management organization which provides the administration and the majority of the teachers in the school. Through the use of contract schools, CPS is reaching under-served communities and providing them with quality educational opportunities.

As the statute authorizing the use of contract turnaround schools did not become effective until July 30, 2009, CPS has not had the opportunity to implement this innovative new strategy in school turnaround, but plans on utilizing this new strategy in the future.

EVIDENCE: SEE NARRATIVE

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools *(40 points)*

Evidence for (F)(2)(i):

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in the State.
- The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State.

Evidence for (F)(2)(ii):

- A description of the State's approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- For each of the last five years:
  - The number of charter school applications made in the State.
  - The number of charter school applications approved.
  - The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).
  - The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).

Evidence for (F)(2)(iii):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the State's approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-

student funding allocations.

Evidence for (F)(2)(iv):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.

Evidence for (F)(2)(v):

- A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

RTTT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions *(5 points)*

The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.

Evidence for (F)(3):

- A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents.

(F)(3) Illinois Reform Conditions

Demonstrating Other Significant Reform Conditions

Illinois has been a leader in early childhood, through the creation in 2003 of the Illinois Early Learning Council and the subsequent expansion of its Preschool for All program. In addition to one of the largest preschool programs for 4-year-olds, Illinois serves a higher percentage of 3-year-olds than any other state, and also has extensive services for infants and toddlers. Preschool for All reinforces the goals of Race for the Top in numerous ways. Illinois requires its preschool teachers to have bachelor of arts degrees, specialized training, and certification, and the State's higher education institutions have been actively involved in increasing teacher quality. Illinois preschool programs are based on learning standards that will be revisited to align with the State's new Common Core Standards, to ensure that all children in Illinois have a thoughtful progression from early learning through college readiness. Illinois has developed a plan to begin designing a linked multi-agency early learning data system, and Illinois law requires that those efforts be connected to the longitudinal data system. In addition, Illinois already uses data aggressively to ensure that early learning program expansion prioritizes those areas of the State where resources for young children are most limited – a principle consistent with the idea of focusing resources on improving the lowest-performing schools.

VII. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Priority 1: Absolute Priority -- Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The State must demonstrate in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans; and it must describe how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.
The absolute priority cuts across the entire application and should not be addressed separately. It is assessed, after the proposal has been fully reviewed and evaluated, to ensure that the application has met the priority.

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). *(15 points, all or nothing)*

To meet this priority, the State's application must have a high-quality plan to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority in the text box below. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: One page

Priority 2: Illinois Response.

The Illinois application includes a comprehensive focus on the establishment of a rigorous course of study in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) for all students within Participating LEAs, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented

groups and women. As described in Section (B)(3) of the application, Programs of Study in key STEM Application Areas are a central component of the Illinois RTTT plan. Participating LEAs serving grades 9 through 12 must establish at least two Programs of Study promoting critical STEM application areas, and Race to the Top resources will be focused on expanding Programs of Study promoting critical STEM application areas. The model provides a wide set of highly flexible options for students to enter STEM-related pathways, especially for students that have not performed well in traditional science and math courses and other underrepresented groups in STEM fields, including women and minorities.

Illinois will use Race to the Top Fund funding to establish "STEM Learning Exchanges" through public-private partnerships modeled after a long-standing, successful model for Illinois agricultural education. STEM Learning Exchanges will include representatives from school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry experts, museums, research centers, and other community partners responsible for overseeing the grant. A separate STEM Learning Exchange will be developed nine critical STEM application areas (See Section (B)(3)). STEM Learning Exchanges will provide the curricular resources, assessments tools, professional development systems, and IT infrastructure necessary for LEAs to develop STEM-related Programs of Study in these application areas. Each STEM Learning Exchange will be housed on the cloud computing hosting infrastructure of the Learning and Performance Management System (see Section (C)(3)) to ensure that all Participating LEAs will have access to the software and curricular resources needed for effective instruction in the STEM disciplines.

Illinois' approach to STEM learning and career preparation and development provides a particularly strong platform for STEM education because it integrates and vertically aligns STEM standards at the elementary, middle school and high school levels that can be assessed across multiple ITEA application areas. The STEM Learning Exchanges will also play an important role in the State's efforts to increase the number of effective teachers teaching mathematics and science by providing externship programs offering educators real-world experience, and expanding the Illinois Math and Science Partnership Program to increase the math and science expertise of teachers in Participating LEAs.

Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes
(not scored)
The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (prekindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.
Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

(Enter text here.)

Illinois has a demonstrated commitment to improving educational outcomes for high-needs students who are young children. The State has been a leader in early childhood through the creation in 2003 of the Illinois Early Learning Council and expansion of its Preschool for All program. Illinois has one of the country's largest preschool programs for 4-year-olds, serves a higher percentage of 3-year-olds than any other state, and has extensive services for infants and toddlers. Consistent with the adoption of Common Core Standards, early learning and K-3 educators will be required to integrate and align professional development across early learning and grades K-3 using data provided through a kindergarten readiness assessment. The State will focus its efforts over the remainder of State Fiscal Year 2010 and during the first two years of the RTTT grant period in large part on establishing new capacities to assist LEAs with the adoption and implementation of Assessments for Learning during the first year of the RTTT grant period, including development and implementation of a kindergarten readiness measure for all Participating LEAs.

Data from the kindergarten readiness measure will be used to support alignment and create joint and integrated professional development across State-funded early learning programs and grades K-3 in Participating LEAs. Cross-sector discussions can improve teaching and practice in both areas, and ensure alignment of instruction and student supports to both the State's early learning content standards and the revised Learning Standards. Under the Participating LEA MOU, following development and piloting of the measure, Participating LEAs are expected to administer the kindergarten readiness measure and integrate and align professional

development across early learning and grades K-3. Given Illinois' national leadership and considerable investment in pre-kindergarten access and expansion, deployment of a kindergarten readiness measure is especially critical in Illinois to better understand the impact of early childhood education programs.

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems *(not scored)*

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to expand statewide longitudinal data systems to include or integrate data from special education programs, English language learner programs, early childhood programs, at-risk and dropout prevention programs, and school climate and culture programs, as well as information on student mobility, human resources (*i.e.*, information on teachers, principals, and other staff), school finance, student health, postsecondary education, and other relevant areas, with the purpose of connecting and coordinating all parts of the system to allow important questions related to policy, practice, or overall effectiveness to be asked, answered, and incorporated into effective continuous improvement practices.

The Secretary is also particularly interested in applications in which States propose working together to adapt one State's statewide longitudinal data system so that it may be used, in whole or in part, by one or more other States, rather than having each State build or continue building such systems independently.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.
Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Of paramount importance to Illinois' RTTT strategy is a State-School District partnership for development of a statewide Learning and Performance Management System (LPMS) that will allow LEAs, principals, teachers, and students to quickly access critical data and information, instructional tools, and resources that are central to the key reforms described in the State's application. Stakeholder consensus indicated that a "cloud" environment is necessary to allow LEAs to focus resources and effort on the use of data, rather than technology infrastructure, and to position the LPMS and its users for the next generation of information technology advancements. Through use of a cloud hosting infrastructure and a clearly defined, core set of data elements, the LPMS could in future years be expanded to serve other States.

Priority 5: Invitational Priority -- P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment *(not scored)*
The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to address how early childhood programs, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, workforce development organizations, and other State agencies and community partners (*e.g.*, child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice agencies) will coordinate to improve all parts of the education system and create a more seamless preschool-through-graduate school (P-20) route for students. Vertical alignment across P-20 is particularly critical at each point where a transition occurs (*e.g.*, between early childhood and K-12, or between K-12 and postsecondary/careers) to ensure that students exiting one level are prepared for success, without remediation, in the next. Horizontal alignment, that is, coordination of services across schools, State agencies, and community partners, is also important in ensuring that high-need students (as defined in this notice) have access to the broad array of opportunities and services they need and that are beyond the capacity of a school itself to provide.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.
Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Priority 5: Illinois Response.

Illinois is intensely focused on key P-20 transition points. The State has recently commenced operations of a P-20 Council consisting of representatives from the State's education, business, and civic communities. The Governor has charged the P-20 Council in part with assuring readiness and smooth transitions for children at each level of their education and cultivating and demonstrating accountability and efficiency in all school programs from pre-school to college. At the district level, Participating LEAs must provide intensive educator support for critical P-20 transition points that ensure professional development and educator collaboration aligned to this Plan's key objectives.

