

**Race to the Top**  
**Application for Initial Funding**  
CFDA Number: 84.395A



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Washington, D.C. 20202  
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**APPLICATION FOR INITIAL FUNDING UNDER RACE TO THE TOP**

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Dear Colleague:

On July 24, President Obama and I released the proposed priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund. That announcement precipitated a vigorous national dialogue about how to best reform our schools and educate our Nation's children. With your assistance, that dialogue is beginning to generate far-reaching reforms that will help America boost student learning, narrow achievement gaps, and increase college and career readiness. Today, the U.S. Department of Education is releasing the final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, along with the application for the Race to the Top competition.

Race to the Top provides an unprecedented opportunity to reform our schools and challenge an educational status quo that is failing too many children. President Obama and Congress have provided more money for school reform than ever before in history. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to change our schools and accelerate student achievement. And everyone committed to education reform can be partners in promoting the success of our children.

Through Race to the Top, we are asking States to advance reforms around four specific areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

Awards in Race to the Top will go to States that are leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform. Race to the Top winners will help trail-blaze effective reforms and provide examples for States and local school districts throughout the country to follow as they too are hard at work on reforms that can transform our schools for decades to come.

The momentum for reform is already building. Some 1,161 commenters submitted thousands of unique comments, ranging from one paragraph to 67 pages. Educators and members of the public from every State and the District of Columbia submitted comments, and the commenters included parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, chief state school officers, and governors. This outpouring of thoughtful input prompted the Department to make numerous changes and improvements to the final application. But just as important, the overwhelming volume of comments demonstrates the potential for Race to the Top to propel the transformational changes that students and teachers need.

I hope this process becomes a model – one where transparent and candid dialogue informs our policies and your work, enabling all stakeholders to act in the best interests of children. I am heartened by and grateful for your participation to date. And I invite you to continue that conversation as we move forward in the effort to build an education system that our students deserve, one that ensures that our country is ready to compete in the global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Sincerely,

/s/

Arne Duncan

## I. APPLICATION INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

### **Introduction**

Race to the Top is authorized under section 14006 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The purpose of the Race to the Top Fund, a competitive grant program, is to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers; and implementing ambitious plans in four core education reform areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

### **General Instructions**

The Department encourages all potential applicants to read through the entire application package – including the notice inviting applications; the notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria; and this application – before beginning to prepare the application proposal.

This application includes sections that require response or action by the State, as well as several sections of background information that are directly relevant to the program. For example, Section II includes definitions that are used throughout the application.

### **Page Length Recommendation**

The Department recommends a page length for the State's response to each selection criterion; these are indicated in the application next to each criterion. We recommend that States limit their total page count (that is, the narrative responses to all selection criteria in Section VI) to no more than 100 pages of State-authored text, and that they limit their appendices to no more than 250 pages. For all responses, we request that the following standards be used:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Each page has a page number.
- Line spacing for the narratives is set to 1.5 spacing, and the font used is 12 point Times New Roman.

The Secretary strongly requests that applicants follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretary will consider applications of greater length.

## **Instructions for Responding to Selection Criteria**

The application provides space for the State to address the selection criteria, including performance measures and supporting evidence. As required by the Absolute Priority (explained in more detail below), the State must address all education reform areas. It need not address every individual selection criterion. However, a State will not earn points for selection criteria that it does not address. There are two types of selection criteria – State Reform Conditions Criteria and Reform Plan Criteria—to which the State may respond.

**State Reform Conditions Criteria** are used to assess a State’s progress and its success in creating conditions for reform in specific areas related to the four ARRA education reform areas. The State must provide, for each State Reform Conditions Criterion addressed, a description of the State’s current status in meeting that criterion, and at a minimum, the information requested as supporting evidence that the State has met the criterion. The State may also submit additional information that it believes will be helpful to reviewers in judging the criterion.

**Reform Plan Criteria** are used to assess a State’s plan for future efforts in the four ARRA education reform areas. The State must provide, for each Reform Plan Criterion that the State chooses to address, a detailed plan for use of grant funds that includes, but need not be limited to—

- The key goals;
- The key activities to be undertaken and rationale for the activities, which should include why the specific activities are thought to bring about the change envisioned and how these activities are linked to the desired goals;
- The timeline for implementing the activities;
- The party or parties responsible for implementing the activities;
- The State’s annual targets for this plan, where applicable, with respect to the performance measures, if any. Where the State proposes plans for reform efforts not covered by a specified performance measure, the State may propose performance measures and annual targets for those efforts; and
- The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, for the criterion, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to reviewers in judging the credibility of the State’s plan.

**Responding to Selection Criteria:** For each criterion, there are up to three parts: the narrative, the performance measures, and the evidence.

- **Narrative:** For each criterion the State addresses, the State writes its narrative response in the text box below the selection criterion (in the space marked, “Enter text here”). In this space, the State describes how it has addressed or will address that criterion. Response lengths are indicated in the directions.
- **Performance Measures:** For several selection criteria, the State is asked to provide goals and annual targets, baseline data, and other information; these are indicated in the application. In addition, the State may provide additional performance measures, baseline data, and targets for any criterion it chooses. Reviewers will consider, as part of their evaluations of the State’s application, the extent to which the State has set ambitious yet achievable annual targets for the performance measures in support of the State’s plan.

Tables for all of the performance measures are provided in the application. For criteria to which a State is responding, the State must complete the tables or provide an attachment in the Appendix responding to the performance measures. If there are data the State does not have, the State should indicate that the data are not available and explain why.

Some data elements may require States to collect information from participating LEAs. It may be helpful to begin gathering this information as early as possible (see especially criteria (A)(1), (D)(2), and (D)(3)).

To minimize burden, performance measures have been requested only where the Department intends to report nationally on them and for measures that lend themselves to objective and comparable data gathering. In the future, the Department may require grantees to submit additional performance data as part of an annual report, program evaluation, or other mechanism.

For optional performance measures, no submission of the measures is required; however if the State wishes to include performance measures in these optional cases, it may use the templates provided in the application or it may submit attachments.

- **Evidence:** Some selection criteria require the State to provide specific evidence; this is indicated in the application. In addition, the State may provide additional evidence for any criterion it chooses.

The State must provide the evidence in the narrative text below each selection criterion or provide an attachment in the Appendix.

**Appendix:** The Appendix must include a complete Table of Contents. Each attachment in the Appendix must be described in the narrative text of the relevant selection criterion, with a rationale for how its inclusion supports the narrative and a notation of its location in the Appendix.

**Competition Priorities:** The Race to the Top competition includes absolute, competitive, and invitational priorities. The competition priorities can be found in Section VII of this application. The absolute priority will be addressed under State Success Factors, section A, and through the State's comprehensive approach to addressing the four education reform areas, selection criteria sections B, C, D and E. A State that is responding to the competitive preference 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 priority in Section VII. Applicants responding to the invitational priorities may address them throughout their applications or in the text boxes below each priorities in Section VII. Responding to the competitive and invitational priorities is optional.

#### **Competition Description and Scoring Rubric**

For information on the competition review and selection process, see (a) the section entitled, Review and Selection Process, in the notice inviting applications; and (b) Section XI, Scoring Rubric (Appendix B in the notice). In addition, point values have been included throughout the application.

### **Technical Assistance Planning Workshops**

To assist States in preparing the application and to respond to questions, the Department intends to host two Technical Assistance Planning Workshops for potential applicants prior to the Phase 1 application submission deadline. The purpose of the workshops would be for Department staff to review the selection criteria, requirements, and priorities with teams of participants responsible for drafting State applications, as well as for Department staff to answer technical questions about the Race to the Top program. The Department plans to release more details regarding the workshops in late November. The Department also intends to host at least one Technical Assistance Planning Workshop for potential applicants prior to the Phase 2 application submission deadline. Updates about all events will be available at the Race to the Top website [www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop](http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop). Attendance at the workshops is strongly encouraged. For those who cannot attend, transcripts of the meetings will be available on our website. Announcements of any other conference calls or webinars and Frequently Asked Questions will also be available on the Race to the Top website [www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop](http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop).

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

The Department has also prepared frequently asked questions in order to assist States in completing an application. Frequently Asked Questions are available at [www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop](http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop).

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Alternative routes to certification** means pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations, that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English language learners<sup>1</sup> and student with disabilities): (a) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (b) are selective in accepting candidates; (c) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (d) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (e) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

**College enrollment** refers to the enrollment of students who graduate from high school consistent with 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1) and who enroll in an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act, P.L. 105-244, 20 U.S.C. 1001) within 16 months of graduation.

**Common set of K-12 standards** means a set of content standards that define what students must know and be able to do and that are substantially identical across all States in a consortium. A State may supplement the common standards with additional standards, provided that the additional standards do not exceed 15 percent of the State's total standards for that content area.

**Effective principal** means a principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, as well as evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement.

**Effective teacher** means a teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

**Formative assessment** means assessment questions, tools, and processes that are embedded in instruction and are used by teachers and students to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning.

**Graduation rate** means the four-year or extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as defined by 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1).

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<sup>1</sup> The term English language learner, as used in this notice, is synonymous with the term limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the ESEA

**Highly effective principal** means a principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates; college enrollment rates; evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement; or evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high numbers of effective teachers.

**Highly effective teacher** means a teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

**High-minority school** is defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

**High-need LEA** means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

**High-need students** means students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools (as defined in this notice), who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English language learners.

**High-performing charter school** means a charter school that has been in operation for at least three consecutive years and has demonstrated overall success, including (a) substantial progress in improving student achievement (as defined in this notice); and (b) the management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school.

**High-poverty school** means, consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

**High-quality assessment** means an assessment designed to measure a student's knowledge, understanding of, and ability to apply, critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats (*e.g.*, open-ended responses, performance-based tasks). Such assessments should enable measurement of student achievement (as defined in this notice) and student growth (as defined in this notice); be of high technical quality (*e.g.*, be valid, reliable, fair, and aligned to

standards); incorporate technology where appropriate; include the assessment of students with disabilities and English language learners; and to the extent feasible, use universal design principles (as defined in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 3002) in development and administration.

**Increased learning time** means using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for (a) instruction in core academic subjects, including English; reading or English-language arts ; mathematics; science; foreign languages; civics and government; economics; arts; history; and geography; (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.<sup>2</sup>

**Innovative, autonomous public schools** means open enrollment public schools that, in return for increased accountability for student achievement (as defined in this notice), have the flexibility and authority to define their instructional models and associated curriculum; select and replace staff; implement new structures and formats for the school day or year; and control their budgets.

**Instructional improvement systems** means technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in this notice), interim assessments (as defined in this notice), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in this notice) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

**Interim assessment** means an assessment that is given at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year, is designed to evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic standards, and produces results that can be aggregated (e.g., by course, grade level, school, or LEA) in order to inform teachers and administrators at the student, classroom, school, and LEA levels.

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<sup>2</sup> Research supports the effectiveness of well-designed programs that expand learning time by a minimum of 300 hours per school year. (See Frazier, Julie A.; Morrison, Frederick J. "The Influence of Extended-year Schooling on Growth of Achievement and Perceived Competence in Early Elementary School." *Child Development*. Vol. 69 (2), April 1998, pp.495-497 and research done by Mass2020.) Extending learning into before- and after-school hours can be difficult to implement effectively, but is permissible under this definition with encouragement to closely integrate and coordinate academic work between in-school and out-of school. (See James-Burdumy, Susanne; Dynarski, Mark; Deke, John. "When Elementary Schools Stay Open Late: Results from The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program." <[http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/redirect\\_PubsDB.asp?strSite=http://epa.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/29/4/296](http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/redirect_PubsDB.asp?strSite=http://epa.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/29/4/296)> Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 29 (4), December 2007, Document No. PP07-121.)

**Involved LEAs** means LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State’s plan that necessitate full or nearly-full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State’s grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State’s Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State’s application.

**Low-minority school** is defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

**Low-poverty school** means, consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the lowest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

**Participating LEAs** means LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State’s Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA’s agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State’s grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA’s relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State’s other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State’s plan.

**Persistently lowest-achieving schools** means, as determined by the State: (i) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (i) The academic achievement of the “all students” group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State’s assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/English-language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) The school’s lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group.

**Rapid-time**, in reference to reporting and availability of locally-collected school- and LEA-level data, means that data are available quickly enough to inform current lessons, instruction, and related supports.

**Student achievement** means—

(a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) a student’s score on the State’s assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

(b) For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

**Student growth** means the change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

**Total revenues available to the State** means either (a) projected or actual total State revenues for education and other purposes for the relevant year; or (b) projected or actual total State appropriations for education and other purposes for the relevant year.

**America COMPETES Act elements** means (as specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of that Act): (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

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

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Tim Pawlenty	Applicant's Mailing Address: Office of the Governor 130 State Capitol St. Paul, MN 55155
Employer Identification Number: 41-6007162	Organizational DUNS: 933561318
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Chas Anderson	Contact Position and Office: Deputy Commissioner Minnesota Department of Education
Contact Telephone: 651-582-8207	Contact E-mail Address: chas.anderson@state.mn.us
<p>Required Applicant Signatures:</p> <p>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.</p> <p>I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:</p>	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Tim Pawlenty	Telephone: 651-296-3391
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Alice Seagren	Telephone: 651-582-8206
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:	Date:
President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): Not Applicable	Telephone: Not Applicable
Signature of the President of the State Board of Education: Not Applicable	Date: Not Applicable

**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):  
James Patrick Barone, Assistant Attorney General

Telephone:  
(651) 757-1203

Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative:

Date:

#### 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](http://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): Commissioner Tom Hanson	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:

## V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A State must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible to receive funds under this program.

### **Eligibility Requirement (a)**

The State's applications for funding under Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program must be approved by the Department prior to the State being awarded a Race to the Top grant.

*The Department will determine eligibility under this requirement before making a grant award.*

### **Eligibility Requirement (b)**

At the time the State submits its application, there are no 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.

*The certification of the Attorney General addresses this requirement. The applicant may provide explanatory information, if necessary. The Department will determine eligibility under this requirement.*

(Enter text here.)

## VI. SELECTION CRITERIA: PROGRESS AND PLANS IN THE FOUR EDUCATION REFORM AREAS

### (A) State Success Factors (125 total points)

#### (A)(1) Articulating 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)
- (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)<sup>3</sup> 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
- (iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix D for more on participating LEA MOUs and for a model MOU.

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

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion, as well as projected goals as described in (A)(1)(iii). The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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

- An example of the State's standard Participating LEA MOU, and description of variations used, if any.
- 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).

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).
- 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.

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).

*Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages (excluding tables)*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Minnesota's education system is at a critical juncture.** We are doing well, yet we must do better. We are ready to succeed and we know what it takes, yet we haven't had this type of opportunity to target funding and reform to dramatically improve student achievement. A Race to the Top grant would accelerate our proven ability to transform our system and increase our country's standing on the world stage.

***We are doing well.*** As a state, we have a track record of strong achievement. Minnesota's fourth graders outperformed 47 other states in mathematics on the 2009 NAEP. Our ACT scores have been the highest in the nation for the past six years (2004-2009) among states where the majority of high school graduates took the test. And, as a TIMSS "mini-nation," Minnesota consistently outperforms the national average and has posted some of the strongest gains in math in the world since 1995 (*see Appendices (A)(1) – Exhibit A and (A)(3) – Exhibits A and C*). Our graduation and proficiency rates are among the highest in the nation, and our expertise in STEM, standards and other topics is often sought by other states. But, if we aspire to continue to be a "lighthouse state," serving as an example to the nation...

***We must do better.*** Despite our high achievement in aggregate, we have a persistent achievement gap between minority and non-minority students and between high-poverty and low-poverty students. Without swifter progress, this gap will continue to threaten the economic well-being of our state. Based on the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education's 2008 "Knocking at the College Door" report, Minnesota expects significant growth in our minority populations over the next 10 years. Our Hispanic population will grow 160 percent and our Black population will grow 57 percent. These populations have the state's lowest graduation rates at close to 40 percent. The shifting demographics give this critical challenge an even greater sense of urgency. Now is the time for us to push further, to lead the way, and to advance our reform agenda in line with Race to the Top.

***We are ready to succeed.*** We have never shied away from high expectations for all students. When many states were lowering their

standards under pressure from NCLB, we raised ours as a matter of principle, with higher standards for students and supports for teachers and students to reach those standards. We even raised standards and expectations in the core subject that is traditionally the weakest for students – math. Research has shown that math, particularly Algebra I, is a gatekeeper subject for students seeking a post-secondary education or high-wage career. Minnesota resolved to undertake a STEM initiative to provide math experiences for all students to ensure that math is an enabler for future success and not the barrier it can be for many students. Minnesota understands that the achievement gap will not close without tackling STEM equity. As the world demands more advanced math and science skills from graduates, Minnesota has responded by raising standards, adding rigor, and launching a comprehensive STEM program. As of 2006, Minnesota requires that all eighth graders take Algebra I; Algebra II is required for graduation. The improvements we have seen in student achievement, especially in math, have been worth the effort. Beyond STEM, reforms that other states are still considering have been commonplace in Minnesota for years. Statewide school choice, alternative compensation, and a supportive charter-school environment are just a few that create an unparalleled environment for Race to the Top.

***We know what it takes.*** Our experience in leading reform over the past 20 years makes Minnesota uniquely positioned to maximize the impact of Race to the Top. We were the first state in the nation to support college credit while in high school as part of our Post Secondary Education Options funding. We were first in the nation to pass a charter school law. And we continue to lead with important innovations, most recently in policies related to the replication of high-quality charter schools and authorizer accountability, performance-based compensation and job-embedded professional development for teachers focused on increasing student achievement, and high-quality, rigorous standards for all students. We know the challenges and complexities of scaling up programs. We have seen the power of extensive collaboration among districts, unions and whole communities to drive true change. Our standards adoption process, for example, includes educators and business leaders alike, leading to broadly supported and rigorous standards. We also know how important it is to learn throughout the implementation of a reform, and applications for the Q Comp improve year over year. The enhancements required in our Race to the Top strategy are built upon the robust learning of the last few

years.

A network of support will be critical to bring reform to reality. That is why our proposal reflects a broad range of P-20 Education stakeholders who have a history of involvement in reform in Minnesota against a range of educational issues and students (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit B*). Stakeholders were extensively involved in the development of this proposal, along with scores of education organizations, non-profits, businesses, and community leaders who have pledged their support of our Race to the Top commitment.

Race to the Top has provided the opportunity to develop a comprehensive, collaborative reform agenda for the state. It will provide the resources to implement our plan and to dramatically improve student outcomes in our state. With Race to the Top...

**We will get results.**

***Minnesota is the only state with a broad teacher support, development, and evaluation system linked to compensation. We will strengthen and expand it.*** Minnesota's Q Comp program, enacted by the legislature in 2005, provides significant funding to support LEAs in reforming traditional steps and lanes. Compensation is linked to student outcomes, to job-embedded and data-based professional development, to evaluation for teachers, and to career pathways. This program has already been adopted by LEAs serving over 30 percent of our students. It is supported by Education Minnesota (the state teacher's union) and Randi Weingarten, national AFT/UFT President. Based on all that has been learned from LEAs and external reports during implementation to date, LEAs participating in Race to the Top will be required to take Q Comp to the next level of rigor and comprehensiveness. By Fall 2012, Minnesota teachers, serving 93.5 percent of Minnesota's students, will no longer be on a traditional salary schedule, will be better supported, and will be more rigorously evaluated.

***Minnesota has an unrivaled environment for charter schools. We will enhance that environment to reflect and replicate high quality.*** Minnesota is the birthplace of charter schools. Since the first charter school opened in St. Paul, we have led the way for the

nation. Our environment was given an “A” grade by The Center for Education Reform “2009 Race To The Top For Charter Schools” report for “strong, rigorous, charter laws” -- one of only three states to earn that designation. We provide open enrollment, equitable funding, and have no cap on the number of charters in the state. Like other states, however, our charter school performance varies. However, we significantly revamped our charter authorizer rules in 2009 to provide for closure of low-performing schools. Given these improvements, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools recently ranked our charter law 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation, stating “If we had released these rankings last year, Minnesota would probably not have been at the top. Although it has long been recognized as having a good law, it enacted several changes this year to strengthen school and authorizer accountability proposed by charter advocates that vaulted it to #1” (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit C*). Furthermore, our strategy provides for the expansion and replication of successful charters in Minnesota. In the next few years, our unrivaled *environment* for charter schools will be known for unrivaled *quality* as well.

***Minnesota’s major metro districts are already taking action. We will help drive and support their aligned strategies.*** Minneapolis took the bold step in 2007 of developing a long-term strategy to improve student achievement, much of which is aligned with Race to the Top reforms. The district developed plans to turn around the bottom 25 percent of schools, closed and re-structured a number of district schools, developed rigorous principal evaluations, partnered with The New Teacher Project to set aggressive staffing improvement goals, and worked with outside experts to conduct school audits (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit D, pages 7-12*). Minneapolis also has a nationally recognized Peer Assistance and Review program, has implemented the nationally-recognized Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in a number of struggling schools, and has an approved district-wide Q Comp plan on file with MDE. Similarly, St. Paul re-designed a number of struggling schools and has developed targeted teacher recruitment initiatives in high-need subject areas targeted at the lowest-performing schools, and has been awarded an AFT Innovation Fund Grant for its proposed CareerTeacher grow-your-own approach to teacher recruitment and preparation. The recent contract agreement reached in St. Paul includes full spectrum Peer Assistance and Review and some language modeled after the recently adopted New Haven, CT

agreement. These districts have momentum. Race to the Top will be their accelerator.

***Minnesota has maintained and raised nation-leading academic standards for all students. We will not diverge from the long, enduring road of implementation.*** Our past success in developing and supporting more rigorous math and science standards and our focus and success with STEM will serve us well as we prepare for even better student outcomes. We know how to effectively translate new standards into the classroom and work with teachers to support their practice in meeting rigorous standards. As we adopt the common core standards, we expect even more success in math and science and significant gains in a broader set of subject areas.

***Minnesota leads the nation in setting a comprehensive P-20 STEM agenda. We will now move STEM into full implementation.*** Our STEM agenda started with changing graduation standards and aligning assessments to reflect the requirement of Algebra II, Chemistry or Physics, and exposure to Engineering Design process and technology standards. These have been complemented by awareness and engagement activities such as STEM summits, forums, career fairs and competitions. We have taken an integrated approach to STEM, recognizing that it is not simply about more scientists, nurses, and mathematicians, but about making all students throughout the state more science, math, engineering, and technology savvy by integrating those subjects throughout a student's career. Now we will continue the work of intense professional development and curricular frameworks for teachers on the STEM subjects along with training focused on content knowledge and instruction as well as and 24/7 online professional development to bring STEM alive in the classroom. We will drive progress toward STEM equity goals with STEM data dashboards, grants for engaging turnaround schools in STEM co-curricular events and STEM internships and jobs. Further, we will leverage the deep partnerships we have throughout the state committed to our STEM agenda.

***Minnesota recognizes the importance of high-quality teacher preparation programs. We are already driving innovation.*** Through a \$40 million grant from the Bush Foundation, 11 Minnesota and three out of state teacher preparation programs, which supply a majority of Minnesota's new teachers, have committed to producing over 25,000 effective teachers (defined as realizing at least one grade level of growth per year with each student) over the next decade through unprecedented improvements in performance and

performance tracking of their graduates. These improvements include higher recruitment standards, a more innovative and experience-based preparation model, partnerships with neighboring P-20 school districts to place teaching graduates, and an unprecedented 3-5 years of support for teachers by their preparation program after entering the classroom. Through this effort, Minnesota will be well-prepared for the wave of teacher retirements expected in the next decade. Further, student performance measures and classroom teacher effectiveness measures have been recommended by the Minnesota Board of Teaching for inclusion in a multiple measures program approval process for teacher preparation programs.

***Minnesota has a robust education data set available and teachers and leaders who want to use it. We will use it to drive continuous improvement and academic achievement.*** Across the state, stakeholders compliment the data we have, but want it more readily available and easier to use. We will make that a reality with extensive enhancements to our P-20 longitudinal data system, our Educator portal, expanded interfaces for a range of stakeholders, support for teachers in utilizing data, and regular review, analysis, and publication of critical data to drive decisions at every level – from the classroom to the Capitol.

***Minnesota has schools that are struggling. We will pull out the stops to turn them around.*** Our comprehensive plan to address our persistently lowest-achieving schools will provide schools with an unprecedented level of support and expertise that will ensure they transform and lead the way for future systemic improvements. Additional job-embedded professional development, extended day, turnaround-specific training for teachers and principals, involvement of educational leadership that represents the diversity of our schools, and state oversight and expertise through the Office of Turnaround Schools give these schools the best opportunity they have had to dramatically improve student achievement. They will also serve as role models as Minnesota applies what we will learn more broadly.

***Minnesota will elevate and enhance the teaching and principal profession by providing an integrated support and evaluation system.*** Every ounce of credit for the achievement we see in Minnesota rests with our teachers and principal leaders. Race to the Top represents an opportunity to elevate the profession systemically through improved teacher and principal preparation programs, greater

support through induction, ongoing evaluation linked to professional development through enhanced Q Comp, Peer Assistance and Review for teachers and principals who are either struggling or who wish to build on their strengths, tiered licensure linked to multiple measures of effectiveness, and principals trained and supported to be better instructional leaders. Exceptional teachers and principals in Minnesota will have more of what they need to help them do what brought them to teaching in the first place – ensuring that all students receive an excellent education.

**Over the next 5 years, Minnesota will have risen to today’s challenge...**

- ¶ 10,000 effective new teachers (realizing one or more years of student growth per year) will be prepared through revamped teacher preparation programs
- ¶ 9500 new teachers will enter the profession through a robust induction model
- ¶ 47,704 teachers will succeed with an integrated model of support, evaluation, and licensure, and 4,467 teachers will have received intensive support to address areas of struggle or to build on existing strengths
- ¶ 1,930 principals (close to 100 percent of all the principals in the state) will take part in an intensive nationally-recognized development experience
- ¶ 782,000 students will benefit from regular interim assessments aligned to high standards and teachers will benefit from the skills and tools to make the most of the data
- ¶ 35 of our most struggling schools will be turned around
- ¶ Teachers, principals, administrators, parents, and community members will have data at their fingertips to understand what’s working and why

**Those efforts will have a statewide impact...** Our proposed development process was designed to ensure that the areas of greatest need in the state are active participants in shaping and participating in our Race to the Top application. As the tables below indicate, both Minneapolis and St. Paul -- our two major urban systems -- will be a part of our effort as will many Greater Minnesota districts facing rural poverty. While some of the reforms proposed in our application were too bold for some districts, we are excited about the range and large percentage of participating districts. These “ready districts” will lead Minnesota toward and beyond the tipping point of this transformative change.

Taken together, Minnesota’s Race to the Top strategy will involve LEAs that support 93 percent of the state’s students, 93 percent of our Free or Reduced Lunch students, 93 percent of our below proficient students, and 96 percent of our minority students. We will also leverage the diversity of insight and approach here in Minnesota as our effort includes 68 percent of our charter schools as well as some of our highest-performing districts whose insights have proven invaluable to us in the past.

Against the goals outlined, Minnesota will provide statewide improvement based on new standards and data systems while directly addressing 93 percent of the students not proficient in math and 93 percent of the students not proficient in English.

**...and that progress will help us meet our high expectations.**

A broad set of stakeholders including political leaders, business leaders, and education leaders, through the Governor’s Education Council, set aggressive goals in 2007 around core proficiency, college readiness and rigorous course-taking, graduation rates, and college success indicators (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit E*). These aspirational targets were set based on the moral imperative that every student has the right to graduate with the potential to pursue a post-secondary education and to be ready for the workforce. They insist on strong performance of our public school system for every student across subgroups. We do not think the state should settle for less. Although some may view these goals as too aspirational, they have been a guiding light for Minnesota and will continue to shape our system’s behavior. They have driven many of our recent reforms and while they would be more challenging to meet as

swiftly without a Race to the Top grant, they will guide our reform strategy either way. And they make Race to the Top an opportunity to further strengthen our reform agenda that we must attain. This Governor’s Education Council continues to meet regularly and adopted a set of Power Indicators in December 2009 (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit F*), to drive ongoing performance with aggressive 10-year “stretch” goals. These goals include a focus on closing the achievement gap by insisting on success for all students and specifically cover increasing College and Career Ready Coursework, College Credit in High School, College and Career Ready Scores on an Anchor Assessment, Graduation Rates and Post-Secondary Enrollment while reducing the number of students enrolled in development coursework upon entering college. Those on the Council are excited about the possibilities of the new Longitudinal Data System to measure progress and provide “deep-dive” information if and where progress is not being seen. We know that the key to successfully using goals to drive decisions and motivate innovation and accountability is a broad set of stakeholders that develop and support the goals, both at a high level and at the subgroup level. To that end, two groups will begin meeting in late January. The MN P-20 Education Partnership has created a workgroup to address the achievement gap in STEM disciplines at the elementary grades as well as a work group to develop a statewide strategy to ensure that all students take rigorous courses. Further, the Governor’s Education Council will be reconvening in March to set interim and subgroup goals aligned with the Power Indicators. With our history of setting and striving for stretch goals, we will continue to expect more from each other and deliver more for all of our students.

**We are doing well, we must do better, we are ready to succeed, we know what it takes, and we will get results.**

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

<b>Elements of State Reform Plans</b>	<b>Number of LEAs Participating (#)</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)</b>
<b>B. Standards and Assessments</b>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	415	100%
<b>C. Data Systems to Support Instruction</b>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	415	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	415	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	415	100%
<b>D. Great Teachers and Leaders</b>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	415	100%
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	415	100%
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	415	100%
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	415	100%
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	415	100%
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	415	100%
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	415	100%
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	200	48%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	18	4%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	415	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	415	100%
<b>E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools</b>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	58	14%

Minnesota’s extensive communication strategy related to Race to the Top included 3 large-group stakeholder meetings in October and December, 13 regional meetings in mid-October to gain input on the potential plan, and extensive meetings with individual education stakeholders. In December the state undertook a set of webinars and 28 regional meetings showcasing the plan and its details to ensure LEAs (both management and labor) were well informed. Prior to these December conversations, each LEA was provided with a detailed description of the strategy (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit G for a sample*) as well as a detailed MOA, as required by the grant (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit H*). This MOA was consistent across all LEAs (with a standard version for Districts and a standard version for charters as charters in Minnesota are their own LEA) and required participation in almost all elements of our Race to the Top strategy. Those areas that did not get full participation pertain to competitive grant opportunities or plans to address shortage areas. In the case of the former, LEAs did not have to decide at this time if they would pursue the grant opportunity. In the case of the latter, these are mandatory for those with shortage areas only.

Given the large number of LEAs in Minnesota, we have placed the commitment and LEA details required in this grant in the “Detailed Table for (A)(1)” in the appendix (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit I*).

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

<b>Signatures acquired from participating LEAs:</b>			
Number of Participating LEAs with all applicable signatures			
	<b>Number of Signatures Obtained (#)</b>	<b>Number of Signatures Applicable (#)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b> (Obtained / Applicable)
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	415	415	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	347	415	84%
Local Teachers’ Union Leader (if applicable)	36	299	12%
Charter Authorizer (if applicable)	72	116	62%

Minnesota’s LEAs vary significantly in size given the large number of rural systems across the state and the fact that charter schools are their own LEAs. As a result, LEA-based ratios fail to demonstrate the extent of support for Race to the Top from School Boards and Teachers’ Unions, and it is therefore essential to reflect on the number of students covered by signatures obtained. Specifically, 93.5 percent of Minnesota’s students are in LEAs that are participating in the Race to the Top program. Of that group, 4 percent of students are in charter schools. Of the remaining students in participating LEAs, 90 percent are in LEAs that include the signature of the local school board. (Please note that we have adjusted the table above to include a line for charter authorizers and thus the number of applicable signatures for lines 3 and 4 sum to the number of LEAs participating in the grant).

Minnesota’s Race to the Top effort was very collaborative and transparent, sharing the plan and working to include teacher input and gain teacher support. Indeed, the teacher’s unions of both Minneapolis and St. Paul have signed on to Race to the Top and while just 12 percent of LEAs have included union signatures, those that have signed represent 20 percent of teachers that will be involved in Minnesota’s efforts. For non-charter participating LEAs, this number also includes, 19 percent of students overall, 27 percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch and 35 percent of minority students. Furthermore, a significant number of LEA Superintendents around the state indicate that many local teachers’ unions will be collaborative partners in implementing Race to the Top even though they were not able to sign the MOA at this time due to a number of factors, including the ongoing nature of contract negotiations in a number of districts and the upcoming statutory deadline of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 for settling teacher contracts.

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

	<b>Participating LEAs (#)</b>	<b>Statewide (#)</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Statewide (%)</b> (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
<b>LEAs</b>	415	522	80%
<b>Schools</b>	2,058	2,311	89%

<b>K-12 Students</b>	782,361	836,238	94%
<b>Students in poverty</b>	275,116	294,380	93%
[Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data]			

**Detailed Table for (A)(1)** (see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit I.)  
This table provides detailed information on the participation of each participating LEA (as defined in this notice). States should use this table to complete the Summary Tables above. (Note: If the State has a large number of participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), it may move this table to an appendix. States should provide in their narrative a clear reference to the appendix that contains the table.)

Participating LEAs	LEA Demographics			Signatures on MOUs			MOU Terms Uses Standard Terms & Conditions? President of Local Teachers Union (if applicable) President of local school board (if applicable) LEA Supt. (or equivalent)	Preliminary Scope of Work – Participation in each applicable Plan Criterion																
	# of Schools	# of K-12 Students	# of d Students in Poverty	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA		(B)(3)	(C)(3)(i)	(C)(3)(ii)	(C)(3)(iii)	(D)(2)(i)	(D)(2)(ii)	(D)(2)(iii)	(D)(2)(iv)(a)	(D)(2)(iv)(b)	(D)(2)(iv)(c)	(D)(2)(iv)(d)	(D)(3)(i)	(D)(3)(ii)	(D)(5)(i)	(D)(5)(ii)	(E)(2)	
Name of LEA here				Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Yes/ No	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	

**(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans (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

(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
- (b) 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.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. The State's response to (A)(2)(i)(d) will be addressed in the budget section (Section VIII of the application). Attachments, such as letters of support or commitment, should be summarized in the text box below and organized with a summary table in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

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.

