Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Arizona Application #2100AZ-4

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**50**	**65**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	35	45	[redacted]
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10	15	[redacted]

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it

(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona's plan is designed to "...ensure that students graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college and careers by providing effective instruction to all students year after year." Effective instruction is to be:
—Based on common, well-articulated academic standards and aided by information gleaned from robust formative and summative assessments;
—Guided by continuous adjustments suggested by regular review of timely, actionable data on student performance using state longitudinal data systems and local instructional improvement systems;
—Delivered by teachers who are rigorously recruited and selected into the profession, who are prepared in effective programs, who receive rich ongoing feedback on their effectiveness at improving student learning, who are rewarded for strong performance, and who are assisted through effective professional development; and
—Targeted on the state's highest-need schools, i.e., those with high concentrations of students who are victims of poverty, who are farthest from meeting state standards, and/or who are consistently lowest in academic achievement.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This reviewer believes that Arizona has developed an ambitious and achievable reform agenda which is comprehensive and coherent, that clearly articulates the state's goals for implementing them, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving those goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the state has proposed. Arizona specifically addresses the four education reform areas specified in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as well as Arizona's State Success Factors Criteria (ASSFC).

(ii) Securing LEA commitment

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona has provided substantial evidence of the commitment of the state's participating LEAs through their endorsement of the RTTT Memo of Understanding (MOU). Of the state's 616 LEAs, 389 (63%) have signed the state's RTTT MOU. Participating LEAs represent 82% of Arizona's schools, 92% of its K-12 student population and 92% of its students in poverty. One hundred percent of the participating LEAs have agreed to implement an aggressive set of policy and procedural changes (scope of work) including: (1) using the Arizona Growth Model (AGM) as one of the multiple measures to be used in evaluating and compensating teachers and leaders; (2) working in partnership with the State to turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools; and (3) increasing the number of students who are taught by effective teachers.

•The state RTTT MOU included the signatures of 100% of LEA superintendents (or equivalent); 95% of local school board presidents; and 50% of local teachers' union leaders. However, the otherwise strong letter of support (appendix) by the president of the Arizona Education Association (AEA) contains qualifying comments which indicate substantial lingering tensions between the AEA and Arizona's state policy leaders and legislators.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

While the extent of the participation by Arizona's LEAS could have been stronger, the number of districts which have elected to participate is encouraging. Of most importance to this reviewer is not the number of LEAs *per se* but rather the substantial degree to which they represent the state's most needy and underserved students. Overall evidence of strong commitment by Arizona's participating LEAs is provided. As noted, the Arizona Education Association (AEA), while supporting the RTTT application, has expressed lingering unresolved tensions between the AEA and the state's policy leaders and educators.

(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact

• LEAs that are participating in the Arizona Race to the Top plan include 92% of its students in poverty which translates to a strong potential for statewide impact of the most underserved student population. Arizona identifies three reform strategies designed to address its goal of statewide impact as a consequence of implementing its RTTT plan. Strategy 1 focuses on adopting and implementing Common Core Standards and Assessment; strategy 2 focuses on strengthening and aligning partnerships with Local School Districts (LEAs) and charters Schools; strategy 3 focuses on Targeting the Transition Years—grades 3,, 8 and 10;

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The proposed strategies are reasonably comprehensive and appear to be tightly focused except for Strategy 2. This reviewer found that a good deal was left to the imagination as to just how Arizona will go about strengthening and aligning partnerships with local school districts and charter schools in order to achieve a statewide impact. What we have here is an apparent effort by the applicant to provide a broad perspective with the details to be developed later. This weakened the response to the criterion.

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

This reviewer has modified scores assigned to criterion A (1) (ii) and criterion (A) (1) (iii) based upon information provided by Arizona's Presentation Team—specifically including that of Superintendent Cowan,

Chief of Staff Klein and Director Yanez—which clarified the right-to-work status of the state and added additional reassurances that the Arizona Education Association (AEA) is significantly involved in support of the state's RTTT proposal. This information particularly responded to this reviewer's prior concern about the lingering unresolved tensions between the AEA and the state's policy leaders and educators.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**27**	**27**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	7	

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona will create an RTTT Executive Board to ensure overarching interagency accountability in implementing the reforms detailed in its application. By appointing members to the RTTT Board from the gubernatorial appointed members of the Arizona State Board of Education (SBE), Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) and Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), the state proposes to link its oversight and management of the RTTT grant to the State's high-ranking education policy boards.