The following is a summary of key Illinois initiatives and programs described in this application that are specifically designed to address critical transitions. Collectively these programs reflect the State's commitment to alignment across the entire P-20 spectrum.

PreK to Kindergarten: As described in Priority 3 and Section (B)(3) of the application, Illinois will develop a kindergarten readiness assessment aligned to the Common Core Standards. Early learning and K-3 educators will be required to integrate and align professional

development across early learning and grades K-3 using data provided through a kindergarten readiness assessment.

Middle to High School: To address student transitions from middle school through postsecondary, the Participating LEAs have agreed to implement Programs of Study as a framework for high school reform, with specific requirements applicable to key Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) application areas. As specified in the MOU, LEA action to establish Programs of Study must include, *inter alia*, implementation of education and career guidance systems, in coordination with feeder middle schools, to provide students with the opportunity to develop long-term career and education plans.

Specifically at the middle school level, Participating LEAs serving grades 6 through 8 must (i) establish systems for educators to align curriculum with high schools and feeder middle schools to support Programs of Study implementation; and (ii) implement education and career guidance systems to provide students with the opportunity to develop career and education plans starting in middle school that align to a Program of Study model at the high school level. Implementing a comprehensive STEM talent pipeline will require elementary schools to participate in aligning curriculum and instruction and will be explored upon successful implementation of LEA requirements at the middle and high school level.

EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT are collectively known as the Educational Planning and Assessment System ("EPAS"). The State is committed to strengthening EPAS as a tool for Participating LEAs to address middle and high school alignment with college and work-ready expectations. Commencing in the 2010-11 school year, the State will require that Participating LEAs administer EXPLORE during 8th grade. Under the Participating LEA MOU, Participating LEAs must make a series of commitments revolving around EPAS, to (i) clearly communicate to students that a assessment scores are a predictor of the student's readiness for non-remedial coursework; (ii) establish systems for educators to discuss patterns and instructional needs identified through EPAS data; (iii) align school improvement activities and targeted student intervention systems across high schools and feeder elementary/middle schools; and (iv) create intensive instructional programs and student support services to increase the number of students prepared for non-remedial coursework.

High School to Post-Secondary: As specified in the Participating LEA MOU, high schools must form collaborative partnerships with postsecondary education institutions to

increase dual credit opportunities and develop structured programs to improve the transition to postsecondary education. These programs must include early identification of students who may need remedial assistance before transitioning, particularly in math, and programs to address the needs of these students before high school graduation. In addition, as an outgrowth of the State's participation in the American Diploma Project, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will adopt standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in public community colleges. ICCB, working with its member postsecondary institutions, will implement standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in advance of the 2011-12 School Year. IBHE has also pledged to work with its member postsecondary institutions to implement standardized ACT placement scores for credit-bearing coursework in the State's public universities. With standardized ACT placement scores "back-mapped" to corresponding EXPLORE and PLAN scores, LEAs will have the tools to measure and clearly communicate whether a student is on-track for credit-bearing postsecondary coursework as early as 8th grade.

Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning *(not scored)*

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State's participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) seek to create the conditions for reform and innovation as well as the conditions for learning by providing schools with flexibility and autonomy in such areas as—

(i) Selecting staff;

(ii) Implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year that result in increased learning time (as defined in this notice);

(iii) Controlling the school's budget;

(iv) Awarding credit to students based on student performance instead of instructional time;

(v) Providing comprehensive services to high-need students (as defined in this notice) (*e.g.*, by mentors and other caring adults; through local partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other providers);

(vi) Creating school climates and cultures that remove obstacles to, and actively support, student engagement and achievement; and

(vii) Implementing strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.
Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Priority 6: Illinois Response.

The State of Illinois has seized on Race to the Top as an opportunity to employ unique strategies to foster agreement by both the superintendent and local teachers' union leader to implement "bigger, bolder, faster" reforms in Illinois' lowest-performing schools, and to establish early proof points for the subsequent implementation of these reforms on the massive scale envisioned in Illinois' application. The State agreed to set-aside at least 10% of the 50% State Race to the Top allocation dedicated solely to those LEAs where both the LEA superintendent and local teachers' union leader agreed to three critical actions specified in Exhibit II of the Participating LEA MOU.