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Five pages (excluding budget and budget narrative)*

## **Background**

To implement its Race to the Top (RTTT) initiatives, Minnesota is putting in place a range of processes to drive and monitor statewide activities, allocate resources and support local school authorities. Throughout the grant period, the Minnesota Department of Education will continue to involve a broad group of stakeholders through an advisory board, as well as via formal LEA communication channels. We believe the reform agenda called for through Race to the Top has the potential to dramatically improve the learning environment, working conditions and change the dynamic in our education system to increase collaboration. To ensure that the state's plan is implemented with integrity and will have lasting impact, we have developed a comprehensive implementation program that draws on our strengths as a local-authority state with a proven track record to implement statewide reform. We believe the state's aforementioned track record increases the state's capacity to manage the changes called for in our plan. There are four main aspects to this plan:

- **Implementing the plan with integrity and ongoing monitoring:** This involves building up resources and capabilities at the state and local levels and creating supports for LEAs to carry out the activities funded by the grant. Implementation also involves grant administration, oversight and budgeting. Finally, it includes governance to track and monitor progress against state goals on an on-going basis and share results with stakeholders. Minnesota's implementation will be informed by the science of "scaling up" so that evidence-based practices can be brought to scale.
- **Develop a strong culture of collaboration and support:** Ultimately, the impact of the RTTT grant will depend on the degree of support that reform efforts receive from educators, students, families and communities and the productive and effective environments in schools and districts throughout the state.
- **Sharing best practices:** By capturing and sharing the most effective practices used by LEAs and schools receiving RTTT funding across the state, we can accelerate the benefits of the grant and discontinue ineffective activities, improving student

achievement while improving working conditions for educators.

- **Maximizing investments and sustainability:** In order to sustain successful programs and practices realized through the state’s participation in Race to the Top, it will be necessary to align successful programs with ongoing state and federal funding sources and continue to be mindful about accelerating effective programs and discontinuing ineffective ones.

### **Implementing the plan**

While Minnesota will drive and track the implementation of its Race to the Top plan centrally at the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the responsibility and support for implementation will require collaboration with local education agencies and a RTTT advisory board broadly representing P-20 education interests and representative of the diversity reflected in our student population. As one of only four states selected to work with a new national “scaling up” technical assistance center, the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP), Minnesota will apply cutting-edge research to build state capacity for scaling up evidence-based practices to improve academic, social, and emotional outcomes for students.

### ***The role of MDE***

Within the MDE, a staff consisting of a director and six full-time employees will form the RTTT Office and lead the implementation and tracking of Minnesota’s Race to the Top programs (*see Appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit A*). The Director overseeing the state’s RTTT team will report directly to the Commissioner of Education and be responsible for leading, monitoring and reporting LEA and state progress to MDE, key stakeholders and the RTTT advisory council. The team will be divided between staff that *leads* implementation of programming – working with LEAs and organizations (e.g., managing and assisting RFPs and implementing statewide programs), and a team that *tracks* the implementation – collecting and creating reports related to RTTT and monitoring LEA compliance across the state. Reports from LEAs will be collected on a regular basis (e.g., monthly) and the office will be responsible for aggregating results at the state-level on a quarterly and annual basis. To analyze program effectiveness, the

team will utilize key metrics related to each program and an assessment framework to monitor the effectiveness of the state's RTTT plan and help make recommendations for improvement when necessary (*see appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit B*).

In addition to consistent reporting throughout and at the end of each year, Minnesota will commission a third-party to provide a “10,000 mile check-up” in the summer of 2012 on state progress against goals and provide an independent, deep-dive analysis to understand major progress and challenges with the reform adoption across the state (*see Appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit C for an sample contract with a third party evaluator*).

The RTTT staff will also be responsible for organizing annual 2-day conferences for participating LEAs that will explore and discuss major challenges, maintain the momentum of the RTTT reform activities and identify emerging keys to success for participating LEAs.

### ***The Role of LEAs***

LEAs play a critical role in implementing Minnesota's plan with integrity. With well over 80 percent of the state's RTTT budget flowing directly to programs for students, teachers and LEAs across the state, the impact of RTTT will be made in our public school districts and charter schools. Through our detailed Race to the Top Memorandum of Agreement, LEAs have demonstrated their commitment to the state's comprehensive reform plan. We believe this process for implementing our state's RTTT agenda will deliver the most impact to our students and educators and will ensure the successful local implementation regardless of state leadership transitions. Additionally, our state has a proven ability to implement successfully at the local level. For example, the state's Q Comp program, negotiated at the local level between management and labor representatives has successfully delivered the programmatic and cultural adoption of performance pay in 39 districts and 32 charter schools serving approximately 30% of Minnesota's student population (*see (D)(2) for further detail*).

***RTTT Advisory Council***

A Race to the Top advisory council will also be convened by MDE to help oversee implementation. Key representatives of P-20 education in Minnesota will make up the council, including: educators, administrators, education organizations, union leadership, and experts with a proven track record of making academic gains with traditionally under-represented minorities. This committee with diverse personnel and professional backgrounds will meet with MDE staff dedicated to RTTT on a consistent basis and be responsible for actively engaging the broader group of education stakeholders in Minnesota's RTTT reforms, communicating best practices and implications, garnering support from communities across the state for the state's plan, and providing the state and LEAs with expertise and best practice research.

Minnesota will also provide additional capacity and leadership at the state and LEA level:

***Additional State supports:***

- Office of Turnaround Schools (OTAS)
- Increased MDE staff support for the expansion of enhanced Q Comp
- Additional MDE management staff to implement the Longitudinal Data System and create and maintain the increased number of district reports
- MDE management staff to create professional development content and oversee implementation of professional development programs related to RTTT assurances B through E

***Additional LEA-level supports:***

- State-sponsored conferences for participating LEAs to explore major achievements and address key challenges
- Trainers to provide professional development to all participating teachers to improve instruction and implement renewed state standards
- Curriculum Directors trained to review and align local curriculum to state standards across the state
- Trained teacher evaluation teams to increase effectiveness of teacher evaluations and ensure inter-rater reliability
- Trained LEAs and teachers to implement the full spectrum peer assistance and review programs
- Trained coaches and mentors to implement induction support for new teachers
- 3-5 years of ongoing mentoring provided by the Institutions of Higher Education participating in the Bush Foundation work for their graduates
- Ongoing funding for local administration of the Q Comp program

### **Developing a culture of collaboration and support**

We believe that the Race to the Top reforms will improve the learning and working environments within our education system that will help change expectations and prepare Minnesota for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning. To guarantee that the grant helps establish these improved conditions for lasting reform and continuous improvement, Minnesota must develop a strong culture of collaboration and support. Additionally, the state must ensure that trust is being established amongst all parties with the implementation of the reform agenda in order to bring about the needed systemic change. For example, we need students, teachers, parents, taxpayers and other stakeholders to understand that academic standards are tools for success—moving beyond the common notion that standards and statewide exams are punitive benchmarks, used only at the end of the school year to identify poor performers(*see Appendix (A)(2)* –

*Exhibit D for further examples of state aspirations for a culture of collaboration and support,).*

This shift in conceptions and practices is especially critical for all those who work in education. For example, in order to successfully implement comprehensive reforms for the teaching profession such as multiple-measure evaluations that factor in student growth, it will be necessary to build an environment where principals consistently have the time and skill to meaningfully support teaching and instruction, and establishing a rapport of support and trust within each site.

Research has shown that in order to successfully adopt new practices with consistency and commitment the following transitions must occur: building an understanding of the value of the change; ensuring that individuals have the skills and tools to adopt the new behavior; showing that peers and other role models are adopting the new approaches; and reinforcing the change with formal and informal mechanisms.

To ensure that this occurs, the state's Race to the Top program employs training and professional development that will:

- Empower teachers to understand and take more ownership of the effectiveness of their practice through access to job-embedded weekly professional learning communities, observation and evaluations that indicate instructional strengths and areas for improvement and reward teachers through leadership opportunities and performance pay.
- Create formal systems that reinforce and support career development in the teaching profession through programs such as comprehensive induction support and peer assistance and review for teachers struggling to perform as well as those who demonstrate high potential for additional responsibility.
- Provide professional development tailored to the needs of teachers and increase the use and understanding of student data and student outcomes to guide instruction and support the transition to a more data-driven culture.
- Increase principal accountability for student outcomes and provide training to support principals as instructional leaders

that support the teachers in their schools through multi-measure, formal evaluations and professional development.

In addition to providing formal mechanisms such as evaluation and performance pay to measure progress in the education system, the state will monitor changes in attitudes and practices that occur through an annual survey of teachers and principals across the state to understand the transformation that takes place between education in the state prior to, during, and post RTTT implementation. The surveys anonymously will tie teacher responses to their evaluation results and student outcomes, with the goal to understand the correlation between perceptions, attitudes and practices with student achievement in the state. The survey will also enable the state to understand potential differences in the quality of implementation of programs across the state which will provide critical feedback to make improvements accordingly (*see Appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit E*).

### **Sharing best practices**

The third major challenge to implementing Race to the Top will be to ensure the state can identify and replicate best practices of effective programs. Given the richness of innovation occurring in local sites, this issue must be addressed through both state and LEA-level supports. LEAs will have increased reporting requirements to help the state identify best practices. As one of only four states selected to work with a new national “scaling up” technical assistance center, Minnesota will apply cutting edge research to build state capacity for scaling up evidence-based practices to improve academic outcomes for students through the Common Principals of Effective Practice (CPEP) model. Additionally, Minnesota’s RTTT plan builds best-practices reporting into many programs, including:

- Office of Turnaround Schools (OTAS), whose Director will report best practices to the MDE Commissioner (*see (E)(2) for more information*)
- The OTAS advisory board (consisting of education organizations and other key stakeholders, such as educators and

administrators of P-20 education and education organizations)

- The existing Quality Compensation (Q Comp) Network, which has trained more than 1500 teachers, curriculum directors, and administrators. will continue to provide a forum for LEAs implementing the state's formal evaluation and performance pay program (*see (D)(2) for more information*)
- Curriculum Director and Superintendent cohorts which will enable sharing of best practices of standards implementation across the state (*see (B)(3) for more information*)
- Digital Professional Development platform grants, which will enable teachers, curriculum directors, professional learning communities (PLCs), et al to create and digitally share user-generated instructional content and professional development across the state (*see (B)(3) for more information*).
- *Regional AYP Networks* developed in partnership with Education Cooperative Service Units (ECSU's) and MDE provided training to more than 500 teachers, curriculum directors, and administrators in school improvement and will continue supporting schools and districts not meeting AYP targets
- Opportunities for sharing between traditional public schools and charter schools. One example we have seen has been the Secondary Technical Education Program (STEP) alternative high school model developed by the Anoka-Hennepin County district is currently in the planning stages to be replicated by a Minnesota charter school.

### **Maximizing investments and sustainability**

The MDE will manage and oversee disbursement of all Race to the Top funds. In addition to submitting detailed implementation plans and budget estimates for RTTT activities, all participating LEAs (sub-grantees) are required to request reimbursement through Minnesota's SERVS Financial system. SERVS Financial is an expenditure reimbursement system used for federal funds (including

all ARRA funds) to ensure compliance with federal regulations (*see appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit F*) The costs of implementing Minnesota’s Race to the Top plan have been estimated for the state and all LEAs using cost-driver estimates for programs based on LEA participation, factoring in the resources required given LEA size (students, teachers and administrators) and location, and estimates for the required administrative expenses to effectively execute the state’s plan.

Sustaining reform over the long term is critical to success and Minnesota’s plan has been developed to account for Race to the Top’s one-time nature. Some of the costs associated with the Race to the Top program are one-time, such as the development of updated curricular frameworks and interim assessments. Others involve significant skill development for Minnesota’s current teachers and principals or the redesign of existing programs, such as training in becoming more adept at using student data or improving teacher preparation. Costs such as these will decrease significantly as the grant ends as the majority of the state’s personnel will be trained and as improved teacher and principal preparation programs integrate such skill-building into their programs. We also know that not every aspect of our strategy will be successful and MDE and participating LEAs expect to use the improved longitudinal data system to continually understand what is and isn’t working, including both RTTT and non-RTTT efforts, and re-purpose funds to programs showing compelling results. Lastly, Minnesota has a series of short and long-term funding sources that can serve to support Race to the Top-related today and into the future. These funding sources include:

State funding through:

- Ongoing state funding to support principal and teacher evaluation and performance pay through Q Comp, currently \$260/student on an annual basis (e.g., \$1040 over four years for LEAs who adopt Q Comp for the next school year). (See (D)(2) and (F)(1) for more detail)
- State 2% set-aside of the district’s general education budget for professional development (\$97m budgeted for FY 2010)

- District Compensatory Revenue (\$348.5m in FY 2009)

Federal funding through:

- School Improvement Grants, regular and ARRA funds
- Title I regular and ARRA funds
- Education Technology regular and ARRA funds
- Title II Part A Funds
- State Fiscal Stabilization Funds
- Requested federal funding for a statewide longitudinal data system grant

Minnesota has a track record of successful reform adoption and sustained program implementation. Many of the state's recent education policies align with the reform agenda of RTTT and will be implemented or expanded through the grant. We plan to leverage our proven track record of reform adoption at the state and local levels with the increased support of the RTTT MDE staff and advisory council. This will ensure that best practices gleaned through RTTT are sustained by aligning proven programs with other sources of federal and state funds.

#### **Stakeholder support for implementation**

Developing MN's RTTT strategy has been a community effort and supporters from stakeholder groups across the state are excited to get started on the reforms identified in the proposal. Since the inception of the state's application, Minnesota has leveraged a broad group of 40+ representatives of P-20 education to develop the state's aspirations for RTTT. This group of key community

leaders and education experts includes representatives from education organizations including the state teachers' union, state law makers, higher education institutions, charter schools, the business community, minority representation and the nonprofit community among others. This group convened for two full day sessions and a half-day session starting October 1, 2009 and concluding December 5, 2009. As described in their letters of support, these leaders are committed to supporting the implementation and look forward to taking Minnesota's education system to the next level.

In addition to this leadership group, the state has been committed to a transparent application development process with our LEA stakeholders. On two occasions throughout the RTTT application development process (mid October and mid December), MDE staff hosted regional meetings throughout the state in a variety of forums to gather input and feedback from more than 300 LEAs represented by district leaders, local teachers' unions, principals, and teachers (*see appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit G for more information on stakeholder engagement*).

Recognizing the importance of this grant to the community and our education system, two local foundations contributed significant grants to enable MDE to secure additional resources to provide analysis and project management support. As of January, 2010, 79 percent of the state's LEAs have signed memorandums of agreement to demonstrate their commitment to participate in RTTT and the MDE has received 51 letters of support for its RTTT proposals from stakeholder groups including education organizations (e.g., Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of School Administrators, and the Association of Metropolitan School Districts), colleges and universities, non-profit agencies, foundations, business groups, state policymakers and local government officials (*see appendix (A)(2) – Exhibit H*). The enthusiasm shared by many across the state about the Race to the Top can be summarized in the following statement from Minnesota Senator Terri Bonoff "My support is based on my comprehensive understanding of how this application was written, its diverse and broad stakeholder group support and its potential to serve a catalytic role in transforming Minnesota's education system."

**(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)
- (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/English-language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;
  - (b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/English-language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and
  - (c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Six pages*

The state of Minnesota is quite proud that our students have consistently exceeded national averages on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit A*). Since 1992, our NAEP scores have exceeded the national mean for fourth and eighth grade mathematics scores by 9 and 13 scale points respectively. Additionally, our reading scores have out performed the nation since 1998 by an average of 6.8 scale points for fourth grade and 7 points for eighth grade. However, we also are aware that, despite considerable progress, achievement gaps remain unacceptably wide. We are working to narrow the gaps, but have not, as some states have done, reduced state standards to make the gap appear smaller. To the contrary, Minnesota continues to raise the bar both on our standards and for accountability by students and educators to meet them. We believe that setting and supporting high expectations for all students is the right choice, and this belief is confirmed by the performance improvements our students have made in math, reading/English language arts, and high school graduation rates/college and career readiness. Below are some highlights of our progress:

### **MATH AND SCIENCE**

Since 2003, there have been several key actions that we feel have driven performance improvements:

- 2003: Minnesota implemented more rigorous math standards, shifting the standards approach from process to content and from grade-span to grade-specific
- 2005: Minnesota lawmakers authorized Quality Compensation for Teachers (or “Q Comp”), a comprehensive professional evaluation and development system (see Assurance D for more detail) that provides for greater support for teachers to improve effectiveness. Q Comp provides incentives such as leadership opportunities and performance pay for teachers who are evaluated in part on measures of student achievement. Q Comp, which also includes job-imbedded professional development, is already driving teacher and student achievement improvement: A 2008 external evaluation found “... a

significant and positive relationship between the number of years a school has been implementing Q Comp and student achievement” (see *Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit B*).

- 2005: The MN P-20 Education Partnership formed the *College and Work Readiness Knowledge and Skills working group* to identify the reading, writing, and mathematics knowledge and skills needed for entry into postsecondary education and/or into highly skilled occupations at the entry level; to assess the extent to which current high school graduation requirements (credits) align with college and work readiness knowledge and skills; and to recommend any changes in high school requirements needed to improve alignment with college and work readiness.
- 2005: Minnesota joined the American Diploma Project (ADP) sponsored by Achieve, Inc. Minnesota sends a team to the first of three ADP Alignment Institutes, a project designed to help states align their high school exit standards with the demands of college and work so that students are able to enter into credit-bearing course work in two- or four-year college—without the need for remediation and with a strong chance for earning credit toward their programs or degree, and gain entry-level positions in quality job and career pathways. The tasks of the P-20 working group and Alignment Institute teams were combined into a single process.
- 2006: MN submitted its “College and Work Readiness Expectations—Mathematics” to Achieve for Quality Review #1. Minnesota continued revising its draft based on Achieve’s feedback.
- 2006: The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment standardized exam for K-12 mathematics, science and English language arts was revised to align with higher academic standards adopted in 2003. The MCA-II standards were drawn up by a committee comprised of parents, educators and representatives from business and higher education and were approved by the legislature.

- 2006-07: Minnesota began its process of revising K-12 math standards to ensure a rigorous course of study for all students, with emphasis in STEM subjects. Today, students are exposed to algebraic and engineering design concepts in elementary school, building up to Algebra I concepts in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math standards. Technology, information literacy, and college and career readiness standards are embedded by law in all subject standards as well. As a result of the positive response to these higher standards, the state agency, and statewide teacher organizations have made a significant effort to introduce the foundations of more rigorous math and science to the earliest elementary grades.
- 2007: Minnesota received letter from Achieve stating, “The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Mathematics (April 14, 2007 Revision) present student learning expectations that are intellectually demanding and well aligned with the ADP Benchmarks, with minor exceptions. If Minnesota students master the state standards, they will likely be well prepared for both workplace and college success” (*see Appendix (B)(1) – Exhibit E*).
- 2007: Minnesota received letter from Achieve stating, “The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Mathematics (April 14, 2007 Revision) present student learning expectations that are intellectually demanding and well aligned with the ADP Benchmarks, with minor exceptions. If Minnesota students master the state standards, they will likely be well prepared for both workplace and college success.” Dr. Schmidt, Michigan State University Distinguished Professor of education and statistics and widely regarded as a national expert and leader on math and science education, has provided valuable input and feedback during the creation and revisions of Minnesota’s academic standards and is also part of the validation panel for the Common Core standards. “Minnesota has shown that rigorous academic standards are vital to student success,” Dr. Schmidt said. “Minnesota’s TIMSS results, especially those in 4th-grade math, provide an example for the rest of the nation to follow.” Michigan State University Distinguished Professor of education and statistics (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit B*).
- 2008-2009 Minnesota revised its science standards to ensure a rigorous course of study for all students, adding the study of

engineering design process concepts, from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. All students are required to pass Algebra II, biology and two other science classes (one of which must be chemistry or physics) to graduate. Technology and college and career readiness standards are embedded by law.

- 2008-2009: A Graduation-Required Assessment for Diploma (GRAD) test component was added to the 10<sup>th</sup>-grade reading and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade math MCA II exams. To graduate, a student must answer a minimum percentage of questions that test math and science knowledge correctly.
- 2008-2009: The state launched Math and Science Teacher's Academies to ensure fidelity in implementation and continued emphasis on new 2007 math and 2008 science academic content standards (*see Appendix (B)(3) – Exhibit A*).

***Student achievement outcomes***

- 4<sup>th</sup> graders taking TIMSS in 2007 started kindergarten in 2003, when new standards were put in place, and their scores prove the value of higher standards. They placed among the top scorers in the world and the improvement in their scores over previous Minnesota fourth graders represented the second-largest improvement among all groups taking TIMSS between 1995 and 2007 (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit C*).
- NAEP math scores for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders continue to be above the national average (overall and by subgroup)
- A 4 percentage point increase in the proportion of students who are rated proficient in MCA-II math exam (to 62.3 percent) between 2006 and 2009
- 2009 Science scores showed a strong improvement over 2008. Fifth-grade scores improved nearly 6 percentage points, eighth-grade scores improved by approximately 4 percent points and high school scores increased by seven percentage

points *(see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit D)*.

- Minnesota has made above-average progress in narrowing the math achievement gap since 2003 in several key subgroups *(see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit A for further details)*:
  - Grade 4 math: a) White-Hispanic, b) White – Asian/Pacific Islander, c) Students with Disabilities, and d) English language learners
  - Grade 8 math: a) White – Black, b) White – American Indian, and c) Students with Disabilities
  - The strongest gains in math proficiency on the MCA-II has been among Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander (API) and black subgroups: The proportion of proficient Hispanic students has risen 17 percentage points, API student proficiency rates rose 12 percentage points, and black student proficiency rose 7 percentage points.
  - Of special note, there was an 8 percentage point increase in 11<sup>th</sup> grade math results between 2008 and 2009 (this occurred after a gain of 2 percent in spring 2008), largely due to the new GRAD requirements linked to high school graduation *(see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit D)*.

## **READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

Performance improvements in reading and English language arts can be traced to the following reforms:

- 2003: More rigorous reading/ELA standards implemented, shifting standards from process to content and from grade-span to grade-specific.
- 2006: MN submitted its “College and Work Readiness Expectations—Language Arts” to Achieve for Quality Review #1.

Minnesota continues revising its draft based on Achieve's feedback.

- 2006: Adoption of MCA-II standardized exam to align the state test program with new 2003 state standards.
- 2008: Minnesota receives letter from Achieve stating, "The proposed College and Work Readiness Expectations—Language Arts present student learning expectations that are intellectually demanding and well-aligned with the ADP Benchmarks. If Minnesota students master these expectations, they will likely be well-prepared for both workplace and college success."
- 2008: MCA-II exams in 9th grade writing and 10th grade language arts get new GRAD components; students must write at a proficient level in the writing exam and answer a percentage of questions on the GRAD test items correctly in the reading exam to graduate

***Student achievement outcomes***

- NAEP reading scores for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders continue to be above the national average (overall and by subgroup)
- The reading and ELA achievement gap has narrowed since 2003 for several key subgroups (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit A for details*):
  - Grade 4 reading: a) White – Asian Pacific Islander, b) Special Ed, c) ELL, and d) Gender gap
  - Grade 8 reading: a) White – Hispanic, b) ELL and c) Free or reduced lunch eligible
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade MCA-II reading increased by 9 percentage points in Spring 2008 (with gains across all subgroups), largely due to implementation of GRAD test component. Scores increased again in the spring of 2009 by an incremental 3.4 percent(*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit D*).

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND RIGOROUS COURSEWORK

Minnesota has improved graduation rates and increased participation in rigorous courses through two initiatives.

- 1985: Minnesota was the first state to establish a Post Secondary Education Opportunities (PSEO) program (*See F(3) for more detail*)
- 2005: Minnesota implemented “Get Ready, Get Credit,” a program designed to guide students to college readiness, which includes helping with curriculum choices. The state pays for students to take assessments for college readiness and interest in 8th and 10th grade. Under the Get Credit portion of the program, qualified students are encouraged to earn college credit through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or the College-Level Examination Program (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit E*).

### ***Student achievement outcomes***

- From 2003 to 2008, four-year graduation rates statewide improved 2 percentage points, to 72.8 percent
- Stronger gains were made in key subgroups, narrowing achievement gaps even as the state was increasing the rigor of its standards and graduation requirements (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit F*). Key 2003-2008 gains include:
  - 7.1 percentage point improvement in Hispanic graduation rates
  - 6.4 percentage point improvement in black, non-Hispanic origin
  - 5.6 percentage point improvement in American Indian/Alaska Native
  - 4.3 percentage point improvement in students with limited English proficiency

- Advanced Placement participation and grades: From the 2004-05 school year to 2008-09, the number of Minnesota public school students taking one or more AP exam has risen by 64 percent - to more than 26,000 students. This is due, in part to Raising Academic Achievement Grants and Get Ready Get Credit legislation. Additionally, the proportion of students receiving 3s, 4s, or 5s on at least one AP exams has averaged 64 percent since 2005. Based on the increase in participation, the overall number of students scoring at a 3 or higher on at least one exam has increased by 56.7 percent since 2005, to more than 17,000 students (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit G*).
- The number of students of color taking AP tests has increased by 106 percent since the 2004-05 school year to more than 3,300 students taking one or more AP exams in the 2008-09 school year.

## **REFORMS AND PROGRESS IN RTTT ASSURANCE AREAS**

Minnesota has made progress in each of the Race to the Top assurance areas in recent years. Key examples include:

- **Standards and Assessments**
  - Increased rigor of standards and graduation requirements, particularly in core STEM content areas (*See (B)(1) for more information*) in light of studies such as Clifford Adelman (1999) and Carnevale and Desrochers (2003), the latter of whom wrote “Just as we educators have learned that courses like algebra II are the gatekeepers to higher education, we must now come to understand that they are gatekeepers to well-paying jobs, as well.”
  - Development of a growth model for math and reading (*see (D)(2) for more information*)
  - Funded Math and Science Teacher Academies to ensure that standards are implemented faithfully and to support teachers in learning instructional best practices

- **Data Systems**

- As detailed in (C)(1), Minnesota has made significant progress on the elements of the America COMPETES Act requirements, with 9 out of the 12 elements in place
- Passed legislation in 2008 that allows the linkage of P-12 data with Higher education data and career data
- Developed a governance structure for a comprehensive P-20 longitudinal data system in Minnesota
- Built an Educator Portal through which teachers can find and use data for improvement
- Created and delivered the Minnesota Model for Data Driven Decisions (M<sup>2</sup>D<sup>3</sup>) to standardize a system implementation model for data-driven decision making
- Trained 20 percent of Minnesota's high school principals in the high school redesign framework, a continuous improvement model based on data-driven decision making
- Trained over 30 percent of Minnesota districts in how to use college readiness data to improve college readiness for all students

- **Great Teachers and Leaders**

- Supported implementation of the national Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model in Minneapolis Public Schools, which currently reaches 590 teachers, and 6900 students in Minneapolis Public Schools. TAP is an integrated and comprehensive school reform initiative focused on providing teacher leadership opportunities, job-embedded professional development, and performance-based compensation for teachers. TAP provides a

foundation to recruit, motivate, develop, and retain high quality teachers in order to increase student achievement.

- Approximately 30 percent of Minnesota teachers have opted into the Quality Compensation for Teachers (or “Q Comp”) program, a comprehensive, locally developed and implemented professional development and evaluation system that uses multi-rater, multi-measure evaluations (including student achievement data) and offers job-embedded professional development as well as incentives such as teacher leader opportunities and performance pay to encourage educators to earn effective teaching ratings. (During the Race to the Top grant period, we expect the proportion of teachers in Q Comp will grow to 90 percent)

- **Turnaround Schools**

- The Minneapolis Public Schools strategic plan, adopted in 2007, explicitly includes refreshing or restarting the bottom 25 percent of the city’s schools. One school has recently been closed and in the 2007-08 school year, two schools implemented the turnaround model and four schools implemented the transformation model (*see (E)(2) and Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit D, pages 7-12 and (E)(2) for further detail*).
- St. Paul has also conducted comprehensive transformational programs such as Dayton’s Bluff, which underwent a turnaround process in 2000-01 school. Since the turnaround, Dayton’s Bluff has made AYP every year under NCLB. This is significant given the school was the lowest performing in the district with one of the highest (98 percent) poverty rates.
- Since 2005, 14 charter schools have been closed for poor academic or financial performance (*see (F)(2) for more information about Minnesota’s strong charter school environment and updated charter accountability laws*)

These actions have driven improvement in recent years across the state. Through Race to the Top, Minnesota will continue to raise

the bar for schools and teachers, maintain high expectations of all students, close the achievement gap, and strive for continuous improvement of teacher and student achievement across the state.

**(B) Standards and Assessments (70 total points)**

**State Reform Conditions Criteria**

**(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.<sup>4</sup>

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the*

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<sup>4</sup>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.

*criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.

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.

For Phase 2 applicants:

- Evidence that the State has adopted the standards. Or, if the State has not yet adopted the standards, a description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

## **Background**

Minnesota has joined, along with 48 other U.S. States, two U.S. territories and the District of Columbia (*see Appendix B(1) - Exhibit A*) in the consortium of states committed to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI)—an ambitious project that will define the K-12 knowledge and skills that all student need to be ready for college and careers (*see Appendix B(1) - Exhibit B*). The “Common Core” standards will be research-based and reflect internationally benchmarked standards (*see Appendix B(1) - Exhibit B*).

Minnesota has taken a leadership role in the CCSSI, providing input in the development of the Common Core mathematics and English-language arts academic standards based on the state’s experience setting rigorous academic standards and its reputation for overall student performance that ranks among the highest in the nation. In a state built on the success of local control, it is especially important to have a strong, clear system of state standards that will ensure consistent and rigorous levels of expectation statewide as well as equitable access to opportunities for meeting these high state standards in any and all local districts.

Policymakers have demonstrated that they value academic rigor by mandating in 2006 that Minnesota’s standards must be revised to embed “the knowledge and skills students need for college readiness and advanced work” in each subject area (Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, subd.2) (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit – C for a draft of CCSSI standards* ). As a result, college and career-readiness knowledge and skills have already been built into Minnesota’s revised K-12 mathematics, arts and science standards and its “College and Work Readiness Expectations” in English-language arts.

Minnesota’s work in standards development has already been benchmarked to college and career readiness through its participation in Achieve’s American Diploma Project and its three Alignment Institutes (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit D*). Additionally, the state has benefitted from its participation as one of ten states in the National Governors Association’s (NGA) Center for Best Practices Honors State Grant from 2005-2007 and then, from 2008-2009 as one of eight states in an 18-month College- and Career-Ready

Policy Institute, through which the state has developed a set of Power Indicators to benchmark and improve our K-12 system (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit E*).

In addition, the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, Minnesota's Early Learning Standards, were developed in 1999 and published in 2000. The development of these standards involved the child care, early education and higher education institutions in Minnesota as well as a review by national experts. These learning standards address 6 developmental domains (physical and motor development; cognitive development; creativity and the arts; language and literacy development; approaches to learning; social and emotional development) and are aligned with the K-12 academic standards as of 2005 Early Learning Standards Alignment (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit F*).

Through Race to the Top, Minnesota plans to review and ensure that other critical programs and standards have the depth and clarity to align with the Common Core State Standards, including the state's English Language Proficiency and Special Education standards, as well as our Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (*see (B)(3) for more detail*).

Today, the state has a well-honed process for reviewing and revising standards so that they are benchmarked to the "best in field," yet flexible enough to accommodate a variety of local curriculum approaches. Standards committees composed of K-12 teachers and postsecondary instructors, business and community representatives voluntarily participate in a transparent process of public engagement that builds consensus around rigorous expectations for all students. Minnesota will use this process for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards as well.

### **Adoption of Common Core State Standards**

The state's standards-related laws require Minnesota to develop rigorous core academic standards in consultation with various stakeholder groups in Minnesota, and that the standards be clear, concise, objective, measurable, and grade-level appropriate (Minn.

Stat. § 120B.021, subd. 2) (*see Appendix B(1) - Exhibit G*). However, nothing in state law prohibits MDE from basing this process on common core standards developed by a group of states, or based on international education standards.

The current rule-making process requires the commissioner of education to adopt statewide rules under section 14.389 to implement academic standards in core subject areas (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit G*). Before these standards are adopted through the rule making process, the commissioner of education is required to consider advice from a broad group of stakeholders across the state, including teachers in the relevant subject areas, faculty teaching in post secondary education institutions, school board members, parents of school-aged children, representatives of Minnesota's business community and others. (Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 subd. 2 and 3).

Additionally, the state has adopted, in statute, a revision and review cycle for academic standards and their related benchmarks in each core subject area including mathematics and English-language arts (*see Appendix B(1) – Exhibit H*). During the revision cycle, the commissioner of education must include the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities as they relate to the standards (*see Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 subd. 1 Appendix (B)(1) – Exhibit G*). The commissioner must also appropriately embed technology and information literacy standards and ensure alignment with the knowledge and skills required for college readiness and advanced work in the subject area. According to state statute, the English-language arts review cycle will happen during the 2009-2010 school year and mathematics will undergo a review and revision process during the 2015-2016 academic cycle.

In order to adopt the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English-language arts before August 2, 2010, the Commissioner will work with the state legislature to ensure an expedited timeframe for the adoption and revision process of the Common Core State Standards. This expedited timeframe will include the following key elements and milestones:

- March 2010: MDE will accept the Common Core Standards (CCS) in their entirety for mathematics and English-language arts and convene a standards committee comprised of experts e.g., K-12 teachers and postsecondary instructors, and business and

community representatives to develop a recommendation to augment CCS in mathematics and English-language arts with up to 15 percent more state-specific standards content. At this time, the Common Core State Standards will also be posted to the MDE website for statewide public comment and feedback.