• A Data Governance Commission (DGC) will be established and will regularly report progress on the implementation of the RTTT plan to the RTTT Board. This governance structure will allow high-level oversight and management of the grant, provide for a direct link between the RttT Board and State education boards that have policymaking authority, and ensure that Arizona leaders are actively participating in the RTTT work.

• The Governor's Office will serve as the fiscal agent for the RTTT funding. The Governor's Office of Economic Recovery (OER) and the Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting (OSPB) will manage the grant, working with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to ensure tight coordination and a seamless system of grants management and performance monitoring.

• The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will provide support and assistance to participating RTTT LEAs, monitor LEA plan implementation, intervene when necessary, and widely disseminate and replicate effective practices statewide. The ADE will employ a two-pronged strategy to achieve these goals through expansion of its web-based technologies and creation of Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform (RCIF).

• A University Research Center for Innovation and Reform (URCIR) will also be established as an integral part of Arizona's RTTT plan. Participants will be Arizona State University, the University of Arizona (UofA) and Northern Arizona University (NAU). This Center will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the Arizona RTTT reform plan including all RTTT-supported activities. The Research Center will identify effective models and/or promising practices from emergent RTTT data and LEAs/schools that can serve as "lighthouse" sites for replication and scale-up. In addition, the Center will conduct research in various reform areas, such as effective practice in Arizona's charter schools, what is working in schools on Indian reservations, and promising practices with English language learners.

• Arizona has additionally provided evidence of an effective and efficient grant administration process. ADE's Grants Management Enterprise (GME) is a full-service grants management system that tracks a grant from application through closeout and is used by ADE for all Federal grants allocated to LEAs, thus

providing for what is defined as seamless integration and coordination of the RTTT funding with other critical federal funding streams.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona addresses the five key areas identified in A(2)(i) viz., provision of (a) a strong state level leadership cadre; (b) multi-faceted ADE support initiatives directed to LEAs; (c) a strong full-service grants management system; (d) a system for coordinating and integrating Federal, State and local fiscal resources; and (e) evidence of high level political commitment to continue reforms after RTTT funding is completed. A detailed governance chart found in the application summarizes Arizona's response to this criterion and provides convincing evidence of the depth of planning which the state has undertaken in order to ensure a strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans.

(ii) Using broad stakeholder support

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• The Arizona RTTT application is supported by more than 60 signed statements from school districts, county superintendents, community colleges, universities, businesses, chambers of commerce, charter schools, foundations, Congressional representatives, and others representing a broad spectrum of the state's political, business and educational leadership.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The depth of the expression of support uniformly indicates strong backing for Arizona's RTTT education reform agenda. These commitments are diverse and geographically representative. Of special note are expressions of support from the Arizona School Administrators Association, Arizona School Boards Association and the Arizona Education Association. However, as noted above, the AEA, while supporting the RTTT application, has expressed lingering unresolved tensions between the AEA and the state's policy leaders and educators.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**25**	**25**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20	20	

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Making progress in each reform area

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona provides adequate evidence that it has made progress over the past several years—and continues to make progress—in each of the four ARRA education reform areas and that it has used its ARRA and other Federal and state funding to pursue such reforms. Detailed examples are found in the application relative to standards and assessments; statewide longitudinal data systems; great teachers, great leaders; and supporting struggling schools.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This reviewer finds Arizona's response to this criterion to be substantial in its scope and reflective of the state's prior and continuing efforts to demonstrate progress in each reform area. Of special note is ADE's recent development of a framework for a multi-tiered system of support, called AZRTI (Arizona Response to Intervention). Based on converging research, the framework incorporates differentiated instruction, personalized learning plans, formative assessment data and, most critically, the response of the teacher/school to struggling students. This framework underpins Arizona's approach to school improvement and guides Arizona Title I schools as they spend their ARRA funds.