First, these Participating LEAs must agree to implement new teacher and principal evaluation systems meeting the requirements of this Plan by no later than the start of the 2011-12 school year (a year earlier than all other Participating LEAs) in their Priority Schools. Second, staffing autonomy must be provided to the site-based leadership of Illinois Priority Schools to enable them to establish an effective teaching staff as quickly as possible. Third, the Superintendent and teachers' union leader must agree to participate in the comprehensive State intervention framework, the Illinois Partnership Zone, and provide other autonomies necessary to enable implementation of the Illinois Partnership Zone model. To maintain eligibility for this funding set-aside, as part of their final LEA plan for Race to the Top funding (due 90 days after an award to the State), the LEA and its union must demonstrate agreement on all of these actions *and* include a negotiated waiver or other agreement providing flexibility from any inconsistent provisions in its collective bargaining agreement. The superintendent and union leader in twelve Participating LEAs, distributed across the State and including more than 128,000 public school students, have jointly agreed to undertake these aggressive reforms in 25 Illinois Priority Schools. Through the work of these "Super LEAs" and their union leadership, Illinois intends to serve as a national model for how bold reforms can be achieved in partnership with teacher unions.

Under Illinois' Participating LEA MOU, Participating LEAs with one or more "Illinois Priority Schools" [defined as: any school that falls within the bottom 5% of student achievement statewide (with the total number of schools in the State as the "denominator"), so that the turnaround commitments extends beyond just the "Tier I" and "Tier II" schools the State has

identified for Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant purposes] must, for all such schools, participate in the Illinois Partnership Zone. The Illinois Partnership Zone is a structured State initiative ensuring alignment to the turnaround, restart, or transformation models. Alternatively, such a Participating LEA may separately undertake one of the four school intervention models identified by the U.S. Department of Education.

Participants in the Illinois Partnership Zone must commit to undertaking a series of actions at the district- and school-level to ensure school interventions are combined with a robust human capital strategy. In addition, the Participating LEA MOU requires certain LEAs identified by ISBE as candidates for school district reorganization to carry out a reorganization analysis, as the closure of underperforming schools or implementation of a "restart" model may require fundamental change at the district level. Intervention models deployed in Illinois Priority Schools must be comprehensive and address all of the "Transformation Criteria" identified in **Appendix E2-2**, which target (1) School culture and climate; (2) Developing teacher and school leader effectiveness; (3) Comprehensive instructional reform strategies; (4) Extended learning time; and (5) Providing operating flexibility. Participating LEAs will be required to coordinate with Lead Partners to ensure appropriate and adequate autonomy over staff and leadership hiring, curriculum and instruction, scheduling, and budget in order to address each of the "Transformation Criteria"