- April 2010: MDE will finalize the augmentation of CCS for Minnesota in mathematics and English-language arts and begin the process of public engagement to consider advice from stakeholders across the state. In order to engage stakeholders across the state, leadership from the MDE will travel to the state's regions and convene meetings of other key stakeholders (e.g., teaching organizations, businesses). Upon conclusion of the public engagement meetings, MDE and the technical writing team for Minnesota's augmented Common Core Standards will finalize any further technical changes.
- May 2010: MDE will finalize technical revisions to standards as necessary based on input gathered through the public engagement process and present finalized K-12 standards for mathematics and language arts to the public and legislature. The state will present the new standards, the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics and English language Arts with Minnesota augmentation, to the 2010 legislature for adoption. Through the legislative process, the state anticipates that Minnesota's new Common Core State standards will be adopted at the state level no later than the end of Minnesota's legislative session in May 2010.
  - June 2010: MDE will begin statewide rollout of state standards through collaboration with regional and local district leaders to:
    - Develop curricular frameworks to help "unpack" the standards and grade-level benchmarks and align local curriculum with state standards and benchmarks
    - Implement statewide interim assessments aligned with the new mathematics and English language arts/reading standards

and MN state standards for science in grades K-12

- Create professional development programs and content to support the adoption of common core standards across the state and increase instructional supports

**(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.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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).
- The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.

*Recommended maximum response length: One page*

***Vision***

Minnesota will develop a coherent system of high-quality assessments jointly with a consortium of states to benchmark student knowledge and skills utilizing innovative techniques and technology.

***Background***

The Minnesota assessment system has established a consistent history of high-quality, reliable assessments combined with innovative approaches to measure students' knowledge and skills. The state assessments are acknowledged within Minnesota and recognized throughout the nation as a leading assessment system that provides all stakeholders with actionable data that accurately reflects student knowledge and skills of rigorous standards. The efforts that Minnesota has put toward its assessment system demonstrate a commitment to establishing a coherent system built upon the highest technical quality, advancing best practices in educational measurement through collaboration, and innovating assessment methodology to advance our knowledge of student achievement (*see Appendix (B)(2) – Exhibit A*).

Minnesota has joined three consortia to forward its large-scale assessment program for its students, teachers, and stakeholders. One consortium focuses on a summative assessment that advances the vision of state's large-scale summative program. The second consortium will support the efforts of formative assessment and professional development begun in this application. The third is an agreement in principle to continue any of our consortia work toward the continued goals of high rigor and expectations that have defined our involvement in the American Diploma Project (ADP) with Achieve. Additionally, the state will participate in two international assessments through RTTT, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) exams, in part to review efficacy of statewide efforts related to math and science teaching and learning in a global context..

**Summative Assessment Consortium**

For its summative assessment work, Minnesota has joined as a lead state in the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) consortium. SMARTER is designed to take advantage of the latest innovations in large-scale assessments and yet establish its foundation with those most closely interacting with the students – the teacher. SMARTER will involve local teachers, school and district administrators and institutes of higher education in the assessment design and administration, ensure the assessment meets the immediate and future needs of many stakeholders, build and maintain the local knowledge base by providing professional development as part of the assessment design, support its lowest and highest performing students by providing an online adaptive test with multiple opportunities, and supports reports that can compare performance among participating states. The test will use interactive technology items within this adaptive assessment – an attribute in which Minnesota has already proven its success in its nation-leading science assessment (*see Appendix B(2) Exhibit B*).

As the infrastructure and deliverables of SMARTER are developed, Minnesota remains committed to ensuring that its imminent state-level summative test redesign leading up to an operational common assessment allows for international benchmarking of state performance. Our state’s history of its participation in 1995 and 2007 in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) as a “mini-nation” demonstrate our commitment to international comparison and our steadfastness in acknowledging whatever that comparison may show us to help our students improve.

### **Participate in TIMSS and PISA International Exams**

First, Minnesota is planning to participate in the TIMSS again in 2011 as a mini-nation. These results will allow us to review in part, the efficacy of statewide efforts related to math and science teaching and learning in a global context. Our goal is to build on the significant gains we realized from 1995 to 2007. Likewise, Minnesota also plans to participate in the 2012 administration of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is a system of international assessments that focus on 15-year-olds' capabilities in reading literacy, mathematics literacy, and science literacy. PISA also includes measures of general or cross-curricular competencies such as learning strategies. Information from this assessment will give us perspective in additional content

areas at an older student age than is assessed by TIMSS. In an annual succession, this second international assessment will provide a constant focus on our performance on the global stage.

Second, Minnesota will use its performance on these international assessments to inform the setting of performance standards on its next generation of assessments currently under development. Until a common assessment is operational, Minnesota will be looking to international expectations to guide its own expectations at home. We will use the performance expectations of these assessments and the knowledge of our own student performance in comparison will heighten our awareness of global reality when setting our own achievement standards until a uniform, nation-wide standard is established.

Third, we are currently investigating a technically-appropriate method of embedding test questions from these international assessments in our own state assessments in the near term. We recognize that technical challenges are not insignificant, such as those described in the National Research Council's *Embedding Questions: The Pursuit of a Common Measure in Uncommon Tests*. However, Minnesota is currently involved in determining how items on international assessments such as TIMSS and PISA could be added to its assessments to provide more frequent feedback on the state's performance against an international field. We are confident that our efforts would provide our SMARTER consortium partners with important experiences about such an effort, both technically and practically. As in all our efforts in education that have made Minnesota a leader in the nation, Minnesota would not step backwards and would insist that this international performance benchmarking be a key characteristic of the summative consortium efforts.

### **Formative Assessment Consortium**

Minnesota has also joined Multiple Options for Student Assessment and Instruction Consortium (MOSAIC) to further support the initial interim assessment system established within this application. MOSAIC intends to partner with SMARTER to build a comprehensive, balanced assessment system that provides both formative assessment information as well as the professional

development necessary to use this formative information effectively. Common professional development efforts around the Common Core standards will allow Minnesota to use the best practices from all member states in integrating these standards in the classroom. The consortium will use performance assessments to evaluate student learning in different and novel ways. This consortium will also work to build a sustained benchmark assessment system aligned to the common core to provide teachers real-time information as they move their students toward end-of-year mastery of the academic standards (*see Appendix B(3) Exhibit C*). More than 30 states have signed on to the MOSAIC Formative Assessment Consortium (*see Appendix B(3) Exhibit D*).

### **American Diploma Project Consortium**

In collaboration with its affiliated states, Minnesota has also indicated its intent to partner with Achieve as a member of the American Diploma Project. This collaboration articulates Minnesota's unwavering commitment to build comparable assessments across the states that are built on the Common Core standards. These assessments will be aligned to college and career readiness expectations, building upon the work of the ADP effort through Achieve. Minnesota is committed to building upon the already successful partnership it has with its fellow states in many areas of assessment, and the Achieve effort that is aligned to our formative and summative assessment consortia will focus on the coherence and rigor of our efforts along with those of our partnering states (*see Appendix (B)(2) – Exhibit E*).

## Reform Plan Criteria

### **(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).

*The State shall provide its plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers 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: Eight pages*

### ***Vision***

Minnesota will build on its success in implementing educational standards to support students in their efforts to meet more rigorous evidence-based standards that are intended to ensure that students will be college- and career-ready when they leave our schools. We will also support teachers as they seek to increase the effectiveness of their instruction through professional development and new curricular frameworks.

### **Background**

Minnesota has a 14-year history of successfully implementing state standards through collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and local education authorities. Local Education Authorities (LEAs) across the state are required to adopt Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in a timely manner and in alignment with the administration of the state's summative assessments aligned with these standards. MDE provides content-area specialists to support this mandate. By statute, the MDE is required to review and revise standards to ensure rigor and encourage the attainment of the knowledge and skills needed by students for success in college and career. In 2006-2007, the state revised and realigned K-12 mathematics standards to require that students satisfactorily complete an Algebra I credit by the end of eighth grade, and that by the 2014-2015 school year, all students satisfactorily complete Algebra II as a high school graduation requirement (*see Appendix B(1) Exhibit H*).

Building on the foundation of rigorous state standards, where there has been a focused effort the state has appropriated funds for programming and teacher professional development and seen results. Minnesota's examples include:

- **Math and Science Teacher Academies (MSTA)** were established through initial funding from the 2007 legislature and implemented throughout the state to support middle and high school science and math standards (*see Appendix B(3) - Exhibit A*).

Since the launch of the academies, the number of participating teachers who use Minnesota State Mathematics Standards at least weekly increased from under half (49.4 percent) in the fall of 2008 to almost 70 percent in the spring 2009. Corresponding to this increase in embedding state standards in classroom instruction, MN has seen increased student achievement in the areas of STEM (*see appendix A(3) - Exhibit D*).

- **Additional STEM Initiatives:** Minnesota has approached STEM programming and initiatives as an integral objective on its own accord and also as a necessary complement to building systemic change founded on rigorous standards and equitable opportunities for all students. A STEM public awareness campaign, business and community partnerships and intentional grants to schools for STEM curriculum and professional development - all aligned to the new state standards in English Language Arts, (e.g. technical reading) Math and Science - has helped educators, communities, and the public in general understand the need for and relevance of rigorous standards and how to implement them in exciting ways that can be successful for students. (*See Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) for more detail*)

We benchmark our student progress, using national and international exams:

- In 2007, Minnesota participated in the **Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)** exam as an individual nation. TIMSS is the largest student math and science achievement study in the world. Minnesota students in fourth grade mathematics scored significantly higher than the national average for the U.S. This gain was due in large part to an increase in the amount of teaching time, aligned more closely with countries that are high-performers in mathematics. In 2007 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers reported devoting substantially less time to mathematics topics often covered at higher grades in other countries and more time on number – computation with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and number patterns – which is the major focus of grade 4 mathematics internationally (*see appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit C*).

- Minnesota's NAEP scores continue to exceed national averages overall and by student subgroup (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit A*)

Despite progress across the state, we continue to face persistent achievement gaps between high-poverty students and students from more economically secure households and between ethnic minorities and white students. Minnesota has implemented programs across the state to address these achievement gaps. Efforts to close the college and career ready achievement and opportunity gaps have included locally implemented programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and Admission Possible. The AVID program targets middle school students that desire to attend college and the willingness to work hard, but are falling short of their potential. AVID makes academic gains these students by focusing on acceleration, tracking students for advanced rigor programming rather than remedial coursework. 20 districts across the state have adopted the AVID program across Minnesota. Admission Possible is a Minnesota-based non-profit organization dedicated to helping promising low-income youth gain acceptance to college. In 2008-09 Admission Possible served 1900 students in the Greater Twin Cities. Overall, 98 percent of low-income students assisted by Admission Possible have been admitted to college (*see Appendix (B)(3) – Exhibit B*).

Statewide initiatives have also been implemented, including:

- **Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS)** as part of the 2005 Get Ready Get Credit legislation the state provides funding to enable all Minnesota students to participate in the ACT 8<sup>th</sup> grade EXPLORE AND 10<sup>th</sup> grade PLAN (*see Appendix (A)(3) – Exhibit C*). These tests are designed to provide student educational and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation to help students, their parents, and their schools gauge progress towards college and career readiness. In Minnesota, EPAS has become a widely used assessment system in Minnesota, with over 30,000 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and almost 49,000 10<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in 2008-2009 (*see Appendices (A)(3) – Exhibit G and (B)(3) – Exhibit C*).
- Additionally, during the 2008-2009 school year, more than 160 middle and high school counselors from 105 school

districts participated in two days of state-facilitated EPAS training and one day of follow-up training to better understand how to administer and use the student results from EPAS. These counselors were also given access to a statewide electronic SharePoint Website, designed to link them to new research and resources to enhance networking capabilities as they develop and share new EPAS-based strategies and tools. We are continuing to build this “Minnesota Model” network during 2009-2010, having just completed the second round of six regionally-based two-day sessions in December. Ongoing professional development opportunities are also supported through quarterly webinars, offering technical assistance to counselors and educators utilizing EPAS data to support student achievement.

- **Raised Academic Achievement Grants** was a state commitment in 2007 (in addition to the \$4.5 million annually budgeted for AP/IB) of \$8 million dollars in grant funding over a period of 2 years to local districts who were committed to increasing the number and achievement levels of typically underrepresented students in Advanced Placement, College Level Examination Placement Exams (CLEP), and International Baccalaureate programs. In 2008-2009 alone, Minnesota had an overall increase in participation of 10.3 percent, and an 11.3 percent in the number of students earning a 3, 4, or 5 on AP exams. For our non-white students these gains were even larger indicating room for continued expansion: Participation (number of students taking at least one exam) and performance (number of students earning a 3 or higher on at least one exam) by 17.9 percent and 26.7 percent respectively for Black students while Native American students saw increases of 32.9 percent and 30.2 percent (*see Appendices (A)(3) – Exhibit G and B(3) - Exhibit D*).
- The **High School Redesign Framework** is a process and protocol of using college and career ready student and system level indicators and data sets to drive district-level policy decisions towards embedding rigorous opportunities and high expectations for all students into the everyday practice and fabric of a district. Currently, 79 school principals representing 74 districts across the state of Minnesota are participating in this model with results such as increased course passing rates, increased MCA scores, increased numbers of students enrolled in dual enrollment, increased attendance rates, and decreased

disciplinary referrals (*see Appendix (B)(3) – Exhibit E*).

**Plans to support the transition to rigorous academic standards through Race to the Top funding**

Minnesota will adopt high-quality, rigorous common standards through a number a legislative supported processes and implement those standards statewide through a number of supports. Additionally, because the state is committed to STEM education for all students and has recently updated our statewide science standards in 2006, we will include science subjects in the supports we provide to LEAs. These supports include: a statewide rollout plan; implementation of curricular frameworks in course instruction; tiered professional development programs to improve learning for all students and prepare teachers for successful instruction across Minnesota’s schools; administration of interim assessments throughout the school year to benchmark student success; and a review of the state’s current English Language Proficiency Standards to ensure they offer the depth and breadth to support alignment with common core standards. The State will also issue grants to support programming to increase the number of high-poverty and minority students enrolled in rigorous and advanced coursework. This extensive professional development will not only support the adoption of the new standards, but will permeate the instruction of teachers throughout their practice and have a broad impact on student achievement in participating LEAs (*see Appendix B(3) - Exhibit F*).

**1) Adopt Common Core State Standards in mathematics and language arts at the state-level before August 2, 2010**

This expedited timeframe will include the following key milestones, goals and activities:

The state will accept the Common Core Standards (CCS) in their entirety for mathematics and English language arts at the time final standards are released (expected February 2010). Subsequently, the state will convene a standards committee comprised of academic experts e.g., K-12 teachers and postsecondary instructors, business leaders and other key experts that represent

Minnesota's diverse P-20 population to review the standards and recommend augmentation of up to 15 percent of CCS in mathematics and English-language arts with state-specific content. In late March or early April 2010, MDE leadership will provide a final review and refine the recommended content additions.

Throughout April 2010, MDE will share the newly adopted standards with stakeholders across the state, including: districts, teachers, the teachers' union, education organizations, law makers, students and parents, and experts representing the diversity of the student population. MDE will travel to all seven of the state's Local Service Cooperatives (LSCs) to accomplish this and will make technical adjustments to the standards as-needed based following the meetings.

In early May, the MDE will present the newly revised standards for adoption into statute through the 2010 legislative session. Through the legislative process, the state anticipates that new standards will be adopted at the state-level no later than the end of Minnesota's legislative session in May 2010.

Following the legislative adoption, Minnesota will begin the statewide rollout of state-augmented Common Core standards and other supports in June 2010. Additional supports will be provided by the state to increase effectiveness of statewide adoption into curriculum and improve classroom instruction for all students through collaboration with regional and local district leaders. The supports include the following:

## **2) Develop curricular frameworks**

New curricular frameworks will be needed to bring curricula in line with the new standards. MDE will provide funding to develop local curricula, increase instructional effectiveness and help "unpack" the standards and grade-level benchmarks for mathematics, English-language arts and science. MDE will also ensure that the core standards align with other critical curricula, including English-language Proficiency (ELP), Special Education and Early Childhood programs. This will be the first time since the late 1990s that the state develops curricular frameworks to help local curriculum directors and teachers align their course curricula with

state standards. We believe these frameworks will substantially improve instruction for all students across the state.

In summer 2010, the State will prepare RFPs for curricular framework content in math, science and English language arts. Through this process, preference will be given to those who will integrate STEM into these frameworks and undertake an inclusive development process. This will additionally result in some specially designed STEM curricular frameworks that assist teachers in teaching rigorous math and science complemented by the relevance of technology and engineering standards. Minnesota's inclusion of Science standards in our standards implementation plan is an intentional and integral strategy for Minnesota's successful implementation of the Common Core Math standards. Since Science teachers will be teaching the math and technical reading and writing standards found in the Common Core, attention to the Science standards and their curriculum frameworks will be instrumental in Minnesota's implementation of the Common Core. The new Minnesota Science standards, which now include Engineering and Technology standards are not only complementary of the Common Core State Standards ELA and Math standards, but are also integral to the "T" and "E" in the Minnesota STEM initiative. In addition, in early 2011, MDE will roll out the frameworks and course guides statewide, via digital distribution furthering the use of the "T" in STEM in the teaching profession.

### **3) Professional development programs for teachers**

The state will sponsor specialized professional development to support the adoption of the common core state standards, strengthen classroom instruction, and realize effective student intervention.

- Between June 2010 and June 2012, MDE will fund three additional FTEs to create professional development content aligned with the new state standards. These employees will provide academic content and assist in the development of teacher training curricula to support adoption of K-12 standards in mathematics, English language arts and science, ensuring alignment with programs such as ELL, Special Education and Early Childhood. They will also create trainer curriculum for master teachers and curriculum directors; LEA curriculum director training content; and curricula for turnaround teacher training academies.

- From June 2010 to June 2012, MDE will employ one state FTE to manage people and processes related to the adoption of state standards, including: providing oversight and management and support of LEA adoption plans, through coordination with regional service cooperatives, LEA administrators and curriculum directors; and ensure these adoption periods occur in advance of the statewide rollout of the consortium-developed summative assessments that align with common core curriculum. This individual will also develop and manage trainer schedules for trainers serving participating LEAs and specialized teaching academies for turnaround schools, and organize and facilitate webinars and regional meetings related to standards adoption.
- The state will provide tiered professional development to teachers across the state to support the adoption of revised standards and to increase the effectiveness of classroom instruction and increase achievement levels for all students. Training supports will be differentiated for teachers based on the needs of students, such as ELL and Special Education, and LEA participation in RTTT.

#### **Training for teachers in participating LEAs**

The state (MDE) will provide enhanced support and strengthen classroom instruction by providing funding for a full day of professional development for teachers in participating LEAs, organized on a regional basis.

The training for teachers will contain the following elements:

- Vertical K-12, or multi-grade subject content in core areas at the strand and sub-strand level.
- Digital and web -based supports including curricular frameworks and instructional strategies linked to state standards at the strand level.
- Analysis of interim and summative assessment data to inform academic intervention strategies and to improve instruction.

To provide this training across all regions of MN, the state will hire 9-12 field trainers between spring 2011 and spring 2012. These trainers will also provide training for LEA curriculum directors and administrators (further detail explained below). The timing of the trainings will coincide with the rollout of interim assessments.

### **Training for teachers in turnaround schools**

Teachers in turnaround schools will attend a 10-day professional development academy during the first two years of the turnaround process.

This training for teachers will contain the following elements:

- Instructional strategies for struggling students in math, science and English language arts/reading.
- Rigorous content focus for teachers in core subjects as well as ELL and special education teachers and testing for all teachers to measure mastery of new content.
- Student intervention training and instruction in digital tools.
- Additional details on professional development for teachers in turnaround schools, including job-based PD, are referred to in Section E(2) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools.

### **Training for all teachers**

To support teachers throughout the state in adopting the new standards, the state will utilize its iTunesU platform and the Educator Portal to deliver digital and web-based tools and instructional content (*See (C)(3) for more information*). Moving the practice of teacher development and community building to a technology platform is part of the states' STEM imitative to build teacher familiarity with the technology tools which many of today's students are already using. In turn, the digital professional development found on this technology platform will teach teachers how to bring more technology practice into their classroom teaching. The

state will be responsible for the management of all digital content supplied to these resources through MDE. Participants, including LEA administrators, curriculum directors and teachers will be encouraged to share best practices on the system and upload their own instructional content. Between May and August, 2010 the state will hold focus groups with key stakeholders to define user interface and capability requirements. At the same time, the State will issue a Request For Proposal (RFP) to develop online professional development content. The State will also award competitive grants to teachers and professional learning communities for the development of digital content, training or instructional programming aligned with state standards.

- To provide administrative oversight and support to develop content on the iTunesU platform and communicate the digital and web-based supports to LEAs across the state, MDE will hire one additional FTE between June 2010 and June 2012. Their role will include: managing the RFP process to develop online instructional supports, review user-generated content, award grant funding to teachers and PLCs, monitor usage and create and manage content categories.

### **Implement professional development support for LEA administrators and curriculum directors**

Between winter of 2010 and winter 2012, MDE will train curriculum directors and school administrators (e.g., assistant superintendents, superintendents and principals) to support the adoption of common core standards and align local curriculum with state standards and benchmarks. The state will engage approximately 2,700 administrators and curriculum directors (average of 5-6 administrators per LEA) across the state through content training and planning support to align district timelines with the statewide adoption of common core standards. The format of these trainings will be a one-two-day workshop on K-12 subject areas for curriculum directors and/or administrative teams. Through these regionally-based trainings, curriculum directors and/or LEA administrators will be given access to digital professional networks to provide peer support throughout the implementation process. These networks will be determined based on commonalities such as implementation timelines, student populations served (e.g., elementary vs. secondary) and their locations. On the state's [www.getSTEM-mn.com](http://www.getSTEM-mn.com) site that has been recognized by the National Governor's Association, the Minnesota Department of Education teamed up with the non-profit Minnesota High Tech Association

and has already created a community of STEM educators and community members interested in advancing STEM education and experiences for students across the state. “getSTEM,” launched less than a year ago, has been gaining steam with 10,517 website views happening in the first 7 weeks of this school year. Teacher “asks” and business “offers” posted on “getSTEM” provide a “Craig’s List” style opportunity for educators and businesses to connect to support students. 152 teacher to business connections have been made on getSTEM in less than a year and over 8,000 students have benefited from these connections, with contributions in excess of \$400,000 in goods or services. Out of the 619 Total getSTEM Profiles, 373 are Educator Profiles and 246 Business Profiles. We will leverage our success with building online education communities on [www.getSTEM-mn.com](http://www.getSTEM-mn.com) even further by creating a place for teachers to find the best curriculum frameworks, classroom activities and supports at their finger tips on a technology platform 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Between fall 2010 and spring 2011, MDE will host online information sessions, including standards orientations for curriculum directors and administrators, standards implementation planning guides and other state resources.

**4) Develop computer-based interim assessments aligned with state standards.**

Between May 2010 and Winter 2011, the State, in partnership with participating LEAs and other key stakeholders, will develop and issue an RFP to select up to three high-quality vendors (ideally selecting more than one) to create interim assessments that align with the newly-adopted, common-core state standards. Participating LEAs must administer exams up to three times each year to every pupil. The RFP will require vendors to adapt assessments to align with Minnesota state standards and provide student result information within 72 hours. Special consideration will be given for vendors that provide college and career readiness assessment and 21st century skill assessments, as well as to those providing streamlined links between student assessment results, professional development and instruction strategies. Finally, preference will be given to applicants that can provide parent and student access to results. *(For further information on Minnesota’s planned formative assessment consortium and a sample list of additional RFP*

*requirements, see Appendices (B)(2) – Exhibit C and B(3) - Exhibit G).*

**5) Review Minnesota’s current English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP)**

June 2010 – September 2010 Review Minnesota’s current English language proficiency standards to ensure they contain the depth and clarity to allow teachers to align the ELP Standards to the Common Core and report findings to state leadership.

**6) Review and align Minnesota’s early learning standards ,the Minnesota Early Indicators of Childhood Progress (ECIPS)**

In Minnesota, the ECIPS are primarily used by early childhood teachers, caregivers and administrators as guidelines for planning curriculum, instruction and assessment of children. They are also designed to be used with community and policymakers to increase understanding of all areas of a child’s development and to support families by providing examples of strategies that facilitate and enhance children’s development. In order for children to be school ready, the ECIPS must be well aligned to the Common Core and Minnesota’s plan will ensure that this happens.

**7) Support programs to increase the number of high-poverty and minority students enrolled in rigorous courses**

The State will increase the enrollment of high-poverty students and members of ethnic minorities in core academic and rigorous coursework by issuing competitive grants to expand the capacity for Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Placement Exams (CLEP), IB courses in Middle and High Schools in targeted districts, Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and Career and Technical Education Programs of Study (CTE POS) that result in statewide technical skill assessments and are associated with articulated college or career certification credit and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in middle and high schools in target districts. The five areas of CTE POS that will be eligible for this competitive grant, because they will have statewide standardized technical skill assessments are Health Therapeutics, Plant Systems, Information Technology – Computer Networking, Accounting and Law Enforcement. Competitive priority will be given to those proposals that focus in on

delivering the rigor of the Common Core through one of the above programs, particularly in the areas of STEM.

Based on the success the state has seen through past Raised Academic Achievement Grants with respect to increasing the number of students that receive a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement exams, grant funding will also be awarded to increase the number of students enrolled in AP and IB programming, with a focus on minority and high poverty students. The state is confident that the expansion of these programs in the context of other RTTT efforts will further address the achievement gap in Minnesota. To implement these plans, the state will issue grants to targeted LEAs and schools that have large numbers of high-poverty and high-minority students.

Grant funding and rollout of these programs will follow the schedule below:

- By May, 2010, MDE will determine which LEAs to target and encourage to apply for the RTTT competitive grant opportunity in order to increase the number of underrepresented minority and high-poverty students that will be impacted by funding.
- Between June and December, 2010, the state will award grants to target LEAs, while MDE provides support to assist district and school administrators with coordination of scheduling and instructor needs.
- The state will develop online content and programming to increase capacity for rigorous coursework instruction in difficult to staff regions and, working with participating LEAs, will develop a methodology for identifying high-potential students for fall 2011.
- Between October 2010 and June 2011, the state will provide supports for teacher training; participating LEAs will establish a collaborative process between middle school and high school teachers and administrators to ensure consistency in identifying high-potential students and ensure alignment on coursework and student preparation.

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<b>Performance Measures</b> Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	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
Percentage of State completion of 15 percent augmentation and adoption of Common Core State Standards	100%				
Statewide LEA adoption of Common Core Standards (e.g., fully adopt new standards in local curriculum, local course exams, etc.)	N/A	25%	50%	90%	100%
Percentage of teachers in Participating LEAs completing Standards and Instruction training for “teachers in participating LEAs”	N/A	70%	100%		
Percentage of teachers in turnaround schools completing Standards and Instruction training for “Turnaround Schools”	N/A	N/A	30%	70%	100%
Percentage of all teachers who participate in Common Core Standards adoption information session and log into digital teacher supports (iTunesU platform)	N/A	70%	100%		
Percentage of all teachers statewide accessing digital and web-based instructional and professional development tools 3 or more times per year	N/A	15%	35%	55%	75%
Percentage of Curriculum Directors and administrators in participating LEAs that receive standards adoption and implementation training	N/A	70%	100%		

Percentage of Participating LEAs administering Interim Assessments aligned with state standards	N/A	50%	100%		
Percentage of high-poverty (approximately 70% of all LEAs based on MN minimum poverty concentration of 20%) and high-minority LEAs awarded advanced-rigor course grants	N/A	5%	10%		
Percentage of high-poverty, high-minority students participating in advanced-rigor exams	TBD				
Percentage of high-poverty, high-minority students achieving college-credit through advanced-rigor exams	TBD				

**(C) Data Systems to Support Instruction (47 total points)**

**State Reform Conditions Criteria**

**(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).

*In the text box below, the State shall describe which elements of the America COMPETES Act (as defined in this notice) are currently included in its statewide longitudinal data system.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

Minnesota's statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) currently includes 9 of the 12 elements required by the America COMPETES Act, and will fully incorporate the remaining three by the end of 2010. The Minnesota P20 Education Partnership voted on Tuesday, January 13, 2010 to amend their bylaws to establish a Longitudinal Data System Governing Committee in the Minnesota P20 Education Partnership for the purpose of overseeing the Minnesota Longitudinal Data System developed jointly by the Office of Higher Education (OHE) and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) (*see Appendix (C)(1) – Exhibit A*). OHE and MDE had already agreed to the first set of data elements that will be collected under Minnesota's Longitudinal Data System (*see Appendix (C)(1) – Exhibit B*). With the governance structure in place and the data elements agreed to, Minnesota is ready for full implementation of all of the elements of an effective longitudinal education data system. We were fortunate to receive a 2006 IES LDS Grant, and have recently applied for 2009 Statewide Longitudinal Data System Recovery Act grants to ensure speedy implementation and completion of our full P-20 longitudinal data system. (These funds have not been incorporated into our Race to the Top budget). A specific description of how we address each America COMPETES element follows:

**(1) Private, unique statewide student identifiers:** SERVS student, the state's web-based system, randomly generates a student identifier that is assigned when a student enters the education system anywhere in the state and is used throughout his/her educational career in Minnesota.

**(2) Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information:** The state started collecting this information in 1998 to support state financial systems and to compile education policy statistics such as AYP, disaggregated test scores and graduation rates. State aid payments are also based on individual student enrollment data, which the state collects through SERVS Student.

**(3) Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs:** This information has been collected since 1998 for P-12 programs for school aid payments. We have

recently established data sharing agreements with the state Office of Higher Education, which allows the incorporation of public and private higher-education student information into the state's P-20 data warehouse.

**(4) The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems;** Minn. Stat. §125B.07 subd 6, and Minn. Stat. § 13.32, subd. 11 authorize communication with higher education systems. As noted, the state has data sharing agreements with the Office of Higher Education, and has developed a joint P-20 Governance Committee to ensure timely implementation, protocol compliance, and review/approval of research and evaluation proposals.

**(5) A State data audit system;** The SERVS system automatically edits all information at the time of submission so that, for example, two districts may not claim the same student. Additionally, each program area validates their program's information.

**(6) Yearly test records.** Test records of individual students for assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)) have been provided since 2006 in a public, aggregated format as well as in a private, student-level format for teachers, parents and districts through the state's Educator Portal.

**(7) Information on students not tested:** The SERVS student system checks student enrollment during testing times and generates a public report by subgroup on each School Report Card (which is published on the MDE website) and for individual students on the Educator Portal, to ensure that we have a clear sense of which students were not represented in the testing data.

**(8) A teacher identifier system matched to students:** This component is incomplete. Although we do have a teacher identifier in the SERVS staff system, it currently does not connect with the relevant unique student identifiers. We are building a course directory to accomplish this and anticipate completion by the end of calendar 2010.

**(9) Student-level transcript information;** This component is not yet complete, however, we have completed the high school course catalog and are finishing middle and elementary school catalogs. Next year, schools will map their courses, attendance and

teachers to the catalogs through SERVS Student and SERVS Staff to ensure that full transcript information is available by the end of 2010.

**(10) Student-level college readiness test scores;** The state currently collects ACT scores tied to unique student identifiers, and also has a data sharing agreement to collect Advanced Placement (AP) and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) scores.

**(11) Information regarding successful student transitions to postsecondary education:** This component is incomplete today. The state’s new P-20 warehouse will house this information in 2010-2011, and will include data such as participation in remedial coursework, facilitated by the data-sharing agreement with the Office of Higher Education.

**(12) Other information to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education:** The state collects key indicators of college and career readiness, including ACT’s Education Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) scores; ACT ‘college ready’ scores; Dual Credit, Post Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), and “College in the Schools” (CIS) participation; and the state will add additional early indicators such as attendance, behavioral indicators, number of failing grades and credit accumulation (*see Appendix (C)(1) – Exhibit C*).

## Reform Plan Criteria

### **(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.<sup>5</sup>

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers 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: Two pages*

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

### ***Vision***

Minnesota will complete development of the P - 20 longitudinal student data system and make the information available to all relevant stakeholders in order to drive greater understanding of what underpins student achievement.

### **Background**

Minnesota currently provides public access to much of its LDS data through the Minnesota Dept of Education (MDE) website. The site provides aggregated school, district and statewide information in Excel or Adobe format, as well as color-coded maps and web-based access to the SERVS Staff system. Publicly-available information includes:

- Results by subgroup (e.g. on AYP, Minnesota Growth Model, Basic Standards Tests, MCA and MCA-II assessment, Test of Emerging Academic English, Student Oral Language Observation Matrices results, graduation rates)
- Summary statistics (e.g. number of students, teachers, attendance, languages, demographics, school contact information)
- School finance data, including revenue, expenditures, staffing trends
- Staff data, such as compliance, demographics, average salary, licensure
- Programs and services (e.g., library locations, service cooperatives, alternative programs, charter schools, supplemental educational services, Head Start, online learning providers, summer feeding sites, etc.).

Additionally, the state's Educator Portal for teachers and administrators provides secure access to individual and subgroup student and staff data. Access to this site is managed by districts, which are better equipped to use their HR records to verify and

approve individual users. The state's future plans include:

**1) Educator Portal Enhancements:**

- Improved site navigation and look-and-feel, to make the system more intuitive and user-friendly (which will be established with parent, teacher and principal focus groups)
- More custom data analytics in program-specific tabs provided by Information Builders, a market leader in business intelligence tools. (This was funded with 2006 IES grant monies).
- District, school and student dashboards, including college and career readiness as well as early performance indicators (e.g. attendance, disciplinary action, grades, test scores, etc.).
- Practical tools for teachers and principals, such as online survey tools, sharepoint sites, 24/7 training and instructional resources, web hosting for turnaround schools, and portal satisfaction surveys (*see (C)(3) for more information*).

**2) Creation of Portals for Parents, Communities and Researchers:**

- *Parent Portal*: MDE will create and populate a site for parents to see their children's performance data, including courses, grades, test scores, attendance, disciplinary action, and find information from the LDS, such as school accountability data, performance metrics, calendars, contact information, newsletters, course catalogs, aggregated teacher evaluations, and "Minnesota – Parents Know" resources. The system will handle feedback and provide communications with teachers and principals. Districts will manage user authentication.
- *Turnaround Schools Portal*: Each turnaround school (*see (E)(1)*) will be provided with a website to serve as a communication tool, resource clearinghouse, support mechanism and accountability tool. MDE will create a template for

the sites and the data coach and school administrative manager at each school will be responsible for keeping the school's site up to date.

- *P-20 Research Portal*: MDE will provide authorized researchers access to anonymous student, teacher and principal information in formats compatible with SPSS, Access, or Excel. Access will be by request, and approval of specific, custom queries will be monitored and granted by the P – 20 Governance Committee.

**3) STEM Analytical Data Dashboard:** Minnesota is developing a web-based analytical dashboard to help schools and districts understand how well individual schools and districts doing at preparing students for opportunities in STEM compared to the rest of the state, other states, and perhaps other nations

**4) Publication of Key Statewide LDS Metrics:** MDE will publish and present an annual report on the “state of education” in Minnesota, to inform policymakers of the successes and challenges for students, teachers and principals during the year, based on statewide LDS data. Specialized, quick view data dashboard reports will be available through the new system for Kindergarten Readiness, STEM, College and Career Readiness, and other key policy initiative areas.

<b>Performance Measures</b> Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	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
Percent of teachers with single-sign on logins to the Educator Portal	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Percent of administrators with single-sign on logins to the Educator Portal	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Percent of students with at least one parent having single-sign-on login to the Parent Portal	N/A	5%	15%	30%	50%
Number of research requests approved for the P-20 Research Portal	N/A	6	12 (1/month avg)	24 (2/month avg)	36 (3/month avg)
Number of community partner links in the Turnaround Schools Portal	N/A	60 (2/school avg)	120 (4/school avg)	210 (7/school avg)	360 (12/school avg)
Percent of teachers accessing Educator Portal annually (% of total teachers)	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Percent of administrators accessing Educator Portal annually (% of total administrators)	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Annual number of visits to the Educator Portal	90,000 (approximation)	151,200 (3 visits/login)	172,800 (3 visits/login)	194,400(3 visits/login)	216,000 (3 visits/login)
Annual number of visits to the Turnaround Schools Portal	N/A	2,020 (1 visit/stakeholder)	4,040 (2 visits/stakeholder)	6,060 (3 visits/stakeholder)	8,080 (4 visits/stakeholder)

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Annual number of visits to the Parent Portal	N/A	42,500 (1 visit/login)	255,000 (2 visits/login)	765,000 (3 visits/login)	1,700,000 (4 visits/login)
Percent of users satisfied with accessibility, format and type(s) of data available on Educator Portal	N/A	65%	75%	80%	85%
Percent of users satisfied with accessibility, format and type(s) of data available on Turnaround Schools Portal	N/A	65%	75%	80%	85%
Percent of users satisfied with accessibility, format and type(s) of data available on P-20 Research Portal	N/A	65%	75%	80%	85%

**(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;
- (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
- (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).

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note the location where the attachment can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Five pages*

### ***Vision***

Minnesota will ensure that teachers, principals and researchers have access to—and the skills to properly use—student, staff and program data to improve instruction.

### **Background**

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has been working to establish a common language for data-driven decision-making for the state's districts and schools under an initiative called the Minnesota Model for Data Driven Decisions (M2D3). M2D3 is intended to support and enhance the use of student assessment and program evaluation data to enable continuous improvements in instruction and curricula, as well as in school organization, management, and environment (*see Appendix (C)(3) – Exhibit A*).

This initiative encourages the flow of data and information among different decision-making groups, including policy makers, program implementers, and continuous improvement teams that review school-wide data trends, classroom teachers, and even students interested in their results. M<sup>2</sup>D<sup>3</sup> uses a five-stage model, called the “Success in Sight” model, which was developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to guide the decision-making process and sustain improvements in schools: 1) Taking Stock 2) Focus on the Right Solution 3) Take Collective Action 4) Monitor and Adjust, and 5) Maintain Momentum. The first two stages focus on analysis of student achievement data and goal-setting, while the last three focus on using program evaluation data with student achievement data.

### ***School Improvement Planning***

On top of the development of the statewide LDS, Minnesota plans to drive continuous improvement in the understanding and use of data by adding new instructional improvement systems and support services.

## 1) Instructional improvement systems

- *The Minnesota Early Indicator Response System (MEIRS):* The state has established a working group to implement the MEIRS web-based dashboard, which will alert schools when students are veering off track in order to help correct the problem and move these students on to graduation and college and career readiness. MEIRS is being developed with input from a variety of organizations, including Minnesota public schools, the University of Minnesota, Minnesota state colleges and universities, and Minnesota technical colleges. The system will have performance indicators based on current and proposed data elements from the P-12 LDS and the Statewide Longitudinal Educational Data System (SLEDS) P-20 data warehouse. These indicators will signal the need for potential intervention with individual students or sub-groups. MEIRS is being designed to capture non-achievement *and* achievement data such as attendance, suspensions, number of failing grades, credit accumulation, and college readiness scores such as ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) exams. These will help create a more comprehensive view of the student and provide another way of identifying potential problems. The MEIRS analytic dashboard will be incorporated into the Educator and Parent Portals (*see (D)(2) for more information*) to ensure accessibility, as well as into the P – 20 Research Portal as approved by the LDS governing body.
- *Interim Assessments* – As mentioned in (B)(3), the state will issue an RFP for an interim assessment system, aligned with state standards, that would provide formative student results to teachers within 72 hours via the Educator Portal. We anticipate that the interim assessments will be available starting in 2011, and all students in participating LEAs will have subsidized access to these interim assessments.
- *Web-based delivery of research-based instructional strategies:* The state will issue an RFP for digital delivery of research-based teacher instructional strategies, linked to state standards at the strand level. The goal is to establish a recommended Teaching Practices Guide beginning in winter 2010-2011 for all core content areas that will be available online and accessible

24/7 by teachers and principals. These guides will provide lessons, tutorials, additional instructional resources, classroom software applications, evaluation techniques and other resources.

- *Apple “iTunesU” Platform:* The state has signed a memorandum of understanding with iTunes to provide a platform for web-based delivery of instructional content, intervention strategies, and sample lessons online and via the Educator Portal in the iTunes format, for use with teacher and student devices. This content can be downloaded anywhere by teachers, parents or principals and is expected to serve as the delivery platform for an expanding range of educational content. A large collection of digital STEM content is available for iTunes distribution immediately, including video clips of lessons and activities as well as content submitted from area science museums and other STEM partners. This content will be built on over time, based on teacher submissions, partner organizations (e.g. museums, libraries), and research-based instructional strategy system (described above).
- *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum:* Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SECs) are detailed, comprehensive, web-based assessments that compare an individual teacher’s actual classroom practices to state standards to identify gaps, redundancies, lack of rigor, and opportunities to improve the integration between standards and the enacted curriculum. The survey system was piloted successfully in 2007 and rolled out with more than 2,000 teachers who participated in the state’s math and science academies. Over time, SEC results will track changes in instructional practice and help spot ways to help students meet proficiency levels on statewide tests.
- *Online professional development resources:* The state will create, share and post online training and other resources through the Educator Portal, including:
  - WebEx presentations on how to interpret commonly used data (e.g. test results)

- Common questions and answers for using student data to improve instruction
- Examples of student data with recommended interventions or action steps
- Links to research and best practice materials

## **2) Support Services**

- *Data Coaches:* One of the keys to ensuring that teachers and principals become adept and frequent users of data is to provide on-site experts, who can answer questions, model data-driven decision-making, and provide coordinated activities and training. All participating LEAs will be given stipends for a data coach. This role is intended to be filled by a master teacher (*see D(2)*) in the school, who is still in the classroom and has been trained as a teacher leader in data-driven decision making. This person will support the principal and teachers within the school by training staff, attending and supporting PLCs, observing classrooms to recommend improvements, analyzing student and school-wide data, and providing reports and recommendations on student performance. Each data coach will be given 2 full days of training, which will be coordinated centrally and provided regionally by the state (*see Appendix (C)(3) – Exhibit A*).
- *Professional development time:* All participating LEAs will receive funds to provide 5 additional days of professional development on data-driven decision making over the four-year term of the grant. LEAs can stagger this time as they wish, provided it is in keeping with the spirit of this assurance. Specifically, this time is intended to build capabilities in areas such as accessing and using LDS data, analysis techniques and systems, use of instructional improvement resources, etc. (*See (D)(5) for more information*)

## **3) Understanding Research-Driven Best Practices in Instructional Improvement**

The P-20 Research Portal will provide researchers with access to the data needed to identify the predictors of long-term success, from

pre-kindergarten through higher education. The P-20 Research Portal will help us define what truly makes a difference in the academic experiences of students—and what does not. The key is linking lifetime data on students who graduate from a Minnesota public high schools and attend a Minnesota post-secondary institution at the undergraduate level (approximately 40,000 high school graduates annually).

The data warehouse will receive inputs provided by MDE, the Office of Higher Education, and the Department of Employment and Economic Development, and will be maintained in the state-wide LDS hosted by the Office of Enterprise Technology. Both the data warehouse and the P-20 Research Portal will be managed jointly by MDE and OHE, using a service-level agreement with OET. The system will provide analysis in three key areas:

1. *System Performance*: How the overall educational system is performing, using aggregate student performance at key points in time (e.g., starting kindergarten, moving to 6<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade, graduation from high school). These data can be used to focus on student performance in relationship to criteria established by Minnesota and provide a common rubric for evaluating student and system performance.
2. *Educational Attainment Gaps*: How does performance vary by demographic, socioeconomic or geographic groups? Longitudinal information will help identify how performance lags early in the student's school career impact later measures of educational success.
3. *Program and Intervention*: How effective are educational programs and interventions designed to increase educational attainment? A number intervention programs to promote equality of educational outcomes have been in place for many years, yet little is known about their collective impact on students.

Greater understanding and use of data, coupled with a greater cultural and developmental emphasis on continuous instructional improvements will both support and incent behaviors focused on driving student growth and achievement.

**(D) Great Teachers and Leaders (138 total points)**

**State Reform Conditions Criteria**

**(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
- (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.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

## ***Background***

Minnesota statutes authorize high-quality alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals, and the number of teachers using these alternatives rose 60 percent in 2008 – 2009. Both the Board of Teaching and the Board of School Administrators are committed to amending and promulgating rules that enable consistent, clear application of standards for authorization of high-quality alternative pathway programs.

### **1) Alternative teacher certification routes**

Minn. Stat. §122A.24 authorizes alternative teacher preparation licensing through high-quality programs that meet 4 out of the 5 elements of an ‘alternative route to certification,’ as defined in the RTTT notice. The statute specifies that programs must: 1) be selective; 2) provide peer coaching and development via a resident mentorship team; 3) require demonstrated subject knowledge and skills in previous coursework or exams; and 4) provide program completers with a standard entrance license. Currently, the statute also requires shared design and delivery of the program with post-secondary faculty (*see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit A*). The Board of Teaching (BOT)’s Minn. Rule §8700.7600 Subparts 5c, 5d and 5e align with this statute, and there are two alternative teacher preparation programs currently operating as “experimental teacher preparation programs” under these rules: Teach For America (TFA) and Twin Cities Teaching Fellows (TCTF). Both are sponsored by Hamline University (*see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit B.*)

In its first year (2008-09), Teach For America brought 42 new teachers into Minneapolis Public Schools (with the support of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers), Brooklyn Center Schools, and six area charter schools. Over the next three years, TFA expects to cycle 120 corps members through Minnesota schools, reaching more than 10,000 students in the region. Selected from a record pool of 35,000 TFA applicants, we have very high expectations for these corps members, who were chosen from a record

35,000 TFA applicants and earned average 3.6 GPAs from universities such as the University of Minnesota, Yale, Carleton College, Macalester, Whitman, and College of William and Mary.

Twin Cities Teaching Fellows, formerly known as St. Paul Teaching Fellows and recently expanded to include Minneapolis and the surrounding region, seeks both outstanding professionals and recent college graduates to make a difference in the lives of the students who most need effective teaching most. Fellows teach hard-to-staff subjects – secondary math, secondary science, bilingual elementary education and K-12 special education – in high-need schools, while completing their licensure coursework. This highly selective program is designed to recruit and train driven, highly motivated individuals who want to give back to our community and make a long-term commitment by changing their careers to become teachers in some of our highest-need public schools. In 2008, 42 fellows were selected to participate and an additional 25 have been selected in 2009. These teachers also help St. Paul in diversifying its teaching force. Two cohorts of teachers have been hired into the district, both with 20 percent or more of the incoming class identified as candidates of color. This is impressive considering that just 15 percent of current St. Paul teachers and 5 percent of the state’s 2007-08 education school graduates are people of color. *(Additional details on these programs can be found in Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit C).* Teachers in TFA and TCTF represent ~4 percent of new teachers licensed by Minnesota in the last two years. The numbers of such teachers will likely grow more once the BOT amends its rules to streamline the approval process for high-quality, innovative licensure programs *(see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit D).*

The state will ensure reporting about authorized alternative pathway programs is clear, including data regarding program completer background, subjects taught, proportion of teachers of color, and placement by district.

## **2) Alternative principal certification routes**

Minn. Stat. §122A.27 authorizes alternative principal licensing for high-quality programs through the Board of School Administrators (BOSA). The authorizing language meets the same 4 out of 5 elements of an ‘alternative route to certification’ as

defined in this notice, and does require affiliation with a postsecondary institution. BOSA plans to promulgate new rules in 2010 that align with Minn. Stat. §112A.27 to authorize alternative principal preparation programs (*see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit E*). No programs have applied to be authorized under this statute to date.

### **3) Teacher and Principal Shortage Areas**

MDE provides a bi-annual Teacher Supply and Demand Survey to the legislature, pursuant to Minn. Stat. §127A.05 subd. 6. This report includes analysis on the patterns of shortages by subject area and region, and tracks district progress in hiring teachers and substitutes in shortage areas. The report also includes a 5-year projection of teacher demand for each district, to help districts plan their hiring around retirement, population and demographic trends. The 2009 Teacher Supply and Demand survey identified the shortages in, by order of greatest need: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD), Science 5-8, Mathematics 5-8, Special Education Early Childhood, Earth and Space Science, Spanish and Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

There are several programs operating that address teacher shortage areas. The Twin Cities Teaching Fellows program specifically targets its teacher placements to areas of greatest locally identified need in the Twin Cities metro area. The St. Paul Federation of Teachers was recently awarded an American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Innovation Grant for their CareerTeacher grow-your-own approach to teacher recruitment and preparation which creates multiple pathways to recruit and improve representation of people traditionally under-represented in teaching, and that intentionally address the problem of hard-to-staff license areas – this includes a wide range of activities, from high school recruiting, to college campus recruiting, and recruiting of “career changers” in other industries. Additionally, authorization for licensure via portfolio can be granted for any subject area or school (e.g., for midcareer changers or for current teachers to add an area), and similarly science teachers can take a content-knowledge exam in another science area to gain another license and fill specific needs (e.g., high school physics). There is currently no consistent or significant shortage of principals in Minnesota (*see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit F*).

## Reform Plan Criteria

### **(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
- (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.

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals,*

*activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers 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: Ten pages*

“We know that improving teacher quality is one of the most powerful ways—if not *the* most powerful way—to create better schools” – *The Widget Effect*, The New Teacher Project (2009)

***Vision***

- To provide teachers and principals with a comprehensive professional assessment system that empowers, supports, and incents them to drive student achievement and growth. Recognizing that we have strong momentum and a history of innovation in evaluation, which is a key foundational element to any comprehensive reform effort, Minnesota has long placed a significant emphasis on assessment of teachers and principals. Our current efforts are centered on two major initiatives:
- *The Minnesota Growth Model* – Designed to quantify and understand individual student growth on annual, summative standardized reading and math tests, using data going back to the 2006-2007 school year. It was developed jointly with state policy makers and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), with input from evaluation and assessment experts in local districts to capture, assess student, teacher and school performance. The model measures schools based on the percentage of students who meet state proficiency and growth targets. Results are for schools overall, by grade, by subgroup, and grade & subgroup. Each school’s results are posted on the MDE website as part of its report card. A simple matrix shows how many proficient and non-proficient students in a school are experiencing high, medium or low growth, allowing for detailed insights into questions such as how many non-proficient students are achieving the growth needed to become proficient (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit A*).
- *Quality Compensation for Teachers program (or “Q Comp”)* – This groundbreaking system of professional development, teacher evaluation and performance-based compensation was introduced in 2005. Currently, Minnesota districts and charter schools serving over 30 percent of our students have volunteered to participate. Local district administration and teacher representatives design and agree to how they will implement the five-part Q Comp program, which is based on the Teacher

Advancement Program (TAP) model. In public school districts, these agreed-upon approaches are included within collective bargaining agreements. The five components of the Q Comp program include:

1. **Career Pathways/Advancement Options for Teachers:** Qualified and effective teachers are offered opportunities to take on leadership roles to share their expertise with their colleagues while retaining a primary role in student instruction.
2. **Job-Embedded Professional Development:** Aligning professional development with student achievement goals on a standardized assessment and providing teachers with weekly or semi-weekly meeting times in the school or teacher contract day to work with colleagues on instructional issues (e.g. professional learning communities)
3. **Teacher Evaluation/Observation:** Tracks teacher growth and improvement in instructional skills through formative teacher evaluation and observation, based on a standardized rubric and provided by a team of trained evaluators/observers; Each teacher must be evaluated at least three times a year by at least two different evaluators/observers
4. **Performance Pay:** Performance bonuses are based on specific teacher and student performance indicators and at least 60 percent of the additional compensation a teacher receives must be based on three performance factors: school-wide student growth on a standardized assessment; student achievement based on classroom, grade level, or team goals; and teacher evaluation/observation results
5. **Alternative Salary Schedule:** Reforms the traditional “steps and lanes” compensation schedules with performance-based increases. At a minimum the salary schedule must be revised so that no teacher receives an increase in base salary unless specific performance indicators are met

Q Comp promotes student achievement by not only developing capabilities of individual teachers, but also by building teacher

leaders, who reshape how schools and districts function. Under Q Comp, teachers have time to discuss instructional practices, student achievement data, and student work during their contract day. Collaboratively, teachers set goals for school-wide and individual student achievement, determine how to improve instructional practices, and work with teacher leaders to improve classroom instruction and student achievement. The evaluation process documents the development of every teacher, based on skills, responsibilities and student growth. The performance-based compensation provides the incentives for continuous improvement in teacher effectiveness.

An important feature of the Q Comp program is the manner in which it is customized in each district and charter school. While the statute provides a foundation to the program, teachers and administrators work collaboratively to ensure that the implementation fits their situation, and that they have a certain degree of flexibility within the program goals. An Advisory Committee of representatives from established Q Comp districts, unions, other educational organizations and MDE monitors implementation issues and provides input for program decisions. Also, a large networking group of Q Comp teachers meets regularly so all participants have a chance to communicate, collaborate and improve their implementation efforts.

Q Comp funding currently provides \$169 per pupil of state aid, with an additional \$91 district levy possible, for a total of up to \$260 per pupil per year (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit B and C*).

Q Comp is already proving an effective tool for improving teaching and student performance. A 2008 external evaluation found “... a significant and positive correlation between the number of years a school has been implementing Q Comp and student achievement” (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit D*). The program has garnered national attention and commendation, including from AFT/UFT President Randi Weingarten, who in March 2009 wrote in *The New York Times*: “Unlike traditional ‘merit pay,’ which trades higher student test scores for individual teacher bonuses, Q Comp is a refreshingly holistic approach that includes things like a career ladder, job-embedded professional development and a wide array of teacher evaluations using numerous criteria — the kinds of components that both identify and grow good teaching” (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit E*). Superintendents, principals, and

teachers have also responded positively in districts that have adopted Q Comp (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit F*).

***Plans to address assurance criteria***

To build on this foundation, the state proposes a set of eight initiatives to use performance evaluation, development and performance incentives more widely to drive further improvement in classroom teaching, school-level management, and student performance.

**1) Develop a teacher- and principal-led “recommended” state rubric for teacher and principal evaluation**

As we canvassed stakeholders across the state to prepare this application, we heard that many districts want the option of a best practice model that they can adopt “as-is.” Currently the Q Comp program allows districts the flexibility of developing evaluations that has led to inconsistency in the collection of teacher performance evaluation data. To address this concern, the state will convene a task force to develop a recommended evaluation rubric for Q Comp that districts can adopt, rather than developing their own teacher and principal evaluations, if so desired. This is particularly important for bringing small districts, that lack resources to develop their own rubrics, into the program. Furthermore, greater standardization addresses the wishes of districts already participating in the Q Comp network, who have observed that their initially disparate evaluation models have begun to converge and now believe more commonality would be of great benefit. Evaluation frameworks for teachers in non-core subject areas will closely follow frameworks similar to traditional classroom teachers (e.g., planning and preparation, environment, delivery of services and professional responsibilities). However, the student outcome components of non-core subject area teachers will require the input of experts from each of these areas work to develop a recommended the appropriate evaluation components. Similarly, evaluation frameworks for specialist’s positions need to reflect the unique qualities of these positions. MDE will provide assistance by assisting to convene experts (where appropriate) and provide technical assistance directly to districts in developing evaluation non-core subject area evaluation rubrics. The state can draw from its experience with the TAP program, which the Minneapolis Public Schools system has successfully grown to over 590 teachers serving 6900 students, to provide this assistance.

The taskforce will also address concerns that any fair evaluation rubric must incorporate multiple measures and reviewers, and should be developed with significant input by teachers and principals. While the current Q Comp framework does allow for LEA flexibility in developing evaluations, we feel that leveraging the expertise of the state’s teachers and principals in developing a “recommended” evaluation rubric for both teachers and principals – across subjects and grade levels – would be a significant improvement.

Use of the resulting state-developed rubric would be optional for LEAs, who may still develop their own rubrics, provided that they meet RTTT and Q Comp guidelines (see details in the next paragraph). Our goal is to have the recommended rubric finished by August 2010. To meet that target, MDE will name the members of a work group of 10 – 20 people no later than February 2010. This group will be comprised of:

- At least 50 percent teachers
- At least 10 percent principals or superintendents
- Representation by urban, suburban and rural districts
- Representatives from key SES subgroups within the state
- Participation from both internal (e.g., MDE) and external stakeholders (e.g., local unions, experts from higher education, parents’ groups, businesses, students)
- Participation by education professionals who currently conduct teacher and principal evaluations
- Participation by experts in high-need, low-performing schools

## **2) Ensure more consistent, supportive and rigorous teacher and principal evaluation by enhancing Q Comp requirements for participating LEAs**

In the four years since the Minnesota legislature enacted Q Comp, we have learned a great deal about evaluation, thanks to the experiences of LEAs that have already implemented the program. Based on these lessons, we are taking this opportunity to enhance the rigor of our guidelines for all participating LEAs, by adding requirements to:

- Implement teacher evaluation rubrics that use multiple measures, including classroom-level student growth as well as other measures relevant to the LEA (e.g., cultural proficiency)
- Ensure evaluation rating outcomes use a 5-level scale (e.g., highly effective, very effective, effective, performing with issues, ineffective)
- Provide support (e.g., technical assistance and expert-recommended rubrics) to LEAs for the creation of evaluation rubrics for non-core subject area teachers
- Include principals in all aspects of Q Comp (e.g. evaluation, compensation, professional development). Note: up to \$2000 per participating LEA principal will be provided for the Q Comp funds through Race to the Top to ensure that the near-term state allocations are not diverting any funds away from teachers; however the long term goal would be to have the state continue to support Q Comp, both teachers and principals.
- Provide a set amount of training to evaluators, to ensure inter-rater reliability
- Differentiate and tailor professional development based on evaluation ratings/needs
- Refer all teachers and principal receiving the lowest ‘ineffective’ rating to Peer Assistance & Review (PAR), a peer

representative with authority to prescribe and guide developmental improvements or recommend dismissal to a committee of teachers and administrators

- In order to ensure only effective teachers are granted tenure in the first place, emphasize that per Minn. Stat. §122A.40 subd 5, teacher evaluation outcomes consistent with statewide performance evaluation standards should be used as a basis for determination of whether to grant tenure to teachers after their probationary period. Minnesota statutes currently ensure that a teacher has had sufficient evaluations on which to establish valid and reliable performance evaluations prior to receiving tenure in districts statewide: “Evaluation must occur at least three times each year for a teacher performing services on 120 or more school days, at least two times each year for a teacher performing services on 60 to 119 school days, and at least one time each year for a teacher performing services on fewer than 60 school days” (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit G*).
- Report aggregated principal and teacher evaluation ratings annually to the Minnesota Department of Education, including the relationship of those evaluations to the granting of tenure, referral into the PAR program, etc., to ensure the evaluations are truly linked to key decisions

LEAs currently on Q Comp will be “grandfathered” in, and allowed to maintain current Q Comp proposal plans through their next set of contract negotiations. However, by July 1, 2012 (by which time all districts will have completed their next round of contract negotiations), they must submit updated Q Comp applications to the state that fully address and incorporate the strengthened guidelines. MDE will spell out the new guidance in application forms and on its website by June 2010. In addition, MDE’s School Improvement division will provide technical assistance to any LEAs that require assistance in revising their Q Comp programs. MDE will also support LEAs by providing resources for evaluator training (such as potential curricula, workshops, etc.) and set up a voluntary, online evaluator ‘loan’ exchange forum for LEAs that will make available evaluators from other LEAs to perform evaluations, if desired. These outside evaluators can provide additional perspective and content expertise, as needed, and could be

particularly useful in smaller, outstate districts.

Adopting this enhanced evaluation program will have widespread benefits. It will enable greater understanding of the overall population of effective educators and how they are distributed by district, school type and subject area. It will make it easier for LEAs and the state to understand and meet the development needs of educators. It will inform the debates regarding pathways to teacher and principal certification and will help isolate the components of preparation programs that lead to the greatest amount of success in the classroom. Finally, enhanced evaluation provides a common benchmark for understanding and improving the core strengths and abilities of Minnesota's current teachers and leaders.

### **3) Ensure all participating LEAs are on Q Comp**

To make sure that the benefits of the enhanced Q Comp guidelines are realized quickly and broadly in the state, we propose to speed adoption by requiring participating LEAs to be part of Q Comp. All participating LEAs are encouraged to begin taking part in Q Comp as soon as possible, and will be required to develop and submit to MDE a proposal for adopting the enhanced Q Comp evaluation guidelines by July 1, 2012; state approval will be no later than September 30, 2012. LEAs can opt to use either the state's recommended evaluation rubric, or one of its own design (provided it meets enhanced Q Comp requirements for RTTT). Minnesota will continue to fund the Q Comp program with state funds, and will not use Race to the Top grant monies to support the expansion of Q Comp. This is intended to ensure that the professional evaluation and development system is truly sustainable in the long term.

The School Improvement division staff will provide technical assistance to any LEAs that require help revising their Q Comp program, and will ensure adequate resources for a timely feedback and review of LEA proposals so that districts have time to act on any concerns the state has regarding their applications. Any participating district that fails to submit a Q Comp evaluation plan incorporating the enhanced guidelines by July 1, 2012 will have its remaining RTTT funds withheld. At the same time, the state is

committed to making sure that the longitudinal data system with links between student and teacher records will go live during 2011, to incorporate the student growth data needed for the enhanced teacher evaluations.

**4) Strengthen and target professional development and other supports to enhance growth among tenured teachers and principals**

Q Comp evaluations are designed to be both formative and aligned with school-wide educational improvement plans and individual staff development plans. Q Comp teacher evaluations inform what development plans are set for teachers, how new teacher mentors are selected, what professional development should be chosen, as well as whether a referral to Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) is warranted, either for remediation or general strengthening of skills. Additionally, Q Comp provides opportunities for teachers to have leadership roles as well as regularly-occurring job-embedded professional development opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on instructional strategies. For principals, evaluations will similarly inform participation in PAR and guide individual development through the Minnesota Principals' Academy. *(In section (D)(5) we describe in greater detail how Race to the Top funding would enhance our induction and professional development activities for teachers and principals.)*

**5) Adopt tiered licensure structure for teachers, with progression linked to performance on multiple standards**

Minnesota's current licensure structure doesn't recognize or reward the growth in our educators' skills and abilities. One meaningful way to standardize and institutionalize recognition of these achievements is through tiered licensure. The Board of Teaching (BOT) is designing a tiered structure (for example, "provisional," "continuing" and "master teacher" licenses), with the involvement of many stakeholders to be completed by the end of 2010. Movement to the next licensure level will require demonstrations of effective performance on multiple measures – including student growth – as well as participation in the state-supported induction program by provisional teachers. Progression from a continuing level of licensure to a master teacher level will require demonstrations of effectiveness above and beyond that which is required to earn a continuing license. The Board of Teaching has

already convened two open workshops on tiered licensure in November and December 2009 (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit H*), and is beginning the process of defining each license level and specifying requirements for advancement through the tiers.

Initially, under this approach, all currently licensed teachers will be given a ‘continuing’ license. Going forward, the Minnesota Board of Teaching will govern and direct the Minnesota Department of Education to implement a tiered licensure system. The Board of Teaching will define a tier for initially licensed teachers that is different from the continuing license tier. Based on workshops to date, movement from one tier to the next will require that a teacher meet the performance measurements, as determined by the Board of Teaching that are consistent with the standardized statewide teacher effectiveness performance evaluations and may include work samples. Meeting these performance measures of classroom teaching effectiveness will be required to move from an initial license to a continuing license and then to move to a master teaching license. According to the BOT workshops, there will be at least three tiers: Initial or Provisional, Continuing and Master.

Consistent with current state law, all teachers will continue to be required to go through re-licensure every 5 years. The legislature has already directed the Board of Teaching in 2009 to implement new criteria for renewal of licensure every 5 years that includes the requirement that a teacher candidate applying for re-licensure show “evidence of support for student learning, use of best practice techniques and their applications to student learning” as well as collaborative work with teaching colleagues, which can be evidenced in work samples and job-embedded professional development performance evaluations (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit I*).

Additionally the Board of Teaching is initiating the requirement of classroom teaching effectiveness work samples, as standard for teacher licensure candidates in teacher preparation programs statewide. As the Board of Teaching works with stakeholders on its redesign of Minnesota’s licensure structure, to accommodate performance-based tiers, performance based re-licensure statute language will be integrated into the tiered licensure structure. Finally, by 2012-13, teacher leadership opportunities in participating LEAs (e.g., those leadership opportunities identified through Q Comp program) should only be offered to teachers who have earned

a 'master teacher' license.

LEAs will report to the state the number and distribution of each type of licensure within their LEA by school, level and subject. MDE will ensure that there is adequate state-level support to roll out of the new licensure structure and collect aggregate license information by school, grade and subject. To ensure confidentiality, aggregation and reporting will require cohorts of 10 or more in each category (e.g., number of master math teachers per high school).

**6) Redesign the principal preparation, licensure and professional development process, with a standard process for movement up linked to performance on multiple measures against licensure standards**

Current guidelines and standards regarding principal preparation, licensure and professional development in Minnesota are not as rigorous or as clear as they are for teachers. The MDE is addressing this issue and proposing a Comprehensive School Leadership Redesign effort, which will begin in 2010 with the convening of a work group to update and improve the processes of principal preparation, licensing and professional development. The focus will be on creating performance-based systems for evaluation and advancement, similar to those that have been developed for teachers, including a parallel three-tiered licensing structure. The working group will complete its work by the end of 2010. The workgroup will require:

- Representatives from urban, suburban and rural districts
- Representatives from key SES subgroups within the state
- Principals comprise at least 50 percent of the participants
- Teachers represent at least 10 percent of the group
- Diverse representatives from stakeholders such as MDE, The Board of School Administrators (BOSA), higher education,

MN Principals Academy, Principals' Associations, superintendents, parents, etc.

BOSA will participate in the redesign and promulgate new rules as necessary to support the rollout of the work group's recommendations. BOSA will focus on creating the three-tier principal license structure--defining requirements for provisional, continuing and master certification by 2011. As with the tiered teacher licensure, movement to the next principal license will be contingent upon demonstration of effective performance on multiple measures, including improvements to teacher effectiveness and school-wide student growth.

All currently tenured principals will initially be given a continuing license, and all currently untenured, licensed principals will be given provisional licenses. Going forward, provisionally licensed principals cannot receive a continuing license unless recommended for tenure by their employing district, based on their evaluations. MDE will ensure that there is adequate state-level support to roll out the new licensure structure, and will collect and report aggregated license information by district. Again, a cohort will require at least 10 members for aggregation and reporting.

#### **7) Expand Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) to provide additional support and development opportunities**

PAR programs can enhance both the support and quality of education by providing coaching to promising and/or struggling teachers and principals. PAR gives educators clear feedback and opportunities to improve their performance, and a transparent and objective process for exiting poor performer, when necessary. The New Teacher Project's study of Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) found that 37 percent of individuals referred to MPS' Peer Assistance and Review services, exited the system. (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit J*). Districts have tended to use PAR as only a tool for remediation, rather than a development opportunity for teachers and principals who do not have overall performance issues. Indeed, only about 1 percent of all MPS tenured teachers received PAR services over the last four years. Largely this is an issue of resources: LEAs frequently lack qualified Consulting Teachers (CTs) and Consulting Principals (CPs) to support expanded use of PAR. However, the PAR process has been successfully used in cities

such as Minneapolis, Toledo, Montgomery, Syracuse and Rochester, N.Y., and can be used to support a broad range of teachers in Minnesota to advance our effort to improve teacher effectiveness (*see Appendix (D)(2) – Exhibit K*).