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[1] Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), Pub. Act No. 96-0861 (2010).
[2] 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3.
[3] North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement website, http://www.ncacasi.org (last visited January 18, 2010).
[4] See Exhibit I, Section (I)(A) of the Participating LEA MOU (Appendix A1-1).
[5] *Id.*
[6] *Id*.
[7] *Id.*
[8] *Id.*
[9] Supports provided through Race to the Top funding will not be used for any portions of the EPAS assessments or WorkKeys assessments incorporated into the PSAE or otherwise used for State and federal accountability purposes. None of the assessment strategies described in this Plan will constitute State summative assessments applicable to all LEAs.
[10] ACT, *How ACT and Common Core Align*, 5 (November 2009).
[11] See the Participating LEA MOU (Appendix A1-1).
[12] ACT, *Benefits of the National Career Readiness Certificate*, http://www.act.org/certificate/benefits.html (last visited January 18, 2010).
[13] *Id*.
[14] V.E. Lee & D.T. Burkam, *Inequality at the Starting Gate: Social Background Differences in Achievement as Children Begin School*, Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute (2002).
[15] See Exhibit I, Section (3)(D) of the Participating LEA MOU (Appendix A1-1).
[16] In 1986, after the Illinois General Assembly legislated that a comprehensive program for agricultural education be created and maintained for the public school system (*see* 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80), the Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education (ICAE) was formed with representation from school districts, postsecondary institutions, businesses, and other community partners. ICAE has developed extensive curriculum resources, consisting of over 600 lesson plans, provides statewide professional development conferences and local hands-on workshops, and supports on-site technical assistance in each high school offering an agricultural program to strengthen and expand the school's agriculture education offerings.
[17] PERA, Pub. Act No. 96-0861 (creating a new 105 ILCS 5/24A-20(a)(10); (b)).
[18] For a detailed description of the transformation in business, see, generally, Nicholas Carr, *The Big Switch: Rewiring the World, from Edison to Google*, W.W. Norton & Company (2009).
[19] 105 ILCS 5/21-5(b).
[20] *Id*.
[21] *Id*.
[22] *Id*.
[23] 105 ILCS 5/21-5(c).
[24] *Id*.
[25] *Id*.
[26] *Id*.
[27] *Id*.
[28] 105 ILCS 5/21-11.4.
[29] *Id*.
[30] *Id*.
[31] 105 ILCS 5/21-5(d).
[32] *Id.*
[33] 105 ILCS 5/21-5(e).
[34] *Id*.
[35] *Id*
[36] 105 ILCS 5/2-3.11(c).
[37] The New Teacher Project, *The Widget Effect* (2009) [hereinafter "The New Teacher Project"], http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect.pdf (last visited January 18, 2010).
[38] Section 10(b) of the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act, 115 ILCS 5/10, states, inter alia: "The parties to the collective bargaining process shall not effect or implement a provision in a collective bargaining agreement if the

implementation of that provision would be in violation of, or inconsistent with, or in conflict with any statute or statutes enacted by the General Assembly of Illinois."

[39] Consortium on Chicago School Research, *Evaluation of the Excellence in Teaching Project: Year One Report to the Joyce Foundation* (2009), http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/Joyce_TE_yr1_finaldoc.pdf (last visited January 18, 2010).

[40] *Id.* at 14.

[41] The New Teacher Project, *supra* note 37, at 11.

[42] See Illinois Education Research Council website, http://ierc.siue.edu (last visited January 18, 2010).

[43] Matthew Lyons, *The Impact of Title I "Comparability" in Illinois School Districts: An Examination of Within-District Funding Disparities*, 7 (May 4, 2009).

[44] Bradford R. White, Jennifer B. Presley, and Karen J. DeAngelis, *Leveling Up: Narrowing the Teacher Academic Capital Gap in Illinois;* Illinois Education Research Council, Policy Research Report: IERC 2008-1, 2.

[45] *Id*. at 5.

[46] Barnett Berry, Melissa Rasberry, and Alice Williams, *Recruiting and Retaining Quality Teachers for High-Need Schools: Insights from NBCT Summits and Other Policy Initiatives*, 4.

[47] Ill. Admin. Code 23, § 27.10, *et seq.*

[48] Two-year induction and mentoring programs, in particular, have been found to have a significant impact on student achievement. *See* New Teacher Center, Chicago, Powerpoint, *CNTC-CPS Partnership Overview, Growth of Intensive Teacher Induction Services*, 7-8, 10 (December 30, 2009).

[49] Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois Fourth in Nation with More than 730 Achieving Highest Teaching Credentials in 2009*, http://www.isbe.net/news/2009/dec16.htm (last visited January 18, 2010).

[50] 105 ILCS 5/2-3.66b(f).

[51] HB 2448 permits the establishment of "remote educational programs" tailored to individual student learning needs, under the supervision of a responsible adult.

[52] 105 ILCS 5/2-3.66b(f).

[53] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(7).

[54] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(8).

[55] *Id*.

[56] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(9).

[57] *Id*.

[58] *Id*.

[59] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(12).

[60] *Id*.

[61] 23 IL Admin. Code 1, § 650.30.

[62] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(11).

[63] *Id*.

[64] *Id*.

[65] *Id*.

[66] *Id*.

[67] *Id*.

[68] 105 ILCS 5/27(A)(5).

[69] *Id*.

[70] 105 ILCS 5/34-1.1.

[71] 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3.