The state plans to use PAR as a way to support both strong and struggling teachers and principals. Teachers and principals will either be referred to PAR or can volunteer for any number of reasons: Some may have performance issues in a particular area; others may have recently switched schools, subjects, or grade levels and want up-front assistance; some may have returned from a leave of absence; others simply may wish to improve their skills and knowledge (e.g. achieving National Board Certification). PAR will enable strong support from consulting teachers and principals through intensive (10 times/year) observation and feedback to serve the specific needs of teachers and principals in various situations. To facilitate expanded PAR support, the state will:

- Post best practices online to assist LEAs in setting up and using PAR (e.g. CT, CP and PAR Board job descriptions; guidelines for selection of PAR Board; processes, oversight, measurement and reporting, etc.)
- Provide funds for LEAs to hire Consulting Teachers and Consulting Principals directly – with the goal of having one CT or CP for every 15 teachers or principals in the program. Larger districts will likely be able to afford full-time CT/CPs; depending on the distribution of participating LEAs, smaller and/or more rural LEAs may combine and share CT/CPs regionally or contract with regional consultants.
- Fund 5 days of training for new CT/CPs.
- Require teachers and principals with ‘ineffective’ ratings on their Q Comp evaluations to be referred to PAR
- Set annual goals for PAR referrals (teachers by principals and principals by superintendents): 1.5 percent in Year One, 2.0 percent in Year Two, 2.5 percent in Year Three, 3.0 percent in Year 4. While actual participation can be higher, the state wants to ensure that the referral pipeline is also well-used. These goals would translate to ~9 percent of all teachers and

principals in participating LEAs served by PAR programs within four years. This will be a key tool in our efforts to improve teacher and principal effectiveness.

- Report aggregated statewide results of number and percent of teachers and principals in PAR, and breakdown of outcomes (e.g., successfully improved, retired, left voluntarily, dismissed)

#### **8) Promote transparency and inform decision-making by reporting aggregated evaluation results and enforcing proper data collection**

The basis of any improvement program is proper measurement. One concern with teacher and principal evaluations is the tendency for all teachers or principals to be given ‘good or great’ evaluation ratings. To ensure a greater degree of inter-rater reliability between districts, the state will conduct analysis to normalize teacher and principal evaluation results across the state and by district, school, subject and grade level wherever possible. For example, MDE could compare the distribution of student grades, growth and scores on state-mandated exams with teacher and principal evaluation results, with the aim of identifying “mismatches.” Ratings would be examined at the district level (*not* at an individual teacher level) to see where ratings are over- or under-inflated (e.g., 70 percent of teachers are rated as ‘highly effective’ even though student growth is extraordinarily low) or do not reflect true teacher or principal achievement (e.g., above average growth in student achievement).

The state will use this information to provide feedback to LEAs and provide coaching where results indicate that their evaluations do not reflect student outcomes. This may involve evaluator training, use of outside evaluators, clearer delineation of evaluation rubric or other measures to ensure inter-rater reliability of evaluation data. The state will also report aggregated teacher and principal evaluation data annually by state, district, school, subject and level wherever there are at least 10 individuals within a cohort to prevent violation of FERPA privacy rules. This can help the state answer key questions such as “What percent of MN teachers and principals are effective, highly effective, ineffective? In what subjects do we have the greatest room for improvement?”,

What percent of teachers earning tenure are in which evaluation category? What improvements are seen in teachers completing PAR who remain in teaching?”

Overall, this integrated approach applies teacher and principal evaluations using multiple measures, including student outcomes, to inform compensation, career pathways, and professional development through enhanced Q Comp. Evaluations are critical to tenure decisions through Minnesota state law, and will be core to advancement decisions and the associated opportunities per the tiered licensure system. The removal process will be supported through required referral to Peer Assistance and Review for ineffective teachers, and Peer Assistance and Review will also serve the purpose of supporting the growth of our already effective teachers to further enhance their professional skills. Taken together, Minnesota’s reform plan fulfills the Race to the Top objectives in a way that will benefit teachers and students extensively over the coming years.

<b>Performance Measures</b>		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
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).						
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>General goals to be provided at time of application:</b>	<b>Baseline data and annual targets</b>				
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	N/A	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	• Developing teachers and principals.	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Compensating teachers and principals.	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Promoting teachers and principals.	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Retaining effective teachers and principals.	33%	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	• Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals.	N/A	50%	75%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	• Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.	N/A	50%	75%	100%	100%

By Oct 1, 2012, all participating districts are required to have approved “Q Comp” applications. Today, one-third of districts are on Q Comp. The strengthened Q Comp program continues to require teacher evaluation and links to professional development, leadership opportunities and compensation, but adds several requirements, including: a) addition of principals, b) link between teacher evaluations and continuing and master teacher licensure (under new tiered licensure structure being rolled out in 2010), and c) required referrals to Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) to provide a due process way of exiting teachers and principals identified as ineffective. See text of section (D)(2) for further information.

**General data to be provided at time of application:**

Total number of participating LEAs.	415				
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.	1,930				
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	47,704				

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

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Data to be requested of grantees in the future:</b>				
(D)(2)(ii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems.				
(D)(2)(iii) <sup>6</sup>	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)(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)(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.				
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.				
(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.				
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.				

**(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

(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.

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Three pages*

### ***Vision***

To achieve equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and principals, ensuring that teaching positions in high-poverty schools, high-minority schools and in high-need subjects attract and retain highly effective candidates at rates equal to or exceeding the state average.

### **Current distribution of highly effective teachers and principals**

Currently, Minnesota does not have a statewide method for identifying highly effective teachers based on multiple measures. According to the Federal Highly Qualified (HQ) requirement definitions, 97.39 percent of teachers statewide are highly qualified. Also by this definition, only 49 schools – 3 percent – in the state have inequitable distribution of non-HQ teachers. Since the HQ designation isn't the best proxy for highly effective teachers, however, the state will be using expanded Q Comp participation and enhanced Q Comp requirements for RTTT to ensure a consistent basis for comparison of teacher and principal performance across districts to achieve a better set of baseline data.

Currently, teachers serving over 30 percent of the state's students participate in the Quality Compensation for Teachers (or Q Comp) program (*see (D)(2) for more information*), and for these teachers we are able to gather some performance data. However, the evaluation rubrics are not consistent, which makes comparisons challenging. Additionally, our largest urban LEAs, Minneapolis and St. Paul, have not participated in Q Comp, which makes a complete picture of the distribution of highly effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools unattainable. Going forward, participating LEAs (including 353 public school districts) will be in Q Comp, and so the state anticipates that by the spring of 2013 (after the next round of contract negotiations is completed statewide), we will be able to determine the distribution of highly effective teachers and principals, based on more standardized Q Comp evaluation results. This will enable us to use a comprehensive, staged approach to understanding and achieving equitable

distribution.

The Minnesota Growth Model reveals significant variation in student progress toward grade level standards. In 2008 – 2009 only 9 percent of the state’s students were not proficient and had low growth in math. In our urban core - Minneapolis and St. Paul - the figures were 19 percent and 15 percent, respectively. The story is the same for reading growth: only 7 percent of the state’s students were not proficient and had low growth, but this rate was twice as high, 14 percent, in both Minneapolis and St. Paul. While the Minnesota growth model is just one metric, and should not be misconstrued as the only way to think about teacher performance, the results do indicate some of the variations in average student growth experienced in our urban core vs. the state overall and potentially, the uneven distribution of effective teachers. At a minimum, this information can help the state and LEAs intervene with targeted programs and professional development to improve the effectiveness of our teachers (*see Appendix (D)(3) – Exhibit A*).

**Plans to ensure equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and principals**

First, throughout this application Minnesota has highlighted several efforts underway to advance the effectiveness of current teachers and principals in high-need LEAs. These include: a) a comprehensive induction system for a full three years in high-poverty LEAs – and at least one year in all participating LEAs; b) expanded use of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) to provided individualized support and development opportunities to both teachers and principals; c) 10-day Turnaround School Teacher Academies for the persistently lowest-performing schools in the state, to develop teacher content and instructional strategies, as well as feedback on classroom management and instructional practices; and d) Minnesota Principals’ Academy, to provide intensive professional development and learning community support to principals – including a special cohort training for Turnaround Principals. (*See (D)(2) for more information about our PAR expansion plans, (D)(5) for more information regarding our induction and Principals’ Academy programs, and (E)(1) for more information regarding our Turnaround Academies.*)

Second, Minnesota would use Race to the Top resources to support LEAs that need more highly effective teachers and principals

(and/or need to have them more evenly distributed across schools, subjects and grade levels) through a series of competitive annual grants to:

- *Promote greater flexibility and support in finding and placing highly effective teachers and principals.*

Specifically, the state is looking for proposals that will seek collaboration between LEAs and their local unions to develop HR policies and practices that give greater flexibility for finding and placing and retaining effective teachers in high-need schools and subjects. Examples of more flexible policies would include introducing ‘Interview & Select’ provisions that allow school leaders to choose from among qualified pools of applicants themselves, early hiring timetables for target positions, training principals in more effective use of voluntary inter-district transfers (with retained seniority in home districts, etc.)

- *Provide incentives and supports for candidates to fill posts in high-need schools and subjects*

While other states have tried incentives such as signing bonus or annual performance bonuses, financial incentives are not often the best way to attract and retain outstanding performers. In fact, research has yet to demonstrate instances where financial incentives by themselves have been sufficient to improve the distribution of effective teachers. Our view is that the school climate, its leadership, and support provided to prospective teachers are also critical aspects of employment decisions and preferences. In discussions with teachers, it is clear that a primary driver behind a teacher’s decision to seek or accept a particular position is a belief that he or she can succeed in that role. Therefore, the state will put a high priority on grant proposals that provide non-financial *and/or* financial incentives to attract and retain highly effective teachers and principals. Non-financial incentives might include career paths to leadership positions, enhanced development or training opportunities, greater decision-making authority, etc.

- *Expand the use of programs with a proven track record of success in high-poverty schools*

We recognize that many individual districts have tried innovative programs in the hopes of finding ways to select and place highly

effective teachers into high-need schools. To the extent that these programs have been demonstrated as successful, LEAs that would like to use their application to request funds to bring in or expand such programs are encouraged to do so. The state is particularly interested in programs that have demonstrated success recruiting teachers and principals of color, who have demonstrated success working in low-performing schools.

### **Rollout process**

The state will deploy its plan to close the gaps in access to effective teachers between high-poverty/high-minority schools in Minnesota on the following schedule:

- SY2010 – 2012:
  - MDE will publish guidelines for competitive grants for LEAs, with guidelines for which LEAs will be prioritized, and what specific decision criteria will be used.
  - Begin pilot grants for LEAs who have innovative ideas and a demonstrated way to assess current distribution inequities or needs in their schools (e.g. through Q Comp evaluations, if historically on Q Comp)
  - Enhanced Q Comp guidelines and greater LEA adherence through RTTT requirements will ensure teachers and principals have more consistent evaluations that are tied to student growth and based on multiple measures.
- SY 2012 – 2013:
  - The state will assess widespread distribution of ‘highly effective’ teachers and principals based on enhanced Q Comp evaluation requirements and publish these aggregated results– statewide, as well as by poverty level, minority level and subject area.

- State will ramp up grant monies available, given larger number of districts with ability to assess distribution of effective teachers and principals

Separately, in 2010 the state commits to exploring the opportunity to work with the Board of Teaching on greater licensure flexibility to enable highly effective teachers in one subject to qualify for additional licenses in high-need subjects if so desired. The goal would be for LEAs to encourage teachers with demonstrated pedagogical ability in non-high-needs subjects to become licensed in high-need areas.

For the purposes of this grant, the state will define “high-minority” school by ranking schools by percent of minority students, then breaking the schools into four groups. The quartile of schools with the highest proportion of minority students will be defined as “high-minority,” and the quartile of schools with the lowest proportion will be “low minority.” While there is often a correlation between these factors, the state’s emphasis will be on improving performance in high-need, low-performing schools, not simply schools with a high proportion of minority students.

<b>Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i)</b>  <i>Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.</i>	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
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application:</b>	<b>Baseline data and annual targets</b>				
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).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25% improvement
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).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Maintain
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10% decline
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5% decline
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).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25% improvement
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).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Maintain
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10% decline

Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5% decline
<p><b>By Oct 1, 2012, all participating districts are required to have approved “Q Comp” applications</b>, which will enable a complete picture of the distribution of highly effective, effective and ineffective teachers in 2012-13, based on a comparable set of baseline evaluations. Based on this data, the state will give preference to grant applications from LEAs that have highly inequitable distributions and innovative remedies.</p> <p>Because we do not have a baseline to start, we have set our goals as a percentage improvement in terms of distribution; we will further clarify and refine these goals once we have a clear picture of the distribution of teacher and principal performance across LEAs.</p>					
<b>General data to be provided at time of application:</b>					
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	756				
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	950				
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	12,939				
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	20,145				
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	523				
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	801				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High-minority schools are defined as schools in the top quartile of minority populations, 37.2% for the 2009-10 school year</li> <li>- High-poverty schools are defined as <math>\geq 52.9\%</math> (or .529) for elementary schools and 58.3% for secondary schools based on the 2008-09 school year</li> <li>- Low-Minority Schools are defined as school with the lowest levels of minority population (by quartile) within the state's public schools. These schools have lower than 6.67% diversity</li> <li>- Low-Poverty schools are defined as a school with fewer than 22.6% of students in poverty (eligible for free or reduced lunch)</li> </ul>					
<b>Data to be requested of grantees in the future:</b>					
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.					
<b>Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii)</b>  <i>Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.</i>					End of SY 2013-2014
					End of SY 2012-2013
					End of SY 2011-2012
					End of SY 2010-2011
					Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application:</b>					<b>Baseline data and annual targets</b>

Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20% improvement
Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20% improvement
Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20% improvement
Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20% improvement
<p><b>By Oct 1, 2012, all participating districts are required to have approved “Q Comp” applications</b>, which will enable a complete picture of the distribution of highly effective, effective and ineffective teachers in 2012-13, based on a comparable set of baseline evaluations. Based on this distribution, the state will preference and provide grants to LEAs who have highly inequitable distributions, as well as innovative strategies to improve this distribution.</p> <p>Additionally, because we do not have a baseline, we have set our goals as a percent improvement or decline in terms of distribution; we will further clarify and potentially refine these goals once we have a clear picture of the distribution of teacher and principal performance across LEAs.</p>					

<b>General data to be provided at time of application:</b>		
Total number of mathematics teachers.	2190	
Total number of science teachers.	1885	
Total number of special education teachers.	6898	
Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs.	990	
[Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data]		
<b>Data to be requested of grantees in the future:</b>		
Number of mathematics teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.		
Number of science teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.		
Number of special education teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.		
Number of teachers in language instruction educational programs in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.		

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

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers 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: One page*

## ***Vision***

To develop the leading programs for recruiting, training, placing and supporting effective teachers and principals in the nation. It is critical to our ultimate goal of driving successful student achievement across the state to improve our preparation programs.

Minnesota has all ready began a process to transform teacher preparation through a partnership of 14 teacher preparation programs and the Bush Foundation, who has committed over \$40 million to support this effort. We will leverage and build on this work.

Specifically, the state will pursue four initiatives:

**1) Linking teacher and principal effectiveness to preparation programs:** To identify the best sources of effective teachers and principals, and to provide feedback for institutions that do not produce high proportions of effective teachers and principals, we are updating our enterprise data model to capture information associated with students, teachers, principals, schools and preparation programs. This update will be completed in 2011 and the data will be loaded into the Educator and Research Portals in a secure and FERPA-compliant manner.

**2) Redesigning teacher and principal preparation program requirements** The Board of Teaching has been working since the fall of 2008 to redesign the process for approving and monitoring preparation programs, with a focus on demonstrated candidate competence as a requirement for authorization. Beginning in the fall of 2010, data will begin to be collected and reported related to candidate competency along multiple measures (e.g., work samples, teacher and/or employer surveys, and test score data). By fall 2013, in an effort to strengthen program accountability, all preparation programs seeking authorization, will be required to report this information. All aspects of principal preparation, licensing and professional development requirements also will be updated (*see (D)(2) for more information*)

**3) Bush Foundation transformation of teacher preparation programs:** 11 Minnesota colleges along with 3 colleges in neighboring states who provide a significant number of teachers to Minnesota's schools are working together with the Bush

Foundation to transform how they recruit teachers into their programs, prepare teaching candidates, place teachers into districts, and support new teachers in the dawn of their teaching career (*see Appendix (D)(4) – Exhibit A and B*). In exchange for the Bush Foundation funds, each school has guaranteed that they will produce effective teachers (as demonstrated by at least one year’s growth annually in student achievement), and will do so by partnering with K-12 schools to measure and support to their graduates. As half of Minnesota’s teachers will retire in the next 10 – 20 years, this initiative will ensure that they are replaced with highly effective classroom teachers and the partnering universities, together, have committed to producing 25,000 effective graduates over the next 10 years. Among the many objectives that the schools are developing include targeting a diverse body of high-caliber students, introducing innovations such as co-teaching strategies and residency programs for full-year immersion experiences during their preparation, formally partnering with neighboring P-12 districts who commit to placing teachers after graduation, and providing ongoing support to new teachers through in-person and online mentoring for the first 3-5 years they are in the classroom. To measure the effectiveness of their guaranteed graduates, the universities will work with their district partners to formally link student performance to teachers and the teachers back to their preparation programs. Through this data linkage, preparation programs will be able to identify the strengths and opportunities for improvement in their own programming while sharing best practices across institutions and learning from each other’s experiences. This approach has been applauded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York (*see Appendix (D)(4) – Exhibit C*). Board of Teaching amendments to Minn. Rule § 8700.7600 will also support innovation of Bush Foundation grantees and other high-quality innovative teacher preparation programs (*see Appendix (D)(1) – Exhibit D*).

**4) Reporting aggregated preparation-program completer information:** To promote transparency and continuous improvement of preparation programs, all programs with at least 20 graduates annually will report completer data to the state by subject, level and program pathway (e.g., traditional vs. alternative). The state will collect this information in its statewide LDS and produce an annual report to promote development and accountability in preparatory programs. LEAs should consider the prep program results in their recruiting and outreach. Disaggregating this data by STEM teacher preparation will be also done to understand the challenge and

make needed improvements related to any STEM teacher shortage and quality problem.

Performance Measures	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
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application:</b>	<b>Baseline data and annual targets</b>				
Percentage 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%	50%	55%	60%	80%
Percentage 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%	25%	50%
<p>Since the Bush Foundation requires that their participating institutions measure and improve the effectiveness of their graduates, and their grantees will supply a majority of Minnesota teaching graduates with bachelors' and masters' degrees, our goals are largely driven by this innovative set of grants and their goals.</p>					
<b>General data to be provided at time of application:</b>					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	643 at 32 institutions				
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	11				
Total number of teachers in the State.	57,730 (HC) 52,695 (FTE)				
Total number of principals in the State.	1,903 (HC) 1,813 (FTE)				

<b>Data to be requested of grantees in the future:</b>			
Number of teacher credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.			
Number of teachers prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.			
Number of principal credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.			
Number of principals prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.			
Number of teachers in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.			
Number of principals in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.			

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

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers 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: Five pages*

## ***Vision***

To improve the effectiveness of instruction, Minnesota will foster a more data-driven culture and provide a broad range of supports are planned to ensure teachers and principals have both time and resources to develop.

### **1) Site-based Data Coaches to support and enhance the use of data within each school**

One of the best ways to drive cultural change is to have effective role models in each building to ‘lead the charge.’ To support this, the state will use Race to the Top funds to provide Data Coaches to participating LEAs, as follows:

- Participating LEAs will receive funds for stipends to provide master teachers within their school who demonstrate aptitude and interest in data-driven decision making to serve as Data Coach
  - Each Data Coach will receive a \$2000 annual stipend
  - Approximately 1 Data Coach for every 35 teachers (average 1 per school)
  - Each Data Coach will receive 2 days of training each year on the latest tools, uses of data and links to instructional development and improvement strategies
- The state will provide funds to convene a work group or otherwise establish the Data Coach training curriculum

### **2) Develop and support a comprehensive new teacher induction system**

To ensure the quality of Minnesota’s educators, we need to support the preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development of all our teachers and educators. All Minnesota children deserve effective teachers. In particular, students in schools with known achievement gaps will benefit from programs that recruit new teachers who will prove to be effective. What will not

help Minnesota's students is continuing the traditional "buddy system" for placement that is still in use in many schools today.

State-level support for new teacher induction programs can help teachers realize their full potential, keep them in the profession, promote greater student learning, and ultimately save money by reducing turnover. Research has shown that providing a comprehensive, multi-year induction program to new teachers can cut attrition rates in half and accelerate development of teachers into highly effective professionals, who improve learning. A thoughtful induction and support system is critical for meeting our goal of distributing effective teaching more evenly in high-need schools and subject areas.

The Teacher Support Partnership (TSP) published the *Minnesota Educator Induction Guidelines* (2009) to help all Minnesota school districts and educational institutions envision a system of supports for educators who are early in their careers or are in career transition. TSP is comprised of representatives from Education Minnesota (the state teacher's union), the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (*see Appendix (D)(5) – Exhibit A*). The guidelines provide a framework for a comprehensive system of induction by: 1) Building local leadership capacity to create and implement a comprehensive system of induction; 2) Understanding how to create and sustain effective professional growth environments for initial, transitioning, and mentor educators; and 3) Developing knowledge and skills in programs that advance instruction and affect student achievement. Minnesota has an opportunity to help new teachers quickly reach their full potential, keep them in the profession, promote greater understanding of student learning, and drive educator effectiveness by supporting such a comprehensive induction system.

To achieve this, Minnesota will expand and enhance induction systems statewide by:

- Providing all participating LEAs with financial support for each first-year teacher to receive a trained, stipended mentor (who is also a master teacher) as well as 1 additional funded hour each week to meet with that mentor, observe other master teachers, etc.

- Providing funding for participating LEAs in the highest quartile of poverty to continue mentor stipends, providing an hour of mentoring each week for new teachers in their second and third years of teaching. The mentoring assistance for second and third-year teachers should be tailored to meet the individual new teacher needs and aligned with school improvement needs of the school
- School leadership that supports, promotes and participates in the work of the mentor and mentee
- Providing at least 2 days of initial mentor training each year for all mentors.
- Hiring full-time mentor trainers to train mentors in participating LEAs.
- Supporting the continued development and dissemination of the TSP induction model
- Develop a curriculum statewide through use of MDE Program Coordinator staff time and technical assistance (e.g., curriculum and website development, report publication, centralized reporting of best practice models, etc.).
- Building on best practices learned from initiatives such as the STEM Teacher Mentorship, a program that piloted online induction for beginning STEM educators, providing mentors, synchronous chat, asynchronous forums, and face-to-face meetings to develop content-specific pedagogical knowledge.

### **3) Expand and enhance Minnesota Principals' Academy training**

To support the state's Comprehensive School Leadership Redesign of principal preparation, licensure and development (*see (D)(2) for more information*), Minnesota will also expand use of the Minnesota Principals' Academy (*see Appendix (D)(5) – Exhibit B*).

The academy is based on the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) curriculum and is conducted over the course of a full school year. The curriculum includes data-driven decision making, identifying performance data metrics, conducting root-cause

analysis of data, and the use of data to initiate change. The Principals' Academy is led by the University of Minnesota College Readiness Consortium (CRC). To expand the services of the academy, the state will:

- Provide financial support to add 5 – 10 additional facilitators a year over the next few years
- Support more in-person coaching (where available), web-based online learning communities, and greater follow-on support for program completers
- Send all participating LEA principals to the Minnesota Principals' Academy
- Create a special cohort and curriculum for 'turnaround principals.' CRC would work with NISL to add a training for the lowest performing schools and use national NISL experts with turnaround experience to serve as trainers
- As appropriate, adapt the NISL curriculum with modules for English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, and Excellence in Science

The cohorts will be hosted annually in five regions across the state (Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, Central and Metro area), so principals are able to cycle their participation over the course of the grant period. Given the cultural and developmental impact of school leaders, it is important for all principals in participating LEAs to have the opportunity to go through this rigorous, standardized curriculum, which also will align with the new tiered licensure standards.

#### **4) Effective professional development for interpretation and use of data to improve instruction**

Most teachers in Minnesota schools today have not been trained to use 21<sup>st</sup> century technology, student growth models, or data analytic software. Indeed, the growing focus on technical assessment and analytical tools has been a source of both excitement and angst among teachers. Lack of knowledge, resources and time to train has impeded the adoption of a data-driven culture in

Minnesota schools. To rectify that, Minnesota will introduce targeted professional development programs with a specific emphasis on using data to tailor and improve instruction.

Specifically, the state will fund participating LEAs to ensure that every teacher receives additional professional development time as follows:

- Five additional professional development days over the grant period for training tailored to the needs of individual LEA teachers and/or schools.
  - Professional development examples might include overall data academy training, grade-level team time to review individual student data across subject areas, training on the use of curricular frameworks, sharing of data analysis from Data Coaches, population-specific instructional strategies, how to use “smart” technologies, how to analyze interim assessments, how to use instructional improvement system tools, etc.
- One day in SY2010-2011 will be set aside for training all teachers on the rollout of the new formative assessments for student achievement and growth assessments.
- 6 hours/year of dedicated PLC time for the rollout of the new standards implementation and adoption in SY2010-2011

#### **5) Measurement and reporting of teacher and principal supports**

The state will use aggregated statewide data to better understand what supports and uses of data have the greatest impact. As part of the introduction of statewide LDS and the integration of LDS data with the Staff SERVS database (*see Appendix (C)(1) – Exhibit C*), the state will be able to monitor the impact of supports such as MN Principals’ Academy participation, expanded induction support programs in high-poverty schools, Data Coach support, and additional days per year of professional development in data-driven decision making. As part of the oversight of this grant, external evaluators will be engaged to use both internal LDS data as

well as interviews and other metrics to monitor the effectiveness of teacher and principal supports (*see (A)(2) for more information*). Within the context of annual evaluation, the state will have the opportunity to adapt supports to maximize impact on student achievement.

<b>Performance Measures</b> Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	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
Percent of participating LEA Principals who have attended the MN Principals' Academy	10%	25%	50%	80%	100%
Percent of participating first year teachers with comprehensive induction (including trained mentors, regular mentor observations and time dedicated to coaching, etc.)	40-50%	66%	80% %	90%	100%
Percent of participating new teachers with comprehensive induction for 3 years (including trained mentors, regular mentor observations and time dedicated to coaching, etc.)	~20%	25%	30%	40%	50%

**(E) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (50 total points)**

**State Reform Conditions Criteria**

**(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.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

Evidence for (E)(1):

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

*Recommended maximum response length: One page*

For accountability purposes, under Minn. Stat. § 127A.05, Minnesota school districts are under the authority of the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education. Minnesota policy requires is for MDE to work with low-performing and struggling schools to improve student and teacher performance, in accordance with No Child Left Behind requirements. And, under §127A.095, MDE is required “to implement the federal No Child Left Behind Act ... without interruption.” This general authority to intervene in the state’s underperforming schools and districts is critical for the initiatives to improve performance and raise achievement under NCLB (*see Appendix E(1) - Exhibit A*).

Additionally, Minn. Stat. §120B.35 requires the Commissioner to “develop and implement a system for measuring and reporting academic achievement and individual student growth, consistent with the statewide educational accountability and reporting system.” The data created from this system, in combination with annual assessment data, is used to measure statewide student achievement.

Section 120B.35 further requires school districts to determine annually whether student achievement levels at each school meet federal expectations as set out in NCLB (*see Appendix (E)(1) – Exhibit B*). If student achievement levels do not meet federal requirements two years in a row and a school has not made adequate yearly progress, the district must “work with the school site to adopt a plan to raise student achievement levels to meet federal expectations.” Furthermore, schools that do not meet federal requirements under NCLB must “develop continuous improvement plans” for student academic achievement. At a district’s request, MDE must assist the district and school to develop a student achievement improvement plan. State law also specifically requires the Commissioner to “assist school sites and districts identified as not meeting federal requirements; and provide technical assistance to schools that integrate student achievement measures into the school continuous plan.” Minn. Stat. § 120B.35, subd. 2(c).

In conclusion, no legal barriers prevent the Minnesota Department of Education from intervening in the state's lowest-achieving schools and districts.

The commissioner has explicit authority to terminate a charter contract if the charter school has a history of failure to meet pupil performance requirements contained in the contract (Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, Subd. 23d).

## Reform Plan Criteria

### **(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)

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

Evidence for (E)(2) (please fill in table below):

- 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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages*

## *Vision*

By 2014, it is our goal to turnaround or close the lowest-achieving schools in Minnesota in order to increase their student achievement to levels to that of higher-performing schools. The state will use several intervention models, defined in this notice, which include public and charter school options, set high expectations for student performance, provide a safe and supportive environment for learning; support staff and leadership through enhanced professional development programs; and provide the operational flexibility that will allow staff and teachers to help students improve.

### **Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools within the state of Minnesota**

Minnesota has developed a comprehensive methodology to identify persistently low-performing schools, as defined by Race to the Top. The methodology uses our robust NCLB assessment data as well as the state's innovative growth model. The methodology was developed by the Minnesota Department of Education in collaboration with Minneapolis and St. Paul district leadership and research teams to ensure the analytic rigor of the methodology.

Below, we describe the approach used for each of the subgroups identified by the RTTT requirements

- Group A1: The persistently lowest-achieving 5 percent of Title I schools was identified by analyzing the 283 Minnesota schools in the three relevant AYP statuses and splitting them into an elementary and secondary group. (Because recent changes raised high school standards and proficiency requirements, we created separate lists of lowest-scoring secondary and elementary schools—otherwise the entire list would have been struggling high schools, as defined by the new standard.). Within each group, the bottom 10 percent was identified based on the average math and reading proficiency rates for all students over the past three years. Then we defined the bottom 5 percent of elementary and high schools by selecting those that have also shown the least growth in student achievement, as defined by the Minnesota growth model. Specifically, these were the schools with

the lowest proportion of students progressing as needed to be “on track”, defined as non-proficient students making high growth, proficient students making high growth, and proficient students making medium growth (See Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit A).

- Group A2: High schools within the group of Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, with graduation rates below 60 percent were identified using the past three years of data.
- Group B1: The bottom 5 percent of secondary schools eligible for, but not receiving, Title I funds was identified using a similar method to A1. We started with a universe of 332 such schools across the state.
- Group B2: Secondary schools similar to those identified in A2 that are eligible for Title I funds, but are not receiving them

Through this methodology, Minnesota has identified 34 persistently lowest-achieving schools (see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit B). Of these schools, 9 are operating in one of Minnesota’s two major urban school districts; 2 are in the greater Twin Cities; 11 are operating in rural districts, including 3 in areas where there are concentrations of Native American students; 9 are charter schools operating in the Twin Cities area; and 3 are charter schools outside the metro area. 62 percent of students in these schools are African American, Hispanic, or American Indian. 78 percent are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch and 20 percent are English language learners. Recognizing the needs of these diverse student populations is critical for developing the turnaround strategy; understanding how to serve these groups will help Minnesota craft its approach to educational improvement more broadly as our demographics shift.

### **Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools in Minnesota**

Minnesota is committed to the shifts in the education system culture and mindsets that will be required to improve academic outcomes for the more than 11,000 students who attend the persistently lowest-achieving schools, and to providing a supportive,

stable working environment for teachers and leaders in turnaround schools to improve their effectiveness. To that end, the state has developed a comprehensive plan that increases state oversight, changes the governance structure for turnaround schools and provides proven supports, operational flexibility, and the leadership to successfully implement turnaround programs in our persistently lowest-achieving schools.

To address the assurance criteria, the state, through the Office of Turnaround Schools (OTAS) will implement the intervention models for each identified persistently lowest-achieving school as defined and prescribed under Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants 1003(g): Turnaround School Model, Restart Model, Close a school, and Transformation Model. Additionally, Minnesota will utilize the public site-governed school model to implement a portion of the Intervention Model schools (*see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit C*). Minnesota’s District-Created Site-Governed schools are an innovative public school model similar to charter schools, recently created with broad legislative, union, and state support. With local school board approval, site-governed schools operate with increased autonomy over school operations. Minnesota’s site-governed schools require different governance of the school and provide for extensive flexibility to enable strategies, approaches, policies, and school day/year design choices at the site level (*see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit D*). The school remains part of its original district and receives services, funding, and oversight from the district. (Given Minnesota’s charter laws, charters cease to be a part of their original district and thus do not receive the oversight a district can provide. We anticipate both approaches will be used as turnaround models and believe this additional option strengthens our application.)

### **1) Create a state-level Office of Turnaround Schools**

An Office of Turnaround Schools (OTAS) to oversee the implementation of the interventions outlined by the RTTT grant application. OTAS will be independent of the SEA to ensure objectivity and stability during political changes. OTAS is accountable to the Commissioner and the SEA on the progress made against performance targets and other leading indicators (*see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit E*). The OTAS will be either a nonprofit or an independent organization housed within an institution of

higher education in the state. The details of the OTAS operation and leadership will be determined by an advisory board that will include: LEAs, representatives from local and/or state teacher unions, higher education, education organizations, leaders that reflect the diversity of the student populations and have expertise in accelerating achievement for traditionally underserved minority students, foundations and the Minnesota business community. In partnership with the SEA, this advisory group will help select a director for the OTAS and play a key role in recruiting additional staff and key operating activities of the OTAS.

MDE will fund the administrative operations of the OTAS and the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools separately. MDE will grant funding directly to OTAS for administrative costs and separately, MDE will grant funding directly to schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving based on intervention model implementation costs through the state's SERVS financial system.

The roles and responsibilities of the OTAS will be as follows:

- *Conduct Diagnostics.* For all lowest-achieving schools in the state, OTAS will conduct a diagnostic and, in partnership with LEAs, determine the appropriate turnaround strategy. For schools already in turnaround, as defined under the RTTT guidelines, the decision to continue or restart will be determined by OTAS in partnership with LEAs, depending on progress against goals and school needs).
- *Review third-party partners.* OTAS will be responsible for ensuring that outside parties that assist in turnarounds have track records of success and can succeed in Minnesota. OTAS will manage the request for proposal and selection process for charter school authorizers, charter management organizations and education management organizations.
- *Principal selection.* OTAS will play a role in selecting principals in all turnaround schools and must approve all final hiring decisions for all turnaround principals. Candidates will include high-potential principals and charter school directors with demonstrated effectiveness and (ideally) previous experience turning around schools, leading struggling schools to high

performance, and generating high student progress on the Minnesota growth model.

- *Site-level hiring.* OTAS will also approve the teacher hiring processes at the site level to ensure the process aligns with appropriate an intervention strategy as outlined in this notice. The goal will be to create a cadre of highly-effective teachers for each site, who will have high expectations for students, the ability to raise performance of low-achieving students, a high commitment to the turnaround and the ability to work collaboratively with other educators.
- *Principal development.* OTAS will provide research expertise and work with the University of Minnesota to develop curriculum and content for a special track in the Minnesota Principals Academy for turnaround principals.
- *Teacher development.* OTAS will provide guidance and recommended curriculum for professional development of teachers in turnaround schools, including cultural competency training, based on the demographic makeup of the turnaround site.
- *Evaluation.* Once the turnaround programs are up and running (or restarted), OTAS will assume responsibility for oversight. It will track site progress against achievement goals (including student achievement and academic growth); assess the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of the learning environment; Compile feedback from students and parents to learn if the school and staff are seen as invested in the success of every student – regardless of background or academic challenges/performance. OTAS officers will work with LEAs to implement parent and community engagement efforts that have proven to be effective – examples of such programs include: the Hmong, Latino, Somali, and newly forming Karen Parents Advisory Council initiatives in the St. Paul Public School District and the Connecting Parents to Educational Opportunities Program (CPEO) in the Minneapolis Public School District. CPEO is a 7-week program for parents that has graduated more than 1,275 Hmong, Latino, Somali, and English-speaking parents to date. It addresses Elementary, Middle, and High Schools and has been taught in 4 languages to meet the needs of the community. The mission of these parent support programs is to promote a partnership between parents and the school and serves as a venue for parents who would

like to learn new ideas to help their children and to voice their concerns and opinions about their children's education (*see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibits F and G*).

## **2) Redefine the governance structure for the lowest-achieving schools**

A new governance model expands state oversight and accountability of turnaround schools while ensuring that LEAs increase focus on these lowest-performing schools and have an “ownership” mindset over the turnarounds. The same model will apply to schools where one of the outlined interventions under RTTT is under way). This approach includes the following elements:

- LEAs will appoint an LEA-based Turnaround Officer(s) or Turnaround Office that will be responsible for coordinating with the OTAS and will take an active role in the day-to-day management of turnaround efforts at the school level. The officers and offices will report directly to their LEAs and indirectly to the OTAS. In the case of charter schools, the LEA turnaround leader will be a part of the charter school’s authorizer management team (the individual selected for this role must be qualified to serve as the turnaround liaison, which may require hiring of new staff in some cases).
- LEA-based Turnaround Officers and Offices will be liaisons to designated program officers in the OTAS and will work with OTAS to develop an appropriate intervention model for each identified persistently lowest-achieving school and successfully implement the intervention strategy.
- School leadership, including principals and charter school directors, EMO or CMO managers, or other appropriate school leadership serving turnaround schools will report directly to their designated LEA turnaround officers. The OTAS program officer is responsible for developing the recommended intervention plan and will provide implementation support and additional oversight for a site’s turnaround implementation. Although the school does not report directly to the OTAS, the program officer will be responsible for providing reports to MDE and can make recommendations to the SEA to continue

funding for a given turnaround, based on adherence to academic progress and other turnaround requirements.

### **3) Allow increased operational flexibility to support turnarounds**

Given the extraordinary needs of students in our lowest-performing schools, it is essential to have a more flexible approach to staffing and scheduling of teachers. To succeed, Minnesota must invest in teachers who can bring the proper instructional strategies and cultural competency to challenge and motivate students in turnaround schools. To succeed, turnaround schools must have flexibility to increase instructional time and the way the school day and year are organized to best meet the needs of students. Minnesota will ensure increased operational flexibility to meet the needs of students, teachers and leaders in turnaround schools throughout the state by negotiating at the local level with labor and managements of LEAs with turnaround schools. Minnesota's site-governed school statute permits these "micro negotiations" at the district level in to implement increased flexibility. Enhanced flexibility for turnaround schools will include:

- Teacher hiring outside of typical seniority rules (e.g., principal-determined, mutual consent or teacher-led council input at site-governed schools).
- Stability for effective teachers working in turnaround schools (including, but not limited to protection from bumping and layoffs for at least two staffing cycles or three full school years). This protection is significant, because enrollment is declining in many Minnesota LEAs.
- A low-stakes, low-barrier transfer process for teachers struggling to be effective in turnaround schools (e.g., move to another school at request of management/labor committee). Local LEAs can also decide to fund "soft landing" (e.g., providing one year of severance) packages for teachers displaced during the turnaround process, if approved by the local teachers union.
- The state will require, at a minimum, one additional hour of instruction time per day for turnaround schools, which will be

funded through Race to the Top. LEAs may elect to extend their instructional time beyond this additional hour based on available budgets or may use these funds to add days to the year instead of hours.

- LEAs may also use local funding, if available, to create alternative and/or extended school-year calendars that add time beyond the RTTT-required hour per school day (Minn. Stat. § 123B.045. District-governed site schools).

To help the LEAs and charter authorizers designate significant resources needed for a successful turnaround effort, planning grants will be awarded to public and charter schools that have been selected to serve as turnaround agents under the OTAS governance model. LEAs, charter authorizers and turnaround officers can use these grants for initial conceptualization, design, planning, collaboration and partnership-building efforts to plan the implementation of the selected intervention strategy. Planning grants can also be leveraged to engage and communicate to parents of students in the school and the surrounding community before and throughout the turnaround process. Districts such as Minneapolis and St. Paul have struggled to plan turnarounds on “nights and weekends.” These planning grants provide dedicated resources to increase the likelihood that turnaround efforts will realize significant gains and achievement goals.

#### **4) Support effective leaders focused on instruction in turnaround schools**

To support the leadership of turnaround schools, the state will provide intensive professional development and coaching for principals and charter school directors of turnaround schools, through the Minnesota Principals’ Academy. During the three-year turnaround period, the school and the principal will receive support from a turnaround coach, who has experience improving low-performing schools. Each coach will work with five turnaround principals. To support the Minnesota Principals’ Academy, led by the University of Minnesota, the state will provide funding for the adaptation of the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) curriculum to include specific turnaround topics, such as cultural competency. MDE will also:

- Provide financial support to add 4-7 coaches to the Minnesota Principals' Academy support turnaround principals
- Create a special cohort of instructors for “turnaround principals”; program directors at the University of Minnesota will work with NISL to adapt the regular curriculum to focus on the needs of the lowest-performing schools, by leveraging NISL experts with turnaround experience to serve as trainers.

In order to ensure that most of the turnaround principal's time is being spent working with teachers in instructional leadership, the state will fund a Site Administrative Manager (SAM) at each turnaround school. A SAM will be equivalent to an assistant principal and will assume most non-instructional responsibilities in the school. Research from the Wallace Foundation found that most principals spend only 30 percent of their time supporting teacher instruction; discussions with Minneapolis leaders suggest the figure is often lower. Using SAMs to oversee administrative duties can give principals time to observe and support teachers in their classrooms (Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy - commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, “Out of the Office and into the Classroom”).

All principals in turnaround schools will receive formal evaluations three times each year, based on multiple measures; student achievement and academic growth in the school will be a significant factor. Sites will utilize a state-recommended and/or OTAS-approved evaluation rubric, and evaluations will be conducted by teacher and district-led teams. Principals of turnaround schools will also receive performance pay based on their evaluation results (*See D(2) for more details on principal evaluation*).

### **5) Develop and support turnaround staff**

The classroom is where turnarounds will succeed or fail. Turnaround teachers will be asked to make significant gains with some of Minnesota's most challenged students under increased time pressures. Teachers will play a critical role in a cultural shift in low-performing schools—where perhaps for the first time students will find that they are expected to succeed. Teachers need a safe environment for learning and the freedom to incorporate the appropriate pedagogy and content to make the desired gains. To

support these efforts, we have developed a comprehensive plan to support our turnaround teachers with a model for ongoing, on-the-job professional development throughout the year, which will include:

*Turnaround school teacher academies:* 10-day professional development academy throughout the first 2 years of the turnaround process that will contain the following elements:

Content and instructional strategies for struggling students in Math, Science and English Language Arts/Reading

- Rigorous content focus in core subject areas (Reading, Math and Science) required for content and special education teachers in the persistently lowest-achieving 5 percent of schools
- Pre- and post-testing for all teachers to measure increase in understanding of content
- Student intervention training based on best practice use of formative assessments during instruction and analysis of interim and summative assessment data to inform academic intervention strategies
- Instruction on use of digital tools available through iTunesU platform to help inform instructional intervention strategies tied to state standards at the strand and sub-strand levels
- Curricular frameworks and incorporating standards within course curriculum
- Differentiated instruction techniques for high-need students including struggling students, Special Education and ELL students, and aligning instructional content for these programs with the common core standards
- Site-based programming including site-specific cultural competency training and family engagement techniques

Professional learning community development and practice planning

- Teachers in turnaround schools will spend a minimum of 90 minutes per week within their professional learning communities
- Time spent in learning communities will be focused on analyzing and understanding student result information from formative assessments and other academic observations to improve course instruction

Feedback on individual teacher instructional practice to help improve instruction

- Teachers will receive feedback on their professional practice after their first year of teaching in a turnaround school by participating in surveys of enacted curriculum which analyze the degree to which the content of the lessons they teach specifically align to the depth and breadth of the state standards.

*Job-embedded professional development:*

- 90 minutes of PD per week including Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and other developmental time
- 60 minutes per day of instructional prep time protected for all teachers in turnaround schools (e.g., utilize a Site Administrative Manager to support non-instructional administrative responsibilities at each site) (See E(2) for further information)
- Multi-measure, formal, teacher evaluations 3x each year, e.g., TAP program or OTAS-approved program that incorporate student growth as a factor in teacher performance evaluations and outcome-based performance pay (Add more detail from (D)(2))
- Data-driven decision-making to support and enhance the use of student assessment and program evaluation to enable continuous improvements in instruction and curricula

*Leadership opportunities at each turnaround site*

- Professional development to support teacher leadership, e.g., working with the state and local union to provide TALL training (teachers as learners and leaders) to teachers. (TALL was developed by MDE and Education Minnesota, the state teacher's union, as a teacher leadership opportunity tied to effective professional development)
- Developing Mentor Teacher roles within each school and assigning site-based teacher mentees
- Developing and providing teachers in turnaround schools with instructional Coach roles

*Site-based programming developed by the state and the Office of Turnaround Schools (OTAS):*

#### **6) Support students for success in turnaround schools**

In addition to the programmatic elements for turnaround schools such as increased school leadership and strengthened instructional practices, students in turnaround schools will receive additional supports to help ensure that they too are equipped to achieve success. These students come to school with economic and social issues: 78 percent are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch. More than 75 percent are members of ethnic minorities that, statistically, have the lowest rates of graduation and which produce higher numbers of students who fall behind at all levels and 20 percent have limited English language proficiency. RTTT presents an opportunity to forcefully engage our most at-risk student populations and prepare them for college and careers. To do so, the state will:

- Mandate additional instructional support for all students, including minimum instructional time per day for mathematics and English-language Arts/Reading and tutoring.
- Use state grants to increase college-readiness and college-application support to raise the matriculation rates by students from our lowest-achieving schools in higher education

- Provide support for programs such as Admission Possible to increase application and matriculation rates for our lowest-achieving high schools
- Increase college and career interest for elementary and middle schools students through post secondary exploration programs for K-8 and post secondary counseling for middle school students
- Increase enrollment in rigorous courses for students in the state’s most struggling schools and prepare students for success in rigorous courses and AP/IB curricula through competitive grants distributed by the state to high-poverty districts through RTTT
- In partnership with OTAS, increase parent outreach and community involvement, e.g., leverage planning grants for turnaround schools, work with the state and local unions to provide “School, Family, Community” Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) course from AFT to improve outreach and involvement.

**Evidence**

Both Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools have had the courage to make dramatic changes in their school buildings in order to improve student achievement. These changes have included implementing multiple measure teacher evaluations, bringing in new leadership and staff, and increasing the flexibility and autonomy of the school's operations and staff stability. While results are mixed, the lessons learned have informed the turn around strategy above and the need for increased rigor, resources, oversight and support in turning around struggling schools. Minnesota will use lessons learned from the Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools' experience to continue the practice of taking a hard and realistic look at intervention models that are that are working for implementation.

<b>Approach Used</b>	<b># of Schools Since SY2004- 05</b>	<b>Results and Lessons Learned</b>
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<p><b>Turnaround Model</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p><b>2007-08: Nellie Stone (Minneapolis Public Schools):</b> Was closed and reopened with a new principal and administrative team, 75 percent new staff and a change in the student population of approximately 50 percent</p> <p>The school instituted the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model at the time of turnaround and refined their program in 2008-09 school year to focus on using student data to drive school programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School has not made AYP in math or reading since restructuring, however student achievement has grown from SY 2007-08 to SY 2008-09 with overall MCA Reading score increases of 3 percent mathematics improvement of 7.37 percent (SY 2008-09 the school ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the district for math proficiency). This demonstrates strong instructional leadership.</li> </ul> <p>The school has made some of the most significant gains of any restructuring program in the state.</p> <p><b>2007-08: Lucy Laney (Minneapolis Public Schools):</b> was closed and reopened with a new principal and administrative team. It was fresh-started with over 50 percent of the students being new to the school and 75 percent of the staff being new. The school implemented a Marzano-consultant program. Marzano consulted the school management team on a weekly basis.</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school did not make AYP in reading for both 2007-08 and 2008-09; this included “all” students for both years and 4 other student groups</li> <li>• The school hired a new administrator in the 2009-10 SY. It has begun implementation of the TAP system and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in fall 2009. The teachers are using these PLCs to identify areas of student need.</li> </ul> <p><b>2000 – 01: Dayton’s Bluff (St. Paul Public Schools)</b> - An elementary school in St. Paul has received national recognition for its major reform efforts. Under the leadership and guidance of a forward thinking principal and superintendent, teachers applied to teach in the lowest performing school with the highest percentage of poverty in the entire district. Although the principal has moved on from his role, his leadership has had a lasting impact and the school continues to see high gains with its student population. This has been due, in a large part to the focus of the principal on creating a school culture where the staff at the school firmly believed that every child could be academically successful. Thus, under the leadership of the new principal, teachers who believed in the students, a focus on instruction and parent involvement the school turned from a low performing school into a model school.</p> <p>Since the turnaround, Dayton’s Bluff has made AYP every year under</p>
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			NCLB. This is significant given they the school was the lowest performing in the districts with one of the highest (98 percent) poverty.	
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Restart Model	N/A	
School Closure	1	<b>Jordan Park (Minneapolis Public Schools)</b>
Transformation Model	7	<p><b>2007-08: Jefferson Elementary (Minneapolis Public Schools)</b> was restructured. The Restructuring option selected was “Other -- change the governance structure of the school in a significant manner that either diminishes school-based management and decision making or increases control, monitoring, and oversight.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school made AYP in reading for 2007-08 but then did not make AYP for 2008-09 (for “all” students and 3 other student groups); The school did not make AYP in math for both 2007-08 and 2008-09; this included “all” students for both years and 4-5 other student groups.</li> <li>• “Jefferson started out with the TAP system in 2007-08 as well and thrived as a TAP school through the next two years. However, their proficiency levels went down in '09 in both reading and math. The principal is part of the MN Principals’ Academy.</li> </ul> <p><b>2007-08: Sullivan Elementary (Minneapolis Public Schools)</b> was restructured. The Restructuring option selected was “Other -- change the governance structure of the school in a significant manner that either</p>

			<p>diminishes school-based management and decision making or increases control, monitoring, and oversight.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school hired a new principal for 09-10 (who is also new to the profession) and the building has worked to implement change by increasing the focus of instructional practices on student outcomes.</li> <li>• The building shares its site with Anishinabe Academy</li> <li>• Became a TAP school in 2007-08 school year</li> <li>• The school did not make AYP in reading and math for both 2007-08 and 2008-09; this included “all” students for both years and (3+) other student groups (including LEP);</li> <li>• In math for 2008-09 the student groups of Black, Am. Indian and Special Education made AYP that was an improvement over 2007-08).</li> </ul> <p><b>2007-08: City View Pam Magnet Elementary (Minneapolis Public Schools)</b> was restructured for 2007-08. The Restructuring option selected was “Other -- change the governance structure of the school in a significant manner that either diminishes school-based management and decision making or increases control, monitoring, and oversight.”</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school did not make AYP in reading and math for both 2007-08 and 2008-09; this included “all” students for both years and (3+) other student groups;</li> <li>• In reading, the number of cells increased for 2008-09;</li> <li>• In math, LEP made AYP for both 2007-08 and 2008-09.</li> </ul> <p>Became a TAP school in 2007-08 - The program has been implemented with fidelity, relying on effective teacher mentors and coaches.</p> <p><b>2007-08: Andersen Open Elementary (Minneapolis Public Schools)</b> was restructured. The Restructuring option selected was “Other -- pair the school in restructuring with a higher performing school.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school did not make AYP in reading and math for both 2007-08 and 2008-09; this included “all” students for both years and (5) other student groups;</li> <li>• Andersen Open (middle) became a TAP school in 04-05 and the elementary school implemented the TAP program in 05-06.</li> <li>• In 08-09, the TAP programs in the two schools combined as the district elected to have only one principal oversee the two campuses. This year (2009-10), the two schools have combined into one K-8</li> </ul>
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			<p>school with over 1000 students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The schools draw from the most impoverished population of students in the city and have a large ELL population.</li> <li>• Andersen schools had the second highest increase in reading in the city for 2009 with a 12 percent increase in the elementary school</li> <li>• TAP program has reformed and is operating well with mentors that have received extensive training (increasing inter-rater reliability).</li> <li>• The principal currently participates in the MN Principal’s Academy.</li> </ul> <p><b>(St. Paul Public Schools)</b> <i>In two different situations, the St. Paul District used the concept of merging a successful school with a school that low performing as part of their efforts to restructure two of their low performing schools. In both cases, there was a strong focus on instruction and the support teachers needed to carry out quality instruction. They did not go through the same administrative and staff changes that Dayton’s Bluff went through. However, both schools, Farnsworth and Linwood were successful elementary schools for a number of years. Based on their track records the district made the decision to expand the concepts/focus to the two failing Jr Highs that were in corrective action. 2008-09 was the first year for the merger so the transformation is still happening.</i></p>
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			<p><b>2008-09 Farnsworth-Cleveland AERO Space (St. Paul Public Schools):</b> Farnsworth and Cleveland were two schools that were merged into a P-8 school. The district merged a high-performing elementary school, Farnsworth AERO Space with a low performing Jr High school Cleveland. Farnsworth AERO Space was designed around an AERO Space focus using the STEP concepts. Farnsworth AERO Space received a Title I distinguished School award two years ago.</p> <p><b>2008-09 Linwood Monroe Arts (St. Paul Public Schools):</b> The district took a high-demand successful elementary school, Linwood Arts A Plus, and expanded it into a Pre-8 school by merging it with Monroe, a low performing Jr High School. Linwood uses an Arts integration curriculum model with a focus on instruction.</p>
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<b>Performance Measures</b>	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
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models (described in Appendix C) will be initiated each year.	35	15	12	8	0

**(F) General (55 total points)**

**State Reform Conditions Criteria**

**(F)(1) Making education funding a priority (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.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State’s success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Three pages*

1) Minnesota's expenditures for education as a percentage of the overall state budget increased by 1 percent from 2008 to 2009. The Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) fund balance analysis, as of July 17, 2009, indicated that expenditures for K-12 and higher education increased from 49.3 percent to 50.3 percent of total state general fund expenditures between FY 2008 and FY 2009 (*see Appendix F(1) Exhibit A*).

2) State policies are in place and have been effective in promoting equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs, and between high-poverty schools and low-poverty schools within LEAs. A "high-poverty LEA" is defined as one with more than 10,000 students in poverty, or at least 20 percent of students from families in poverty and receiving free or reduced-priced lunch. More than 70 percent of the students in Minnesota are enrolled in high-poverty LEAs and students enrolled in high-poverty LEAs make up 90 percent of the student population that receives a free lunch from the state. In FY 2009, LEAs with 20 percent or more of their enrollment population eligible for free or reduced-price lunches received an average of \$481 more per student in state and local general education funding (including voter approved operating referendum levies) than LEAs with fewer than 20 percent of enrollees eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (*see appendix F(1) Exhibit – B*). To further ensure that high-poverty schools receive the intended extra funding, Minnesota law (*see Minn. Stat. § 126C.15, subd. 2*) requires a school district to allocate at least 95 percent of the compensatory revenue to the school building housing the students whose poverty qualifies the district for the funding (*see Appendix F(1) Exhibit – C*). Additionally, Minnesota uses free or reduced-price lunch counts as the poverty measure for purposes of allocating Title I funds within LEAs and also to allocate state compensatory aid to LEAs and high-poverty sites within LEAs.

The state's compensatory education funding formula (*see Minn. Stat. § 126C.05, subd. 3, 126C.10, subd. 3, and 126C.15*) provides targeted funding to schools and school districts with high concentrations of poverty:

- Sites where the number of students eligible for free lunches plus one-half of the number of students eligible for reduced-priced

lunches equals or exceeds 80 percent of the school's enrollment receive compensatory revenue equal to 60 percent of the general education formula allowance (\$3,074 in FY 2010) for each free or reduced-priced lunch eligible student and ½ of that amount for each reduced-price lunch eligible student.

- Sites with lower poverty concentrations receive proportionately less for each free or reduced-price lunch –eligible student. For example, a site where the number of students eligible for free lunches plus one-half of the number of students eligible for reduced-priced lunches equals 40 percent of the school's enrollment receives compensatory revenue equal to 30 percent of the general education formula allowance (\$1,537 in FY 2010) for each free-lunch eligible student and one-half of that amount for each reduced-price lunch eligible student.
- For FY 2010, the state total compensatory revenue is \$331.8 million, or 5.9 percent of all general education revenue from state aids and property taxes, a much larger commitment by the state than the federal Title I funding of approximately \$221m.
- Minnesota also provides Limited English Proficiency (LEP) aid to school districts and charter schools, equal to \$700 per LEP / ELL student, plus an additional amount based on the concentration of LEP students, equal to \$250 per LEP student in districts and charter schools with LEP concentrations of at least 11.5 percent. For FY 2010, the state total LEP aid was \$31.9 million and the LEP concentration aid was \$8.4 million (*see Appendix F(1) Exhibit – D*).
- Minnesota also provides extended time revenue for students requiring additional time outside of the regular school day or year for remedial work, which also disproportionately benefits high-poverty schools and districts. For FY 2010, the state total extended time aid was \$66.5 million.

### **Charter School Funding**

Minnesota is one of the only states in the nation that provide charter schools with an equitable share of state funding and support. For FY 2008-09, charter school per pupil revenues in the general and debt service funds were 101 percent of average school district per pupil revenues, and charter school expenditures in the general and debt service funds were 99 percent of average school district expenditures (*see charter school funding summary F(2)*).

**Q Comp Revenue**

Q Comp program was proposed by Governor Tim Pawlenty and was enacted by the Minnesota Legislature in July 2005. The program is based on the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model, and allows local districts and the local teachers' union to design and collectively bargain a plan that meets the five main components of the program. Since 2005-06 school year, approximately 30 percent of Minnesota teachers have opted into Q Comp (*see (D)(2) for more detail*).

Since its enactment, the state has supported The Quality Compensation for Teachers (or "Q Comp") through state aid and local levies to provide \$260 per pupil in funding to support the program. Initial revenue in FY 2006 amounted to \$16.3m; in 2009 total Q Comp revenue amounted to \$63.5m and is projected to grow to \$88.5m by 2013 (*see Appendix (F)(1) – Exhibit E*).

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

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State’s success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

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.

*Recommended maximum response length: Six pages*

## **Background**

Minnesota has supported charter schools since 1991, when it passed the first law in the nation that allowed for public charter schools. From its inception, Minnesota's charter school legislation was designed to give charter schools the autonomy and flexibility needed to carry out the intended purposes of result-oriented, student-centered public schools. Charter schools fulfill purposes identified in state charter school law, [Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, subd. 1\(a\) \(2009\)](#): 1) improve pupil learning and student achievement; 2) increase learning opportunities for pupils; 3) encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods; 4) measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes; 5) establish new forms of accountability for schools; and 6) create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site (*see Appendix (F)(2) – Exhibit A*).

- Minnesota law does not limit the number of charter schools allowed to operate in the state and Minn. Stat. § 124D.10 provides legislation to ensure charter schools operate independently as autonomous public schools by providing charters with authority to function as an autonomous school district (LEA);
- Fiscal and legal autonomy, subject to regular audit procedures;
- Authority to elect a board of directors with teacher, parent and community member representation;
- Authority of the board to make all decisions related to school operations, including budgeting, curriculum and operating procedures;
- The right to receive state and federal education funds directly, including start-up funding, general education funding, lease aid, transportation revenue, and special education aid;

- Exemption from many state statutes and rules applicable to traditional school districts, that inhibit flexibility, including those requiring collective bargaining agreements for licensed and non-licensed staff and administrators;
- Authority to contract for services and to discharge teachers and non-licensed employees;

152 charter schools currently serve over 35,000 K-12 students (based on October 2009-10 student enrollment data) (*see Appendix (F)(2) – Exhibits B and C*). Almost 4.5 percent of Minnesota’s public school students are enrolled in charter schools and charter school enrollment has more than tripled over the last seven years. Charter schools are open to all and an admissions lottery system is employed if more applications are received than slots available. In the past five years, 131 charter school applications have been made and 66 of those applications were approved (*see Appendix (F)(2) – Exhibit D*).

Minnesota’s charter schools operate in urban, suburban and rural areas and communities and serve an extremely diverse population; over 53 percent of charter school students qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch, over 20 percent have limited English proficiency and almost 50 percent are students of color. Many of the state’s charter schools were specifically established to better serve the unique needs of diverse student populations.

Although each charter school offers a unique education program, students can expect quality education based on results. Charter schools employ licensed teachers, serve special needs students and require students to take state and national tests to assure academic accountability and improvement. Charter schools are open to all, do not charge tuition and there are no admission requirements to enroll students in charter schools.

Minnesota’s rich history in school choice and academic excellence has fostered a chartering environment that now ensures accountability while still promoting innovation and parental choice. The Center for Education Reform recently issued its [\*Charter School Law Ranking and Scorecard 2010\*](#). Minnesota continued to score exceptionally well in this analysis based on multiple indicators. Further, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools recently ranked our charter law 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation (*see Appendix*

*(A)(1) – Exhibit C*). Minnesota received especially high marks because our charter schools are afforded a great amount of freedom to innovate, authorizer accountability leads to more high-quality charter schools, and charter are provided equitable funding and facility lease aid.

## **F(2)(ii)**

### **Charter school authorizers**

Charter schools are established through a performance contract with an approved authorizer. School boards, education districts, qualifying charitable organizations, colleges and universities may apply to the commissioner for approval as an authorizer. Over 50 organizations currently authorize charter schools in Minnesota.

The 2009 Minnesota Legislature made several changes to the state’s charter school laws (Minn. Stat. § 124D.10 and Minn. Stat. § 124D.11) to increase the responsibility and accountability of charter schools and charter authorizers for charter school performance (*see Appendix F(2) - Exhibits A and E*). The 2009 law now provides the commissioner with substantial power to consider a potential authorizer’s ability and capacity to effectively charter a school. The new language provides MDE with specific tools to ensure that only high-quality authorizers are approved to charter schools. Of equal significance, changes in state law now provide the commissioner with explicit authority to intervene in the lowest-performing charter schools. The ultimate goal of this change in legislation is to ensure a strong and supportive climate of accountability – particularly related to charter school authorizing, governance, leadership and performance – to help all charter schools thrive. Recent legislative changes did not limit the number of charter schools allowed to operate in the state, or otherwise inhibit the ability of charter schools to operate and serve as education innovators in the state.

As a national recognition of Minnesota’s recent legislative accomplishment, the National Association of Charter Schools Authorizers (NACSA) awarded Minnesota their [\*2009 Award for Excellence in Improving Policy\*](#). This award acknowledges, “The

newly approved changes to Minnesota’s charter school law seek to improve the quality of the charter school sector chiefly through strengthening authorizing...these key changes to Minnesota’s charter school law have significantly increased the authority, capacity, and accountability of Minnesota’s charter school authorizers and will lead to a much stronger charter school sector.” Given these improvements, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools recently ranked our charter law 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation, stating “If we had released these rankings last year, Minnesota would probably not have been at the top. Although it has long been recognized as having a good law, it enacted several changes this year to strengthen school and authorizer accountability proposed by charter advocates that vaulted it to #1” (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit C*).

MDE’s new authority to approve charter school authorizers is identified in Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, subd. 3. Eligible organizations identified above must submit an application to the commissioner for “approval as an authorizer before submitting any affidavit to the commissioner to charter a school”. The approval is based upon an authorizer’s “(1) capacity and infrastructure; (2) application criteria and process; (3) contracting process; (4) ongoing oversight and evaluation processes; and (5) renewal criteria and processes.”

The commissioner will review an approved authorizer’s performance every five years to ensure the authorizer is chartering and monitoring schools according to their approved authorizer application. However, the commissioner may at any time, take corrective action, including terminating an authorizer's ability to charter a school for not meeting the authorizer approval requirements, violating a charter contract or other unsatisfactory performance.

Charter schools are held accountable by their authorizers and the state to comply with provisions of applicable laws, rules and their charter contract. Authorizers have the ability to terminate or not renew a charter for non-compliance with state laws and contract rules including: failure to meet pupil performance requirements contained in the contract; financial mismanagement or failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or repeated or major violations of the law or other good cause shown. In addition to an authorizer’s ability to terminate a contract, the commissioner may hold a charter school

accountable, at any time, by terminating a contract for these same reasons (*see appendix F(2) - Exhibits A and E*).

### **Increased support for effective charters through RTTT**

Through RTTT funding Minnesota will support the growth of highly-effective charter schools across the state in two ways:

- The state will award start-up funds to a single charter authorizer dedicated to the replication and expansion of schools with proven track records of making achievement gains with high-need student populations (e.g., KIPP, Chicago's Noble Street Network)"
- The state will award funding to support the expansion of the Charter School Director Training Program, a program developed in Minnesota through a partnership between charter schools and the Minnesota business community that focuses on instructional leadership development and management practices.

### **Minnesota Charter School Funding**

Minnesota charter schools are considered Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and are fiscally independent and operate autonomously of school districts. They receive direct payment of state and federal aids that flow through MDE. Since 2001, total state aid entitlements to charter schools have increased significantly to more than \$275m in fiscal year 2008 (*see Appendix (F)(2)- Exhibit E Table 1*). Under Minnesota Statutes, Section [124D.11](#), subd. 6, a charter school receives other state aids and grants as if it were a district, including:

- 1) General Education Revenue – the state’s primary education funding formula by which a charter school earns general education revenue on a per pupil unit basis and may be used for any purpose; 2) Referendum Revenue – the aid portion of each enrolling student’s referendum revenue based on the student’s resident district referendum amount; 3) Special Education Revenue; 4) Transportation Revenue – a charter school is eligible for an additional amount of general education

revenue of approximately \$250 per pupil unit if it elects to provide transportation services; 5) Building Lease Aid – a charter school is eligible for building lease aid equal to the lesser of \$1,200 per pupil or 90 percent of the charter school’s lease costs; 6) Start-up Aid – for the first two years of a charter school’s operation, it is eligible for additional state aid equal to the greater of \$50,000 per charter school, or \$500 per charter school pupil unit; 7) Facilities Funding and Other Aid, Grants, and Revenue – a charter school may receive money from any source for capital facilities needs and is also eligible to receive other aids, grants, and revenue; and 8) Federal Aid - a charter school is eligible for any federal aid received by the state as if the charter school were a school district.

A charter school may not receive aid, a grant, or revenue if a levy is required to obtain the money, or if the aid, grant, or revenue replaces levy revenue that is not general education revenue. While funding for charter school operations is very similar to funding for school district operations, there are two significant differences:

- 1) Charter schools receive only the state aid portion of voter-approved operating referendum levies; the resident school district retains the local property tax portion. On average, school districts received \$916 per student in operating referendum revenue in FY 2009, while charter schools received \$55 per student.
- 2) To offset that difference, charter schools are guaranteed full funding for the cost of special education, while school districts receive only partial funding and must cover the unfunded costs of all resident special education students, including charter school students, from their general fund budgets. On average, school districts spent \$706 per enrolled student (regular + special education) in FY 2009 to cover unfunded special education costs.

On average, **charter schools receive significantly more state aid per pupil than school districts** with \$9,768 per pupil for charter school students versus \$7,718 per pupil for public school districts in fiscal year 2008. This happens, in part, to compensate for the lack of a local property tax levy (*see Appendix F(2) - Exhibit E Table 1*).

This funding advantage is also illustrated by FY 2008 revenues that include the general fund revenues and debt service. In Minnesota, pupil transportation and capital expenditures are included in the general fund. The food service, community education and building construction funds are excluded. The average charter school revenue per student in the general and debt service funds from all sources **was slightly higher than the average school district revenue per student** -- \$11,039 for charter schools versus \$10,926 for school districts. School districts received more from local sources due to the property tax, but this was offset by significantly higher state aid and slightly higher federal aid per student for the charter schools (*see Appendix (F)(2) - Exhibit E Table 3*).

Comparing the average FY 2008 general and debt service fund expenditures per student by *program* for school districts and charter schools, the average charter school expenditure per student in the general and debt service funds was slightly lower than the average school district expenditure per student -- \$10,728 for charter schools versus \$10,865 for school districts (*see Appendix (F)(2) Exhibit E Table 4*). Charter school revenues and expenditures are not fully comparable to school district revenues and expenditures. For example, charter schools may elect to have the school district where the charter school is located provide pupil transportation services. If the school district provides the transportation, the transportation portion of the general education aid for the charter school is paid to the school district, and the expenditures are reported by the district. This slightly increases the revenue and expenditures per student for school districts and reduces the revenues and expenditures for charter schools, compared with what would be reported if the charter school elected to provide transportation for its students.

### **Charter Facilities Funding**

State funding for charter school facilities includes school building lease aid, as described above, as well as operating capital revenue, a component of the general education revenue program. School districts must reserve operating capital revenue for facilities, equipment or technology purposes, **while charter schools have the flexibility to use operating capital revenue for any school purpose**. Since charter school building lease expenditures and aid are recorded in the general fund, while school district

facilities are funded primarily with debt service, charter school general fund expenditures are inflated compared with school district general fund expenditures (*see Appendix (F)(2) - Exhibit E Table 4*). To account for the variation between charter schools and school districts in where facilities costs are reported, the analysis above includes both the general fund and the debt service fund.

### **Other Innovative, Autonomous Public Schools**

The 2009 Legislature passed into law a new statute, Minn. Stat. § 123B.045, that authorizes and governs district-created site-governed schools. This new legislation enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. It specifically permits school boards to approve site-governed schools based on proposals from licensed professionals and parents. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of site-governed schools; addresses revenue for site-governed schools; exempts site-governed schools from most state laws, similar to the charter school exemptions; requires boards and site-school governance to establish performance standards and achievement targets; and allows a board to terminate the site-school agreement for cause (*see Appendix (E)(2) – Exhibit D*).

**(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.

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

Evidence for (F)(3):

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

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

Minnesota is a national leader in education reforms designed to increase student achievement, enhance instructional practices and support transparency and accountability. The state has leveraged federal and state funding to achieve its goals in education and often utilizes legislative change to implement change.

From being the first state to offer dual credit, post-secondary programming to establishing the first charter school law in 1991, the state has taken on education reforms that have been widely adopted across the United States.

The state's education reforms have enjoyed bipartisan support over the past forty years. The state has made significant efforts to ensure student access to a high quality public education system and also ensuring that all students (public, private and homeschooled) have access to needed academic supports.

### **Minnesota History of Education Reforms**

The state of Minnesota started its education reform efforts in the 1970s. In 1971, Democratic Governor Wendell Anderson signed the Minnesota Miracle Act into law, which provided a **substantial increase in state funding for public schools and lessened the reliance on property taxes to support public education** (*see Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit A*). The Minnesota Legislature in 2001 reaffirmed the state's commitment to using state resources in funding education by completely eliminating the general education levy (*see Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit B*).

In addition, the Minnesota Legislature passed laws in 1969 and the 1970s that **equalized access to quality educational services** in providing state funds for transportation, non-religious textbooks, counselors, health services and special education services **to non-public schools and students**. These academic supports and services continue today and ensure that all students – regardless of economic status – have access to educational supports and services (*see Minn. Stat. § 125A.18 (special education services to non-*

public students - *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit C*).

Democratic Governor Rudy Perpich continued the state's bipartisan education reform efforts by proposing to expand access to high quality education options for students. In 1988, Governor Perpich proposed and signed into law the state's **public school choice option that allows students to attend a public school of choice rather than being restricted by attending a public school based solely on geography or school district boundaries** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 124D.03, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit D*). In 1985, Governor Perpich signed into law **post-secondary options for high school students** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 124D.09, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit E*). This law allows high school students to earn college credit, and requires the resident school district to reimburse higher education institution for the cost of the program.

The **school choice** effort continued into the 1990s with a Democratic-controlled Minnesota Legislature passing **the first charter school law in the nation in 1991 and passing education tax credits and deductions for low-income families in 1997** with bipartisan support (*see* Minn. Stat. § 124D.10 (charter school law), *Appendix (F)(2) - Exhibit A*) and *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit F* (education tax credits and deductions). The **charter school law in place today is considered the strongest in the nation** by the National Alliance of Charter Schools (*see Appendix (A)(1) – Exhibit C*), **as it was further strengthened in 2009** to provide for greater accountability, allow for single purpose authorizers and allow school districts to form site governed schools (*see* Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, *Appendix (F)(2) - Exhibit A*).

Governor Arne H. Carlson, a Republican, continued the education reform efforts by proposing and implementing the state's first set of academic standards and statewide testing system (1996-07) (*see* Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, *Appendix (B)(1) - Exhibit G*). The Democratic-controlled Minnesota Legislature also required that all Minnesota students pass a Basic Skills Test (BST) in reading, math and writing in order to obtain a high school diploma (*see* Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, (*Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit G*) and Minn. R. § 3501).

During this past decade, Governor Jesse Ventura, Governor Tim Pawlenty and the Minnesota Legislature have continued their support for education reforms with a renewed focus on ensuring every student has an effective teacher in classrooms across the state. These initiatives include: the **state's first teacher performance pay and professional development program called Q Comp** (2005); and **Math & Science Academies to re-train existing math and science teachers** (2007) (*see* Minn. Stat. § 122A.414 (Q Comp program), *Appendix (D)(2) - Exhibit C*). and Minn. Stat. § 122A.72 (Teacher Centers), *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit H*). The state also **required that two percent of its general fund education aid (approximately \$97 million per year) is set aside for teacher professional development activities** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 122A.60-61, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit I and J*).

In addition, the state has been focused on increasing accountability, strengthening state academic standards, and developing a dynamic statewide assessment system. The state implemented its **first statewide accountability system in 2003 and developed a school and student growth model in 2008** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit H*, Minn. Stat. § 120B.31, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit L*; and Minn. Stat. § 120B.35, *Appendix (E)(1) - Exhibit B*). The state's academic standards in math, reading/language arts, science and social studies have been revised, and **all Minnesota students will be required to complete Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade; Algebra II and Chemistry or Physics for graduation** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 120B.021, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit G*, Minn. Stat. § 120B.023, *Appendix (B)(1) - Exhibit H*), and Minn. Stat. § 120B.024 (*see Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit L*). The state also eliminated the BST test and **replaced its graduation exit exam with a more rigorous assessment measuring college and work readiness skills needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** (*see* Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, *Appendix (F)(3) - Exhibit G*).

All of these efforts have enhanced the state's educational system and provided students with access to a high quality education. However, as the state's demographics have shifted it has become clearer the state must work in a targeted way to reduce the achievement gap among students. The next generation of reforms in the state will continue to focus on improving teacher effectiveness with a greater focus and emphasis on closing the achievement gap, particularly in our urban school districts.

## 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*

Minnesota considers access to and understanding of STEM content to be an equity issue, and as such has placed a strong emphasis on the integration of STEM into our comprehensive education reform and high standards efforts statewide. Specifically, we address STEM in this application through our standards adoption process, teacher supports, data-driven decision making and student support proposals. In all of these areas we have continued to benefit from cross-sector partnerships with businesses and non-profits. Through RTTT, we plan to pursue new initiatives that build on the strengths of our past and accelerate proven programs to increase STEM Equity throughout the state. These on-going state and RTTT-specific initiatives include:

### **1) College and Career Ready STEM Standards**

Minnesota K-12 teachers as well as Higher Education and Business partners revised its K-12 Math and Science Standards to ensure a rigorous course of study for all students. As of today, all of Minnesota's students are exposed to technology as well as algebraic and engineering design standards in elementary school, building up to Algebra I standards (required by 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and the requirement to pass Algebra II, biology and two other science classes (one of which must be chemistry or physics) to graduate. Minnesota's proposal for RTTT funding will provide teachers with the STEM curricular frameworks that they need to frame their lessons to be consistently rigorous and relevant across the state.

### **2) College and Career Ready Academic programming to support STEM**

*Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate:* Minnesota has had success with rigorous programming initiatives in the form of Raised Academic Achievement Grants. Through Race to the Top, Minnesota will increase the number of under-represented minority and high-poverty students who enrolled in rigorous courses that put them on track for STEM career success through multiple rigorous programs including AP, CLEP, IB. Past success with this model has led to an increase of 10-35 percent overall in both participation and achievement of non-white students. (See (A)(3) and (B)(3) for more detail).

*Engineering curriculum through free PTC Pro-Engineering software and Project Lead The Way (PLTW).* At least 266 teachers have received professional development and training to offer 250 Pro-E courses across the state. Pro-E is the same CAD software used by many STEM career

industries including construction and medical fields. PLTW is a nationally-recognized comprehensive engineering program for middle and high school students. Minnesota has second-fastest growing PLTW program in the US. Fall 2009 data show that 9 percent of MN high schools and 26 percent of MN middle schools are implementing all or part of the PLTW program.

*Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act* in which funded twenty six consortia between high schools and colleges, each with at least one secondary school district and at least one Perkins-eligible college to govern career and technical education programming beginning no later than grade 11 and continuing for at least two years beyond high school. In addition the *CTE Health Careers Promotion Grants* provide another avenue for students to pursue study in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The Minnesota Department of Education manages state funds appropriated by the legislature to the Minnesota Department of Health for the purpose of promoting participation in courses leading to careers in health related fields. Through *Race to the Top*, 5 CTE programs of study, including the Health Careers, will be eligible for grants to ramp up rigorous programming for students in these 5 CTE areas.

## **2) STEM Teacher Supports**

*Math and Science Teacher Academies (MSTA)* The state has granted over \$3.75 million and earned an additional \$500,000 in grants, in the last 4 years to implement nine regional Math & Science Teacher Academies, which have provided very well-received professional development and technical assistance to over 1200 teachers, principals and curriculum leaders. *(See (B)(3) for further detail).*

*STEM Teacher Mentorship program* has provided online induction for beginning STEM educators and can serve as a model for the integration of technology to drive strong content-based induction. As part of this RTTT funding plan, MN will be able to ramp up the teacher academy and the STEM mentoring program and through those disseminate the new *STEM* curricular frameworks developed as part of this RTTT funding. The STEM PD and curricular supports will all be developed through RTTT funding and available 24/7, beyond RTTT funding as digital resources on the new Minnesota K-12 *iTunes* website and through [www.getSTEM-mn.com](http://www.getSTEM-mn.com). In addition, this RTTT funding will provide grants to districts to be able to recruit quality licensed

math and science teachers to their high needs schools.

**3) Student Outreach and Public Awareness:** MN engages its stakeholder community and communicates with students about college and career ready STEM expectations in several ways:

*Public Awareness Campaigns:* MDE and members of the business community have a branded logo and built the case for STEM classes and real-world STEM careers. As a result, student interest in STEM careers has increased from 10.8 percent in 2005 to 37 percent in 2009 (Minnesota ACT EPAS data).

*STEM Forums and Summits:* The state, MN High Tech Association and the MN State Colleges & University System provided 8 regional STEM summits with interactive, hands-on exhibits, which engaged over 150 partners and 10,000 students, parents and teachers in hands-on STEM career experiences.

*Connecting business and educators with [www.getSTEM-mn.com](http://www.getSTEM-mn.com):* This is a one-of-a-kind ‘Craig’s-list’ like, teacher-to-STEM-industry matching website to encourage STEM career partnerships, company visits, mentors and speakers in K-12 schools; and the business community. There are more than 600 getSTEM profiles set up on the getSTEM site resulting in over 134 educators to business STEM matches in the last 9 months. Built as a partnership between business and MDE, it is a national model.

*STEM Equity Pipeline:* Minnesota is part of a partnership among 6 states; research-based best practices for the integration of girls and women in STEM, particularly in career and technical education.

*To leverage the success of Minnesota's Public Awareness Campaign Minnesota will capture the data with RTTT funding to create STEM data dashboard to provide the public a window on state progress at bridging the STEM equity gap, which is a window into Minnesota's future workforce and quality of life. We will continue to track and benchmark data, including student awareness of STEM through EPAS participation, and use that information to effectively target Race to the Top STEM activity funding. Minnesota will also continue to promote the STEM brand, partnerships,*

and nation-leading getSTEM website we have built with our STEM business partners.

For a comprehensive list and further details on Minnesota's past and present STEM activities *see Appendix (P)(2) – Exhibits A and B.*

**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*

Early childhood education is one of the most high-impact ways to impact the trajectory and success of high-need children. Minnesota places a high degree of importance on improving school readiness and the transition from preschool to kindergarten via multiple initiatives:

- **The Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress:** Minnesota’s Early Learning Standards were developed in 1999 and published in 2000 as Early Learning Standards. The development of these standards involved the child care, early education and higher education institutions in Minnesota as well as a review by national experts. These learning standards address 6 developmental domains (physical and motor development; cognitive development; creativity and the arts; language and literacy development; approaches to learning; social and emotional development) and were aligned with the K-12 academic standards in 2005 through Early Learning Standards Alignment.
- **School Readiness Programs** are offered through Minnesota’s public schools to children age three to kindergarten entrance. The purpose of the program is to prepare children to enter kindergarten. Program requirements include: 1) assess each child’s cognitive skills with a comprehensive child assessment instrument when child enters and again before the child leaves the program to inform program planning and promote kindergarten readiness; 2) provide comprehensive program content and intentional instructional practice aligned with the state’s early childhood learning standards and kindergarten standards focused on children’s cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills and development and prepares children for the transition to kindergarten; 3) coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers. School Readiness aid is based on the number of number of district four year olds and number of pupils enrolled in the school district from low income families.
- **Parent Aware quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)** was established by the legislature to ensure that Minnesota’s children have access to high-quality early learning and care programs in a range of settings so that they are fully ready for kindergarten by 2020. The statute goes on to state that the “creation of a standards-based voluntary quality rating and improvement system includes...tracking progress toward statewide access to

high-quality early learning and care programs, progress toward the number of low-income children whose parents can access quality programs, and progress toward increasing the number of children who are fully prepared to enter kindergarten. The current pilot, called Parent Aware is being scaled to encompass more early education and care facilities.

- “**Start Early**” initiative is intended to increase the data currently collected about preschool children. New elements are planned for addition to the state’s longitudinal data system describing preschool students, the staff who teach them and the schools in which they receive services. This data will inform the understanding of experiences that lead to the positive outcomes needed to prevent or close achievement gaps in early childhood. At this time information about preschool students in the LDS is limited to those who receive early childhood screening for special education services or early intervention special education services. The Start Early project will add enrollment and demographic data from two additional public school programs for preschool children, Early Childhood and Family Education, School Readiness; and, **Head Start**. Start Early will also sponsor the collection of information about the specific program site or organization where students are enrolled and the licensed teachers who provide services. Each site has unique program delivery characteristics that are of interest in understanding the commonalities of experiences that lead to the positive outcomes needed to prevent or close achievement gaps in early childhood.
- The Minnesota School Readiness Study: Developmental Assessment at Kindergarten Entrance annually assesses a representative sample that amounts to 10 percent of all kindergarten students in public schools using **The Minnesota Work Sampling System® Kindergarten Entry Developmental Checklist**. Start Early will work with Pearson, the test vendor to use Minnesota’s unique student identification numbers and provide assessment data for inclusion in the LDS. Districts will use this information to evaluate their programs and understand the impact of early childhood services on elementary education.
- Legislature funds MDE to **annually report these school readiness** results on a statewide basis and by demographic group, based on The Work Sampling System (WSS), a

standards-based observational assessment

*(For a description of additional Early Childhood program and funding descriptions, see appendix (P)(3) – Exhibit A)*

**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*

Minnesota established a P-20 Partnership in 2004 governed by the institutional and organizational leaders of the major education organizations plus others from business, government, the legislature and citizens. While completely voluntary, the Partnership is a major catalyst for insuring a seamless transition from Pre-K through post-secondary and the workplace. Since its inception, members have worked together to develop our math, science and English language arts standards, developed the data sharing framework for the Longitudinal Data System, promoted STEM and the identification of the best practices in instruction for science and mathematics.

The Minnesota Department of Education is the midst of developing a linkable P-20 data warehouse based on anonymized unit record level data, which is contributed to through cross-agency partnerships to include data from pre-K, K-12, public and private higher education, workforce and labor. This data warehouse will include metrics such as:

- Preschool program participation
- Remedial coursework taken
- SERVS staff data, which includes staff licensure, prep program, average salary information, etc. – as well as Q Comp evaluation results
- SERVS Org collects school finance (revenue, expenditure) data
- Follows students across districts
- Participation in Post Secondary, College-in-School, and dual enrollment options

This will be undertaken as part of the state's completion of its statewide longitudinal data system or SLDS (*see Appendix (C)(1) – Exhibit A*). The state is applying for additional LDS grant funds to complement MDE resources and enable the state to more quickly complete and scale their data system. The state's role in the SLDS is to:

- Transfer relevant agency data files, stripped of personal information (e.g., name)
- Manage the data warehouse in conjunction with Office of Higher Education (OHE)

- House data warehouse at state data center
- Contract with neutral third party for management
- Ensure privacy by stripping personal information from data file when linking with OHE to ensure privacy
- Conduct quality assurance testing
- Access the SLDS to conduct research and provide aggregated reporting, as needed and approved by the P-20 Governance Council

**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*

### *P-20 Post Secondary Interagency Governance*

SLDS the interagency data warehouse outlined will be jointly managed by OHE and MDE and hosted by the State Data Center at the Office of Enterprise Technology (OET). OET will develop service level agreements governing ongoing operational technical support, security and data access processes and procedures. Specific governance committees are listed below.

- *The Governing Board* established to direct this work is a subgroup of the P-20 Council including representatives from MDE, OHE, and business, higher education systems, K-12 schools, the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and citizens. Their main responsibility is to review and approve on-going research and evaluation proposals set forth by the Research and Data Committees.
- *Research Committee* responsibilities include the review and development of research and evaluation proposals to make recommendations to the Governing Board for approval. They are charged with developing protocols for maximizing the validity and reliability of LDS data.
- *Data Advisory Committee* responsibilities also include the review and evaluation of proposals through the lens of technical expertise on data structures and linkages. They share the charge of developing protocols for maximizing the validity and reliability of LDS data.
- *LDS System Coordinators* are project managers with responsibilities for daily operations who will Work with IT staff on data security, data transfer, and data file construction issues, Maintain awareness and compliance with FERPA and other relevant laws. Work with the Data Advisory Committee to coordinate the data management including: set data standards, define data elements, document data processes, identify file specifications; and, Facilitate research utilizing the LDS data.
- *IT Staff* (at both MDE and OHE) have responsibilities for DRLS processes to match directory information and assign a unique, anonymous and secure SLEDS IDs. SLEDS will use unit record data to create aggregate or anonymous unit record views to be used

for research. Staff will assure data security protocols.

- *State Data Center* responsibilities include housing the LDS data system and related server equipment and responsibility for data system related issues including hardware, security, user access, etc.

**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*

- Site-governed schools legislation allows for greater teacher decision-making regarding the leadership, culture, climate and practices of site-governed schools (*see (E)(2) and (F)(2)*)
- “New Program” protection in select districts for fresh-started schools implementing turnaround strategies in the past (e.g., MPS, SPPS) has provided greater teacher protection and stability (e.g., 2 years’ or 1 cycle’s protection for hiring purposes) for schools undergoing significant turnover as part of their transformation
- Turnaround schools’ increased learning time – all turnaround schools identified through RTTT will be funded to provide an additional hour of learning per day
- Examples of community schools initiatives throughout the state
- Funding follows the student, so sites who are able to attract students by driving innovation and reform see continued funding

## **VIII. BUDGET**

### **(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(2)(i)(d))**

Applicants should use their budgets and budget narratives to provide a detailed description of how they plan to use their Federal grant funds, and how they plan to leverage other Federal (*e.g.* School Improvement Grant, Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant, Teacher Incentive Fund grant, Title I), State, and local funds to achieve their reform goals. The budget narrative should be of sufficient scope and detail for the Department to determine if the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. For further guidance on Federal cost principles, an applicant may wish to consult OMB Circular A-87. (See [www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars)).

For the purpose of the budget, we expect that the State will link its proposed reform plans to projects that the State believes are necessary in order to implement its plans. Providing additional budget detail through a project-level table and narrative will allow the State to specifically describe how its budget aligns with its reform plans in all four areas and how its budget supports the achievement of the State's goals. Some projects might address one Reform Plan Criterion, while others might address several similarly-focused criteria as one group. For example, the State might choose to have one "management project" focused on criterion (A)(2), Building Strong Statewide Capacity. It might have another "human capital project" that addresses criteria (D)(2) through (D)(5) in the Great Teachers and Leaders section.

To support the budgeting process, the following forms and instructions are included:

1. Budget Summary
  - a. Budget Summary Table. This is the cover sheet for the budget. States should complete this table as the final step in their budgeting process, and include this table as the first page of the State's budget. (See Budget Part I: Budget Summary Table.)
  - b. Budget Summary Narrative. A budget narrative that accompanies the Budget Summary Table should provide an overview of the projects that the State has included in its budget. The State should also describe how other Federal, State, and local funds will be leveraged to further support Race to the Top education reform plans. (See Budget Part I: Budget Summary Narrative.)
2. Project-Level Detail. This is the supporting, project-level detail required as back-up to the budget summary. For each project that the State is proposing in order to implement the plans described in its application, the State should complete the following:
  - a. Project-Level Budget Table. This is the budget for each project, by budget category and for each year for which funding is requested. (See Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Table.)
  - b. Project-Level Budget Narrative. This is the narrative and backup detail associated with each budget category in the Project-Level Budget. (See Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Narrative.)

### Budget Part I: Budget Summary Table

**Instructions:**

In the Budget Summary Table, the State should include the budget totals for each budget category and each year of the grant. These line items are derived by adding together the line items from each of the Project-Level Budget Tables.

<b>Budget Part I: Summary Budget Table</b> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(2)(i)(d))					
<b>Budget Categories</b>	<b>Project Year 1</b>	<b>Project Year 2</b>	<b>Project Year 3</b>	<b>Project Year 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Personnel					
2. Fringe Benefits					
3. Travel					
4. Equipment					
5. Supplies					
6. Contractual					
7. Training Stipends					
8. Other					
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)					
10. Indirect Costs*					
11. Funding for Involved LEAs					
12. Supplemental Funding for Participating LEAs					
13. Total Costs (lines 9-12)					
14. Funding Subgranted to Participating LEAs (50% of Total Grant)					
15. Total Budget (lines 13-14)					

All applicants must provide a break-down by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-15.  
Columns (a) through (d): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.  
Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all project years.  
\*If you plan to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section.  
Note that indirect costs are not allocated to lines 11-12.

## **BUDGET PART I: BUDGET SUMMARY NARRATIVE**

### **Instructions:**

Describe, in an Appendix, the overall structure of the State's budget for a Race to the Top grant, including the list of projects for which there is a project-level budget, and a rationale for how these will be organized and managed.

The State should also describe how other Federal (*e.g.* School Improvement Grant, Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant, Teacher Incentive Fund grant, Title I), State, and local funds will be leveraged to further support Race to the Top education reform plans.

The State must include, on Line 14 of the Budget Summary Table, the amount of funding to be subgranted to its participating LEAs based on their relative shares of funding under Part A of Title I of the ESEA for the most recent year (that is, FY 2009), as required under section 14006(c) of the ARRA. States are not required to provide budgets for how the participating LEAs would use their funds. However, the Department expects that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that participating LEAs spend these funds in accordance with the State's plan and the scope of work described in the agreement between the State and the participating LEA.

**Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Table**

**Instructions:**

For each project the State has proposed in its Budget Summary Narrative, the State should submit a Project-Level Budget Table that includes the budget for the project, for each budget category and each year of the grant.

<b>Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Table</b>					
<b>Project Name:</b> [fill in the project name the State has assigned to this work]					
<b>Associated with Criteria:</b> [fill in the designations of the criteria associated with this project]					
<b>(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(2)(i)(d))</b>					
<b>Budget Categories</b>	<b>Project Year 1 (a)</b>	<b>Project Year 2 (b)</b>	<b>Project Year 3 (c)</b>	<b>Project Year 4 (d)</b>	<b>Total (e)</b>
1. Personnel					
2. Fringe Benefits					
3. Travel					
4. Equipment					
5. Supplies					
6. Contractual					
7. Training Stipends					
8. Other					
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)					
10. Indirect Costs*					
11. Funding for Involved LEAs					
12. Supplemental Funding for Participating LEAs					
13. Total Costs (lines 9-12)					

All applicants must provide a break-down by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-15.  
 Columns (a) through (d): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.  
 Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all project years.  
 \*If you plan to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section.  
 Note that indirect costs are not allocated to lines 11-12.

**BUDGET PART II: PROJECT-LEVEL BUDGET NARRATIVE**

**Instructions:**

For each project the State has proposed in its Budget Summary Narrative, the Department strongly recommends that the State submits the following information for each budget category.

**1) Personnel**

Provide:

- The title of each position to be compensated under this project.
- The salary for each position under this project.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position under this project.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of the project, and connections back to specific project plans. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

For example:

Personnel: The following requested personnel will all be hired as employees of the project.	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
Project Director (1): Jane Doe will be responsible for the overall leadership and management of the Performance-Based Teacher and Principal Compensation Program. She is an expert in this area and has worked on this issue for six years. She will report to the Race to the Top project director and be responsible for negotiating details related to the performance-based programs proposed in the plan associated with (D)(2). Her qualifications are described in detail in the project management plan on page A-24 of the Appendix.	80%	\$65,000	\$52,000

**2) Fringe Benefits**

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel in the project.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

**3) Travel**

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

For example:

Travel: Travel expenses include the average mile reimbursements of \$100 each, in addition to an amount of per diem of \$50.	# Trips	\$ per Trip	Total
A kick-off conference will provide technical assistance to our participating 325 districts. The conference will last two full days. A more detailed justification for this trip is explained in the narrative for selection criterion (A)(2).	325x3 people (1 Project Dir. & 3 staff per district.)	\$200	\$195,000

#### 4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.
- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

For example:

Equipment: Consistent with SEA policy, equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$1,000 or more per unit.	Cost of Item	Item Description	Total
Desktop Computers (3): Three desktop computers will be needed to expand our current office and supply the needs of 3 new employees.	\$1,500	Computer including monitor & printer	\$4,500

#### 5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed for the project, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

#### 6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.

- The estimated cost per expected procurement.
- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

## 7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other school personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

## 8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category (*e.g.*, communications, printing, postage, equipment rental).
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

## 9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

## 10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

**11) Funding for Involved LEAs**

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by involved LEAs (as defined in this notice).
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of LEAs involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all involved LEAs).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity.

For example:

Activity	Purpose	Cost	# LEAs involved	Total
Stipends for teachers to participate in statewide professional development during summer 2011	Implementing new standards	\$100 per teacher x 2,500 teachers (across all involved LEAs)	250	\$250,000

**12) Supplemental Funding for Participating LEAs**

- a) For each of the specific activities to be done by selected participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), and for which the State is compensating the LEAs beyond their Title I shares under section 14006(c) of the ARRA:

Provide:

- The type of activity
- The estimated cost of each activity, and its cost basis.
- The approximate number of LEAs involved in each activity.

Explain:

- The purpose of the activity.

For example:

Activity	Purpose	Cost	Approx. # of LEAs	Total
Pay-for-performance pilot program	Fund the performance bonuses for 200 teachers	\$5,000 per teacher x 100 teachers/LEA x 3 years	2	\$3,000,000

b) For each participating LEA (as defined in this notice) whose Title I share is being supplemented by the State in order for the LEA to participate fully in the State’s Race to the Top plans:

Provide:

- The name of the participating LEA whose share is being supplemented
- The amount of the supplement to the LEA’s subgrant

Explain:

- The rationale for the supplement to the subgrant.

For example:

LEA	Rationale	Supplemental Subgrant Cost	Total
ABC District	Based on its Title I share, this LEA would receive \$X of the State’s Race to the Top grant; this subgrant from the State’s 50% increases the LEA’s funding to allow it to fully participate in all State plans	\$100,000/year x 4 years	\$400,000

**13) Total Costs**

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-11, for each year of the budget.

### Budget: Indirect Cost Information

To request reimbursement for indirect costs, please answer the following questions:

<p>Does the State have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?</p> <p>YES <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/></p> <p>If yes to question 1, please provide the following information:</p> <p>Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (mm/dd/yyyy): From: <u>  07  </u> / <u>  01  </u> / <u>  2009  </u> _____ To: <u>  06  </u> / <u>  30  </u> / <u>  2010  </u> _____</p> <p>Approving Federal agency: <u>  X  </u> ED <u>  </u> Other (Please specify agency): _____</p>
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Directions for this form:

1. Indicate whether or not the State has an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement that was approved by the Federal government.
2. If “No” is checked, ED generally will authorize grantees to use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted salaries and wages subject to the following limitations:
  - (a) The grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after ED issues a grant award notification; and
  - (b) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.
3. If “Yes” is checked, indicate the beginning and ending dates covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. In addition, indicate whether ED, another Federal agency (Other) issued the approved agreement. If “Other” was checked, specify the name of the agency that issued the approved agreement.

**IX. PARTICIPATING LEA MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
(Appendix D in the Notice of Final Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and  
Selection Criteria; and in the Notice Inviting Applications)**

**Background for Memorandum of Understanding**

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Participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in a State's Race to the Top plans are required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement with the State that specifies the scope of the work being implemented by the participating LEA (as defined in this notice).

To support States in working efficiently with LEAs to determine which LEAs will participate in the State's Race to the Top application, the U.S. Department of Education has produced a model MOU, which is attached. This model MOU may serve as a template for States; however, States are not required to use it. They may use a different document that includes the key features noted below and in the model, and they should consult with their State and local attorneys on what is most appropriate for their State that includes, at a minimum, these key elements.

The purpose of the model MOU is to help to specify a relationship that is specific to Race to the Top and is not meant to detail all typical aspects of State/LEA grant management or administration. At a minimum, a strong MOU should include the following, each of which is described in detail below: (i) terms and conditions; (ii) a scope of work; and, (iii) signatures.

(i) Terms and conditions: Each participating LEA (as defined in this notice) should sign a standard set of terms and conditions that includes, at a minimum, key roles and responsibilities of the State and the LEA; State recourse for LEA non-performance; and assurances that make clear what the participating LEA (as defined in this notice) is agreeing to do.

(ii) Scope of work: MOUs should include a scope of work (included in the model MOU as Exhibit I) that is completed by each participating LEA (as defined in this notice). The scope of work must be signed and dated by an authorized LEA and State official. In the interest of time and with respect for the effort it will take for LEAs to develop detailed work plans, the scope of work submitted by LEAs and States as part of their Race to the Top applications may be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work should include the portions of the State's proposed reform plans that the LEA is agreeing to implement. (Note that in order to participate in a State's Race to the Top application an LEA must agree to implement all or significant portions of the State's reform plans.)

If a State is awarded a Race to the Top grant, the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work (which could be attached to the model MOU as Exhibit II), which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with the preliminary scope of work and with the State's grant application, and should include the participating LEA's (as defined in this notice) specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures.

(iii) Signatures: The signatures demonstrate (a) an acknowledgement of the relationship between the LEA and the State, and (b) the strength of the participating LEA's (as defined in this notice) commitment.

- With respect to the relationship between the LEA and the State, the State's counter-signature on the MOU indicates that the LEA's commitment is consistent with the requirement that a participating LEA (as defined in this notice) implement all or significant portions of the State's plans.
- The strength of the participating LEA's (as defined in this notice) commitment will be demonstrated by the signatures of the LEA superintendent (or an equivalent authorized signatory), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable) and the local teacher's union leader (if applicable).

Please note the following with regard to the State's Race to the Top application:

- In its application, the State need only provide an example of the State's standard Participating LEA MOU; it does not have to provide copies of every MOU signed by its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice). If, however, States and LEAs have made any changes to the State's standard MOU, the State must provide description of the changes that were made. Please note that the Department may, at any time, request copies of all MOUs between the State and its participating LEAs.
- Please see criterion (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii), and the evidence requested in the application, for more information and ways in which States will be asked to summarize information about the LEA MOUs.

## **Model Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding**

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This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between \_\_\_\_\_ (“State”) and \_\_\_\_\_ (“Participating LEA”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top grant project.

### **I. SCOPE OF WORK**

Exhibit I, the Preliminary Scope of Work, indicates which portions of the State’s proposed reform plans (“State Plan”) the Participating LEA is agreeing to implement. (Note that, in order to participate, the LEA must agree to implement all or significant portions of the State Plan.)

### **II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

#### **A. PARTICIPATING LEA RESPONSIBILITIES**

In assisting the State in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top application, the Participating LEA subgrantee will:

- 1) Implement the LEA plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Actively participate in all relevant convenings, communities of practice, or other practice-sharing events that are organized or sponsored by the State or by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”);
- 3) Post to any website specified by the State or ED, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using funds associated with the Race to the Top grant;
- 4) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State or ED;
- 5) Be responsive to State or ED requests for information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered;
- 6) Participate in meetings and telephone conferences with the State to discuss (a) progress of the project, (b) potential dissemination of resulting non-proprietary products and lessons learned, (c) plans for subsequent years of the Race to the Top grant period, and (d) other matters related to the Race to the Top grant and associated plans.

#### **B. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

In assisting Participating LEAs in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top application, the State grantee will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating LEA in carrying out the LEA Plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Timely distribute the LEA’s portion of Race to the Top grant funds during the course of the project period and in accordance with the LEA Plan identified in Exhibit II;
- 3) Provide feedback on the LEA’s status updates, annual reports, any interim reports, and project plans and products; and
- 4) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

#### **C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) The State and the Participating LEA will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top grant.

- 2) These key contacts from the State and the Participating LEA will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU.
- 3) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the whole grant period.
- 4) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will negotiate in good faith to continue to achieve the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top grant, even when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating LEA, or when the LEA Plan requires modifications.

**D. STATE RECOURSE FOR LEA NON-PERFORMANCE**

If the State determines that the LEA is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the State grantee will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include a collaborative process between the State and the LEA, or any of the enforcement measures that are detailed in 34 CFR section 80.43 including putting the LEA on reimbursement payment status, temporarily withholding funds, or disallowing costs.

**III. ASSURANCES**

The Participating LEA hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Has all requisite power and authority to execute this MOU;
- 2) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all or significant portions of the State Plan;
- 3) Agrees to be a Participating LEA and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded,
- 4) Will provide a Final Scope of Work to be attached to this MOU as Exhibit II only if the State's application is funded; will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe in Exhibit II the LEA's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures ("LEA Plan ") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I) and with the State Plan; and
- 5) Will comply with all of the terms of the Grant, the State's subgrant, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

**IV. MODIFICATIONS**

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, and in consultation with ED.

**V. DURATION/TERMINATION**

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a grant is received, ending upon the expiration of the grant project period, or upon mutual agreement of the parties, whichever occurs first.

**VI. SIGNATURES**

**LEA Superintendent** (or equivalent authorized signatory) - required:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name/Title

**President of Local School Board** (or equivalent, if applicable):

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Signature/Date

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Print Name/Title

**Local Teachers' Union Leader** (if applicable):

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Signature/Date

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Print Name/Title

**Authorized State Official** - required:

By its signature below, the State hereby accepts the LEA as a Participating LEA.

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Signature/Date

---

Print Name/Title

**A. EXHIBIT I – PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK**

LEA hereby agrees to participate in implementing the State Plan in each of the areas identified below.

<b>Elements of State Reform Plans</b>	<b>LEA Participation (Y/N)</b>	<b>Comments from LEA (optional)</b>
<b>B. Standards and Assessments</b>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments		
<b>C. Data Systems to Support Instruction</b>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems		
(ii) Professional development on use of data		
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers		
<b>D. Great Teachers and Leaders</b>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth		
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems		
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations		
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development		
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion, and retention		
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification		
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal		
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools		
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas		
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development		
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development		
<b>E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools</b>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools		

**For the Participating LEA**

**For the State**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Authorized LEA Signature/Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Authorized State Signature/Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name/Title**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name/Title**

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**X. SCHOOL INTERVENTION MODELS**  
**(Appendix C in the Notice of Final Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and Selection Criteria; and in the Notice Inviting Applications)**

There are four school intervention models referred to in Selection Criterion (E)(2): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model. Each is described below.

- (a) Turnaround model. (1) A turnaround model is one in which an LEA must--
- (i) Replace the principal and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach in order to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates;
  - (ii) Use locally adopted competencies to measure the effectiveness of staff who can work within the turnaround environment to meet the needs of students,
    - (A) Screen all existing staff and rehire no more than 50 percent; and
    - (B) Select new staff;
  - (iii) Implement such strategies as financial incentives, increased opportunities for promotion and career growth, and more flexible work conditions that are designed to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in the turnaround school;
  - (iv) Provide staff with ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development that is aligned with the school’s comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff to ensure that they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies;
  - (v) Adopt a new governance structure, which may include, but is not limited to, requiring the school to report to a new “turnaround office” in the LEA or SEA, hire a “turnaround leader” who reports directly to the Superintendent or Chief Academic Officer, or enter into a multi-year contract with the LEA or SEA to obtain added flexibility in exchange for greater accountability;
  - (vi) Use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based and “vertically aligned” from one grade to the next as well as aligned with State academic standards;
  - (vii) Promote the continuous use of student data (such as from formative, interim, and summative assessments) to inform and differentiate instruction in order to meet the academic needs of individual students;
  - (viii) Establish schedules and implement strategies that provide increased learning time (as defined in this notice); and
  - (ix) Provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students.
- (2) A turnaround model may also implement other strategies such as—
- (i) Any of the required and permissible activities under the transformation model; or
  - (ii) A new school model (*e.g.*, themed, dual language academy).

(b) Restart model. A restart model is one in which an LEA converts a school or closes and reopens a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process. (A CMO is a non-profit organization that operates or manages charter schools by centralizing or sharing certain functions and resources among schools. An EMO is a for-profit or non-profit organization that provides “whole-school operation” services to an LEA.) A restart model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.

(c) School closure. School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving. These other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.

(d) Transformation model. A transformation model is one in which an LEA implements each of the following strategies:

(1) Developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness.

(i) Required activities. The LEA must--

(A) Replace the principal who led the school prior to commencement of the transformation model;

(B) Use rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals that--

(1) Take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor as well as other factors such as multiple observation-based assessments of performance and ongoing collections of professional practice reflective of student achievement and increased high-school graduations rates; and

(2) Are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement;

(C) Identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing this model, have increased student achievement and high-school graduation rates and identify and remove those who, after ample opportunities have been provided for them to improve their professional practice, have not done so;

(D) Provide staff with ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development (e.g., regarding subject-specific pedagogy, instruction that reflects a deeper understanding of the community served by the school, or differentiated instruction) that is aligned with the school’s comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff to ensure they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies; and

(E) Implement such strategies as financial incentives, increased opportunities for promotion and career growth, and more flexible work conditions that are designed to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in a transformation school.

(ii) Permissible activities. An LEA may also implement other strategies to develop teachers’ and school leaders’ effectiveness, such as--

(A) Providing additional compensation to attract and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in a transformation school;

(B) Instituting a system for measuring changes in instructional practices resulting from professional development; or

(C) Ensuring that the school is not required to accept a teacher without the mutual consent of the teacher and principal, regardless of the teacher's seniority.

(2) Comprehensive instructional reform strategies.

(i) Required activities. The LEA must--

(A) Use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based and "vertically aligned" from one grade to the next as well as aligned with State academic standards; and

(B) Promote the continuous use of student data (such as from formative, interim, and summative assessments) to inform and differentiate instruction in order to meet the academic needs of individual students.

(ii) Permissible activities. An LEA may also implement comprehensive instructional reform strategies, such as--

(A) Conducting periodic reviews to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity, is having the intended impact on student achievement, and is modified if ineffective;

(B) Implementing a schoolwide "response-to-intervention" model;

(C) Providing additional supports and professional development to teachers and principals in order to implement effective strategies to support students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and to ensure that limited English proficient students acquire language skills to master academic content;

(D) Using and integrating technology-based supports and interventions as part of the instructional program; and

(E) In secondary schools--

(1) Increasing rigor by offering opportunities for students to enroll in advanced coursework (such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate; or science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses, especially those that incorporate rigorous and relevant project-, inquiry-, or design-based contextual learning opportunities), early-college high schools, dual enrollment programs, or thematic learning academies that prepare students for college and careers, including by providing appropriate supports designed to ensure that low-achieving students can take advantage of these programs and coursework;

(2) Improving student transition from middle to high school through summer transition programs or freshman academies;

(3) Increasing graduation rates through, for example, credit-recovery programs, re-engagement strategies, smaller learning communities, competency-based instruction and performance-based assessments, and acceleration of basic reading and mathematics skills; or

(4) Establishing early-warning systems to identify students who may be at risk of failing to achieve to high standards or graduate.

(3) Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools.

(i) Required activities. The LEA must--

(A) Establish schedules and implement strategies that provide increased learning time (as defined in this notice); and

(B) Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

(ii) Permissible activities. An LEA may also implement other strategies that extend learning time and create community-oriented schools, such as--

(A) Partnering with parents and parent organizations, faith- and community-based organizations, health clinics, other State or local agencies, and others to create safe school environments that meet students' social, emotional, and health needs;

(B) Extending or restructuring the school day so as to add time for such strategies as advisory periods that build relationships between students, faculty, and other school staff;

(C) Implementing approaches to improve school climate and discipline, such as implementing a system of positive behavioral supports or taking steps to eliminate bullying and student harassment; or

(D) Expanding the school program to offer full-day kindergarten or pre-kindergarten.

(4) Providing operational flexibility and sustained support.

(i) Required activities. The LEA must--

(A) Give the school sufficient operational flexibility (such as staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates; and

(B) Ensure that the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support from the LEA, the SEA, or a designated external lead partner organization (such as a school turnaround organization or an EMO).

(ii) Permissible activities. The LEA may also implement other strategies for providing operational flexibility and intensive support, such as--

(A) Allowing the school to be run under a new governance arrangement, such as a turnaround division within the LEA or SEA; or

(B) Implementing a per-pupil school-based budget formula that is weighted based on student needs.

If a school identified as a persistently lowest-achieving school has implemented, in whole or in part within the last two years, an intervention that meets the requirements of the turnaround, restart, or transformation models, the school may continue or complete the intervention being implemented.

## **XI. SCORING RUBRIC**

**(Appendix B in the Notice of Final Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and Selection Criteria; and in the Notice Inviting Applications)**

### **I. Introduction**

To help ensure inter-reviewer reliability and transparency for State Race to the Top applicants, the U.S. Department of Education has created and is publishing a rubric for scoring State applications. The pages that follow detail the rubric and allocation of point values that reviewers will be using. Race to the Top grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to States in two phases. The rubric will be used by reviewers in each phase to ensure consistency across and within review panels.

The rubric allocates points to each criterion and, in selected cases, to sub-criteria as well. In all, the Race to the Top scoring rubric includes 19 criteria and one competitive priority that collectively add up to 500 points. Several of these criteria account for a large number of points; others account for a comparatively small portion of a State's score.

It is important to emphasize that over half the points that reviewers may award to States are based on States' accomplishments prior to applying—their successes in increasing student achievement, decreasing the achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, enlisting strong statewide support and commitment to their proposed plans, and creating legal conditions conducive to education reform and innovation. Finally, it bears underscoring that reviewers will be assessing multiple aspects of States' Race to the Top applications. States that fail to earn points or earn a low number of points on one criterion, can still win a Race to the Top award by presenting strong applications and histories of accomplishments on other criteria.

Notwithstanding the guidance being provided to reviewers, reviewers will still be required to make many thoughtful judgments about the quality of States' applications. Beyond judging a State's commitment to the four reform areas specified in the ARRA, reviewers will be assessing, based on the criteria, the comprehensiveness and feasibility of States' applications and plans. Reviewers will be asked to evaluate, for example, if States have set ambitious but achievable annual targets in their applications. Reviewers will need to make informed judgments about States' goals, the activities the State has chosen to undertake and the rationales for such activities, and the timeline and credibility of State plans.

Applicants address the absolute and competitive priorities throughout their applications. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding. Applications that address the competitive priority comprehensively will earn extra points under that priority. Invitational priorities are extensions to the core reform areas; applicants are invited to address these, but are not granted additional points for doing so.

In this appendix there is information about the point values for each criterion and priority, guidance on scoring, and the rubric that will be provided to reviewers.

## II. Points Overview

The chart below shows the maximum number of points that may be assigned to each criterion.

Selection Criteria	Points	Percent
<b>A. State Success Factors</b>	125	25%
(A)(1) Articulating State’s education reform agenda and LEAs’ participation in it	65	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	
(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	
<b>B. Standards and Assessments</b>	70	14%
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	
<b>C. Data Systems to Support Instruction</b>	47	9%
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	
<b>D. Great Teachers and Leaders</b>	138	28%
Eligibility Requirement (b)	eligibility	
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	14	
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	
<b>E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools</b>	50	10%
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	
<b>F. General</b>	55	11%
Eligibility Requirement (a)	eligibility	
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative s	40	
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>
Subtotal: Accomplishments	260	52%
Subtotal: Plans	240	48%

### III. About Scoring

About State Reform Conditions Criteria: The goal for State Reform Conditions Criteria is to ensure that, wherever possible, reviewers are provided with criterion-specific guidance that is clear and specific, making the decisions as “objective” as possible. (See application requirement (d) for the guidance provided to States concerning responding to State Reform Conditions Criteria in their applications.)

About Reform Plan Criteria: For Reform Plan Criteria, reviewers will be given general guidance on how to evaluate the information that each State submits; this guidance will be consistent with application requirement (e). Reviewers will allot points based on the quality of the State’s plan and, where specified in the text of the criterion, whether the State has set ambitious yet achievable annual targets for that plan. In making these judgments, reviewers will consider the extent to which the State has:

- *A high-quality plan.* In determining the quality of a State’s plan for a given Reform Plan Criterion, reviewers will evaluate the key goals, the activities to be undertaken and rationale for the activities, the timeline, the parties responsible for implementing the activities, and the credibility of the plan (as judged, in part, by the information submitted as supporting evidence). States are required to submit this information for each Reform Plan Criterion that the State addresses. States may also submit additional information that they believe will be helpful to peer reviewers.
- *Ambitious yet achievable annual targets* (only for those criteria that specify this). In determining whether a State has ambitious yet achievable annual targets for a given Reform Plan Criterion, reviewers will examine the State’s targets in the context of the State’s plan and the evidence submitted (if any) in support of the plan. There is no specific target that reviewers will be looking for here; nor will higher targets necessarily be rewarded above lower ones. Rather, reviewers will reward States for developing targets that – in light of the State’s plan – are “ambitious yet achievable.”

Note that the evidence that States submit may be relevant both to judging whether the State has a high-quality plan and whether its annual targets are ambitious yet achievable.

About Assigning Points: For each criterion, reviewers will assign points to an application. In general, the Department has specified total point values at the criterion level and in some instances, at the sub-criterion level. In the cases where the point totals have not been allocated to sub-criteria, each sub-criterion is weighted equally.

The reviewers will use the general ranges below as a guide when awarding points.

Maximum Point Value	Quality of Applicant’s Response		
	Low	Medium	High
45	0 – 12	13 – 33	34 – 45
40	0 – 10	11 – 29	30 – 40
35	0 – 9	10 – 25	26 – 35

Maximum Point Value	Quality of Applicant's Response		
	Low	Medium	High
30	0 – 8	9 – 21	22 – 30
25	0 – 7	8 – 18	19 – 25
21	0 – 5	6 – 15	16 – 21
20	0 – 5	6 – 14	15 – 20
15	0 – 4	5 – 10	11 – 15
14	0 – 4	5 – 9	10 – 14
10	0 – 2	3 – 7	8 – 10
7	0 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 7
5	0 – 1	2 – 3	4 – 5

About Priorities: There are three types of priorities in the Race to the Top competition.

- The absolute priority cuts across the entire application and should not be addressed separately. It will be assessed, after the proposal has been fully reviewed and evaluated, to ensure that the application has met the priority. If an application has not met the priority, it will be eliminated from the competition.
- The competitive priority also cuts across the entire application. It is worth 15 points. Applicants will earn all or none of it, making it truly a competitive preference. In those cases where there is a disparity in the reviewers' determinations on the priority, the Department will award the competitive priority points only if a majority of the reviewers on a panel determine that an application should receive the priority points.
- The invitational priorities are addressed in their own separate sections. While applicants are invited to write to the invitational priorities, these will not earn points.

In the Event of a Tie: If two or more applications have the same score and there is not sufficient funding to support all of the tied applicants, the applicants' scores on criterion (A)(1)(ii), Securing LEA Commitment, will be used to break the tie.

#### IV. Reviewer Guidance for Criteria

##### A. State Success Factors

*General Reviewer Guidance for (A)(1): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

*Reviewer Guidance Specific to (A)(1)(ii):*

- *The model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), provided in Appendix D to this notice, is an example of a strong MOU.*

**(A)(1) (maximum total points: 65) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEAs' participation in it:** The extent to which—

(i) **(maximum subpoints: 5)** 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;

(ii) **(maximum subpoints: 45)** 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—

(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

(iii) **(maximum subpoints: 15)** 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—

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

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/English-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.

*General Reviewer Guidance for (A)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

(A)(2) **(maximum total points: 30)** Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans: The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—

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

(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;

(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

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

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

(b) 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.

*General Reviewer Guidance for (A)(3): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).*

(A)(3) **(maximum total points: 30)** Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps: The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—

(i) **(maximum subpoints: 5)** 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;

(ii) **(maximum subpoints: 25)** 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—

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

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

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

**B. Standards and Assessments**  
State Reform Conditions Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (B)(1): *In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).*

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (B)(1)(i)(b) – Significant Number of States:

- “High” points for a significant number of States are earned if the consortium includes a majority of the States in the country.
- “Medium” or “low” points are earned if the consortium includes one-half of the States in the country or less.

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (B)(1)(ii):

- “High” points are earned for: Phase 1 applicants’ commitment to and progress toward adoption by August 2, 2010; and Phase 2 applicants’ adoption by August 2, 2010.
- No “Medium” points are assigned for this criterion.
- “Low” points are earned for a high-quality plan to adopt by a later specified date in 2010.
- No points are earned for a plan that is not high-quality or for a plan to adopt later than 2010.

(B)(1) **(maximum total points: 40)** Developing and adopting common standards: 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) **(maximum subpoints: 20)** The State’s participation in a consortium of States that—

(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) **(maximum subpoints: 20)** (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.<sup>7</sup>

*General Reviewer Guidance for (B)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).*

*Reviewer Guidance Specific to (B)(2)(ii) – Significant Number of States:*

- “High” points for a significant number of States are earned if the consortium includes a majority of the States in the country.
- “Medium” or “low” points are earned if the consortium includes one-half of the States in the country or less.

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

#### *Reform Plan Criteria*

*General Reviewer Guidance for (B)(3): In judging the quality of the applicant’s plan and annual targets (if any) for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

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

## C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

### State Reform Conditions Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (C)(1): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (C)(1):

- Applicants earn two (2) points for every element the State has, out of 12 elements possible.

(C)(1) **(maximum total points: 24)** Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system: 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).

### Reform Plan Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (C)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets (if any) for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).

(C)(2) **(maximum total points: 5)** Accessing and using State data: 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.<sup>8</sup>

General Reviewer Guidance for (C)(3): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets (if any) for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).

(C)(3) **(maximum total points: 18)** Using data to improve instruction: 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;

(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

(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).

**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**  
State Reform Conditions Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (D)(1): In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (D)(1):

- The criterion must be judged for both teachers and principals.

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (D)(1)(i):

- “High” points are earned by States that have alternative routes that (a) permit providers who operate independently of institutions of higher education (IHEs), and (b) include at least 4 of the 5 elements listed in the definition of alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice).
- “Medium” points are earned by States that have alternative routes that (a) permit providers who operate independently of IHEs, and (b) include at least 2 of the 5 elements listed in the definition of alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice).
- “Low” points are earned by States that have alternative routes that (a) do not permit providers who operate independently of IHEs, OR (b) include only 1 of the 5 elements listed in the definition of alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice).

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

Reform Plan Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (D)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion and annual targets, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).

*Reviewer Guidance Specific to (D)(2):*

- *The criterion must be judged for both teachers and principals.*

(D)(2) **(maximum total points: 58)** Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance: 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) **(maximum subpoints: 5)** Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student;

(ii) **(maximum subpoints: 15)** 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;

(iii) **(maximum subpoints: 10)** 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; and

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

(a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;

(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;

(c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and

(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

*General Reviewer Guidance for (D)(3): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

(D)(3) **(maximum total points: 25)** Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals: 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) **(maximum subpoints: 15)** 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; and

(ii) **(maximum subpoints: 10)** 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.

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.

*General Reviewer Guidance for (D)(4): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

*Reviewer Guidance Specific to (D)(4):*

- *The criterion must be judged for both teachers and principals.*

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

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

*General Reviewer Guidance for (D)(5): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets (if any) for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).*

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

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

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

### State Reform Conditions Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (E)(1): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).

#### Reviewer Guidance Specific to (E)(1):

- 10 points are earned by States that can intervene directly in both schools and LEAs.
- 5 points are earned by States that can intervene directly in either schools or LEAs, but not both.
- 0 points are earned by States that cannot intervene in either schools or LEAs.

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

### Reform Plan Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (E)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant's plan and annual targets for this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks, to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any), and to the elements of a high-quality plan as set forth in application requirement (d).

**(E)(2) (maximum total points: 40)** Turning around the lowest-achieving schools: The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) **(maximum subpoints: 5)** 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

(ii) **(maximum subpoints: 35)** 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).

## **F. General**

### State Reform Conditions Criteria

General Reviewer Guidance for (F)(1): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (F)(1)(i):

- “High” points are earned if the percentage of the total revenues available to the State that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education increased from FY2008 to FY2009.
- “Medium” points are earned if the percentage of the total revenues available to the State that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education were substantially unchanged from FY2008 to FY2009.
- “Low” points are earned if the percentage of the total revenues available to the State that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education decreased from FY2008 to FY2009.

(F)(1) **(maximum total points: 10)** Making education funding a priority: 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.

General Reviewer Guidance for (F)(2): In judging the quality of the applicant’s response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (F)(2)(i):

- “High” points are earned if the State either has no cap on the number of charter schools, or it has a “high” cap (defined as a cap such that, if it were filled,  $\geq 10\%$  of the total schools in the State would be charter schools); and the State does not have restrictions, such as those referenced in the “note to reviewers” below, that would be considered even mildly inhibiting.
- “Medium” points are earned if the State has a “medium” cap on the number of charter schools (defined as a cap such that, if it were filled,  $\geq 5\%$  and  $< 10\%$  of the total schools in the State would be charter schools); or the charter school law has sufficient flexibility to allow for an increase in the number of charter schools as if it were a medium or higher cap (e.g. by allowing for the creation of multiple campuses under the same charter); and the State does not have restrictions, such as those referenced in the “note to reviewers” below, that would be considered moderately or severely inhibiting.
- “Low” points are earned if the State has a “low” cap on the number of charter schools (defined as a cap such that, if it were filled,  $< 5\%$  of the total schools in the State would be charter schools) OR if the State has restrictions, such as those referenced in the “note to reviewers” below, that would be considered severely inhibiting.
- No points are earned if the State has no charter school law.
- Note to reviewers: Charter school laws are so complex that it is hard to write rules to capture each possible obstacle to charter school growth; therefore, this rubric is meant to guide

reviewers, not to bind them. For example, if a State limits the number of charter schools by limiting the share of statewide or district-level funding that can go to charter schools, rather than by explicitly limiting the number of charter schools, reviewers should convert the funding restriction into an approximately equivalent limit on the number of schools and fit that into the guidelines here. As reviewers assess the inhibitions on charter schools, they should look for restrictions such as: disallowing certain types of charter schools (e.g., startups or conversions); restricting charter schools to operate in certain geographic areas; and limiting the number, percent, or demographics of students that may enroll in charter schools. Some States have “smart caps” designed to restrict growth to high-performing charter schools; this is not a problem unless it effectively restricts any new (i.e., unproven) charter schools from starting.

Reviewer Guidance Specific to (F)(2)(iii):

- “High” points are earned if the per-pupil funding to charter school students is  $\geq 90\%$  of that which is provided to traditional public school students.
- “Medium” points are earned if the per-pupil funding to charter school students is 80-89% of that which is provided to traditional public school students.
- “Low” points are earned if the per-pupil funding to charter school students is  $\leq 79\%$  of that which is provided to traditional public school students, or the State does not have a charter school law.
- No points are earned if the State has no charter school law.

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

(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.

(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.

(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.

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

*General Reviewer Guidance for (F)(3): In judging the quality of the applicant's response to this criterion, reviewers should refer to what the criterion asks and to the evidence requested in the application and presented by the applicant (if any).*

**(F)(3) (maximum total points: 5) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions:**  
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.

## **V. Reviewer Guidance for Priorities**

*Absolute Priority Guidance: The application will be judged to ensure that it has met the absolute priority set forth below. 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. If an application has not met the priority, it will be eliminated from the competition.*

### **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.

*Competitive Priority Guidance: The application will be judged to determine whether it has met the competitive preference priority set forth below. 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. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.*

### **Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). (competitive preference points: 15, 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.

*Invitational Priority Guidance: No points are awarded for invitational priorities.*

**Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes.**

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 (pre-kindergarten 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.

*Invitational Priority Guidance: No points are awarded for invitational priorities.*

**Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems.**

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.

*Invitational Priority Guidance: No points are awarded for invitational priorities.*

**Priority 5: Invitational Priority – P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment.**

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.

*Invitational Priority Guidance: No points are awarded for invitational priorities.*

**Priority 6: Invitational Priority – School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning.**

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.

## XII. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor, the State's chief school officer, and the president of the State board of education (if applicable). States will respond to this requirement in the application, Section III, Race to the Top Application Assurances. In addition, the assurances in Section IV must be signed by the Governor.

(b) The State must describe the progress it has made over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas (as described in criterion (A)(3)(i)).

(c) The State must include a budget that details how it will use grant funds and other resources to meet targets and perform related functions (as described in criterion (A)(2)(i)(d)), including how it will use funds awarded under this program to--

(1) Achieve its targets for improving student achievement and graduation rates and for closing achievement gaps (as described in criterion (A)(1)(iii)); the State must also describe its track record of improving student progress overall and by student subgroup (as described in criterion (A)(3)(ii)); and

(2) Give priority to high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice), in addition to providing 50 percent of the grant to participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) based on their relative shares of funding under Part A of Title I of the ESEA for the most recent year as required under section 14006(c) of the ARRA. (Note: Because all Race to the Top grants will be made in 2010, relative shares will be based on total funding received in FY 2009, including both the regular Title I, Part A appropriation and the amount made available by the ARRA).

(d) The State must provide, for each State Reform Conditions Criterion (listed in this notice) that it chooses to address, a description of the State's current status in meeting that criterion and, at a minimum, the information requested as supporting evidence for the criterion and the performance measures, if any (see Appendix A).

(e) The State must provide, for each Reform Plan Criterion (listed in this notice) that it chooses to address, a detailed plan for use of grant funds that includes, but need not be limited to--

(1) The key goals;

(2) The key activities to be undertaken and rationale for the activities, which should include why the specific activities are thought to bring about the change envisioned and how these activities are linked to the key goals;

(3) The timeline for implementing the activities;

(4) The party or parties responsible for implementing the activities;

(5) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable (see Appendix A), and where the State proposes plans for reform efforts not covered by a specified

performance measure, the State is encouraged to propose performance measures and annual targets for those efforts; and

(6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, for the criterion, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the State's plan.

(f) The State must submit a certification from the State Attorney General that—

(1) 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; and

(2) At the time the State submits its application, the State does not have any legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the State level to linking data on student achievement or student growth to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation.

(g) When addressing issues relating to assessments required under the ESEA or subgroups in the selection criteria, the State must meet the following requirements:

(1) For student subgroups with respect to the NAEP, the State must provide data for the NAEP subgroups described in section 303(b)(2)(G) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622) (*i.e.*, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, disability, and limited English proficiency). The State must also include the NAEP exclusion rate for students with disabilities and the exclusion rate for English language learners, along with clear documentation of the State's policies and practices for determining whether a student with a disability or an English language learner should participate in the NAEP and whether the student needs accommodations;

(2) For student subgroups with respect to high school graduation rates, college enrollment and credit accumulation rates, and the assessments required under the ESEA, the State must provide data for the subgroups described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA (*i.e.*, economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency); and

(3) For the assessments required under the ESEA, refer to section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA; in addition, when describing this assessment data in the State's application, the State should note any factors (*e.g.*, changes in cut scores) that would impact the comparability of data from one year to the next.

### **XIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

A State receiving Race to the Top funds must submit to the Department an annual report which must include, in addition to the standard elements, a description of the State's and its LEAs' progress to date on their goals, timelines, and budgets, as well as actual performance compared to the annual targets the State established in its application with respect to each performance measure. Further, a State receiving funds under this program and its participating LEAs are accountable for meeting the goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets established in the application; adhering to an annual fund drawdown schedule that is tied to meeting these goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets; and fulfilling and maintaining all other conditions for the conduct of the project. The Department will monitor a State's and its participating LEAs' progress in meeting the State's goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets and in fulfilling other applicable requirements. In addition, the Department may collect additional data as part of a State's annual reporting requirements.

To support a collaborative process between the State and the Department, the Department may require that applicants who are selected to receive an award enter into a written performance or cooperative agreement with the Department. If the Department determines that a State is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate action, which could include a collaborative process between the Department and the State, or enforcement measures with respect to this grant such as placing the State in high-risk status, putting the State on reimbursement payment status, or delaying or withholding funds.

A State that receives Race to the Top funds must also meet the reporting requirements that apply to all ARRA-funded programs. Specifically, the State must 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)).

In addition, 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 English language learners 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).

## XIV. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### **Evaluation**

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) will conduct a series of national evaluations of Race to the Top's State grantees as part of its evaluation of programs funded under the ARRA. The Department's goal for these evaluations is to ensure that its studies not only assess program impacts, but also provide valuable information to State and local educators to help inform and improve their practices.

The Department anticipates that the national evaluations will involve such components as—

- Surveys of States, LEAs, and/or schools, which will help identify how program funding is spent and the specific efforts and activities that are underway within each of the four education reform areas and across selected ARRA-funded programs;
- Case studies of promising practices in States, LEAs, and/or schools through surveys and other mechanisms; and
- Evaluations of outcomes, focusing on student achievement and other performance measures, to determine the impact of the reforms implemented under Race to the Top.

Race to the Top grantee States are not required to conduct independent evaluations, but may propose, within their applications, to use funds from Race to the Top to support such evaluations. Grantees must make available, through formal (*e.g.*, peer-reviewed journals) or informal (*e.g.*, newsletters, websites) mechanisms, the results of any evaluations they conduct of their funded activities. In addition, as described elsewhere in this notice and regardless of the final components of the national evaluation, Race to the Top States, LEAs, and schools are expected to identify and share promising practices, make work available within and across States, and make data available in appropriate ways to stakeholders and researchers so as to help all States focus on continuous improvement in service of student outcomes.

### **Participating LEA Scope of Work**

The agreements signed by participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) must include a scope-of-work section. The scope of work submitted by LEAs and States as part of their Race to the Top applications will be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work should include the portions of the State's proposed reform plans that the LEA is agreeing to implement. If a State is awarded a Race to the Top grant, its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with their preliminary scopes of work and with the State's grant application, and should include the participating LEAs' specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures.

### **Making Work Available**

Unless otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information, the State and its subgrantees must make any work (*e.g.*, materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under

its grant freely available to others, including but not limited to by posting the work on a website identified or sponsored by the Department.

**Technical Assistance**

The State must participate in applicable technical assistance activities that may be conducted by the Department or its designees.

**State Summative Assessments**

No funds awarded under this competition may be used to pay for costs related to statewide summative assessments.

## **XV. CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES**

Generally, all procurement transactions by State or local educational agencies made with Race to the Top grant funds must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with the standards in Section 80.36 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This section requires that grantees use their own procurement procedures (which reflect State and local laws and regulations) to select contractors, provided that those procedures meet certain standards described in EDGAR.

Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

## XVI. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

### SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The deadline for submission of Program applications is January 19, 2010 for Phase 1 applicants, and June 1, 2010 for Phase 2 applicants.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. The Department strongly recommends the use of overnight mail. Applications postmarked on the deadline date but arriving late will not be read.

a. Application Submission Format and Deadline.

Applications for grants under this competition, as well as any amendments regarding adoption of common standards that Phase 2 applicants may file after June 1 and through August 2, 2010, must be submitted in electronic format on a CD or DVD, with CD-ROM or DVD-ROM preferred. In addition, they must submit a signed original of Sections III and IV of the application and one copy of that signed original. Sections III and IV of the application include the Race to the Top Application Assurances and the Accountability, Transparency, Reporting and Other Assurances.

All electronic application files must be in a .DOC (document), .DOCX (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. Each file name should clearly identify the part of the application to which the content is responding. If a State submits a file type other than the four file types specified in this paragraph, the Department will not review that material. States should not password-protect these files.

The CD or DVD should be clearly labeled with the State's name and any other relevant information.

The Department must receive all grant applications by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington DC time, on the application deadline date. ***We will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.*** Therefore, we strongly recommend that applicants arrange for mailing or hand delivery of their applications in advance of the application deadline date.

b. Submission of Applications by Mail.

States may submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed original of Sections III and IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by mail (either through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier). We must receive the applications on or before the application deadline date. Therefore, to avoid delays, we strongly recommend sending applications via overnight mail. Mail applications to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.395A)  
LBJ Basement Level 1  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.  
Washington, DC 20202-4260

***If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.***

c. Submission of Applications by Hand Delivery.

States may submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed original of Sections III and IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by hand delivery (including via a courier service). We must receive the applications on or before the application deadline date, at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.395A)  
550 12th Street, SW.  
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza  
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

***If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.***

d. Envelope requirements and receipt:

When an applicant submits its application, whether by mail or hand delivery--

(1) It must indicate on the envelope that the CFDA number of the competition under which it is submitting its application is 84.395A; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to the applicant a notification of receipt of the grant application. If the applicant does not receive this notification, it should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

In accordance with EDGAR §75.216 (b) and (c), an application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program.

## **XVII. APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**Please use the following checklist to ensure that your application is complete.**

### **Formatting Recommendations (page 3)**

- Are all pages 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides?
- Are all pages numbered?
- Is the line space set to 1.5 spacing using 12 point Times New Roman font?

### **Race to the Top Application Assurances (page 12)**

- Is all of the requested information included on the Race to the Top Application Assurances page?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or an authorized representative signed and dated the Race to the Top Application Assurances?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Chief State School Officer signed and dated the Race to the Top Application Assurances?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the President of the State Board of Education signed and dated the Race to the Top Application Assurances?

### **State Attorney General Certification (page 13)**

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the State Attorney General or an authorized representative signed and dated the Race to the Top Application Assurances?

### **Accountability, Transparency, Reporting, and Other Assurances and Certifications (pages 14-16)**

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed and dated the other Assurances and Certifications?

### **Eligibility Requirements (page 17)**

- Has the State provided explanatory information for eligibility requirement (b)? (Note that the Attorney General certification addresses this requirement, so the explanatory information is optional.)

### **Selection Criteria: Progress and Plans in the Four Education Reform Areas (pages 18-50)**

- Has the State responded to all of the selection criteria to which it plans to respond?
- For each selection criterion to which the State is responding, has the State provided the necessary:
  - Narrative response?
  - Performance measures?
  - Evidence?
- Has the State organized the Appendix properly such that each attachment in the appendix is described in the narrative text of the relevant selection criterion?

**Competition Priorities (pages 51-54)**

- **[Optional]** Has the State responded to all the competitive preference and invitational priorities to which it plans to respond?

**Budget (see pages 55-64)**

- Has the State completed the following elements of the budget?
  - Budget Part I: Summary Table (page 56)
  - Budget Part I: Budget Summary Narrative (page 57)
  - Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Table (page 58)
  - Budget Part II: Project-Level Budget Narrative (page 59)
  - **[If requested]** Indirect Costs (page 64)

**Application Requirements (see pages 92-93)**

- Has the State fulfilled all of the application requirements?

**Application Submission Procedures (pages 98-99)**

- Has the State complied with the submission format requirements, including the application deadline for submission?

**Appendix (page 102)**

- Has the State created a table of contents for its appendix?
- Has the State included all required appendix documents per the instructions in the application, as well as any other documents it refers to in its narratives?