(ii) Improving student outcomes

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

Arizona has presented evidence of student learning outcomes during the previous decade in the following areas: (a)NAEP mathematics, grades 4 and 8; (b) NAEP reading, grades 4 and 8; (c) Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) mathematics: elementary, middle and secondary levels; and (d) AIMS reading: elementary, middle and secondary levels. NB, Applicant states that comparisons prior to 2005, in some cases, could not be reported due to changes to Arizona's proficiency standards in effect prior to that date. This statement is not further explained in the application.

Overall, between 2003 and 2009, Arizona students demonstrated moderate *(yet insufficient according to applicant)* increases in math and reading achievement as reflected on both NAEP and AIMS assessments with most gains concentrated in elementary and middle grades. Although improvements in 8th grade reading were not seen on NAEP, AIMS results indicated improvements in middle school reading. The lower increases in high school achievement reflect the need for additional focus on secondary instruction and standards, which Arizona's recently improved high school graduation standards have begun to address.

Arizona also provided data on Advanced Placement which this ***reviewer considers to be significant in response to the criterion given the overall troubling academic performance of low-income and Hispanic students in Arizona.*** Specifically, from 2004 to 2009, Arizona increased the percentage of Hispanic students with a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam from 13.7% to 21.3% of the population of students with a score of 3 or higher. From 2004 to 2009, Arizona increased the percentage of low-income students with a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam from 7.5% to 16.6% of the population of students with a score of 3 or higher.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This reviewer notes that during much of the past decade Arizona's Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, migrant, African-American and Native American students have made some progress in closing the achievement gap separating them and their peers. However, while the extent of this improvement is unexceptional overall, this reviewer nevertheless remains impressed by the progress which did occur. It is noted that the applicant was not able to fully respond to the request for data on overall student improvement outcomes between 2003 and 2005 because of changes in the state's proficiency standards. This appears to be a psychometric timing issue at the ADE level rather than any deliberate effort by the state to avoid providing the requested information. The State has appropriately responded to the criterion with the one exception just noted.

Total	125	102	117

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards

(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards

(ii) Adopting standards

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona is participating in the Common Core State Standards initiative led by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO in partnership with ACT, the College Board, and Achieve. Forty-nine states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia are collaborating to develop internationally benchmarked standards in mathematics and English/language arts.

• The common core standards are scheduled for adoption by the Arizona SBE on June 28, 2010. Arizona law (A.R.S. § 15-701 and 15-701.01) authorizes the SBE to adopt statewide academic standards and also provides (A.R.S. § 15-741) for the adoption and implementation of the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) test to measure student achievement related to the newly adopted standards. It is noteworthy that University of Arizona professor, Dr. William McCallum, is the head writer for all national work on Common Core Standards in mathematics. Dr. McCallum continues to work with ADE and will be a key participant throughout the Common Core Standards rollout and beyond.

• ADE leadership continues to participate with representatives from textbook publishing companies and assessment companies to discuss how the Common Core Standards might inform their work and the materials they provide to support Arizona educators. In addition, presentations for specialized audiences, including principals and other stakeholders, are being planned to address the critical role of leadership in transitioning to the Common Core Standards.
Substantive discussions also continue among policymakers and educators about college and career-readiness standards. These discussions have been extensive and ongoing, as evidenced by Arizona's participation in the College and Career Readiness Policy Institute (CCRPI), sponsored by Achieve, Inc., and other partner organizations known for their strong work in supporting education reform. As a result of this work, Arizona has aligned its high school graduation requirements for college readiness by mandating four years of mathematics and three years of science.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has provided evidence of its full participation in a consortium of states for the purpose of developing and adopting common core standards. A total of fifty-one states, territories, and the District of Columbia, including Arizona, are collaborating in these efforts.

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

(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessment

(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments

(ii) Including a significant number of States

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona has applied to participate in the RTTT Assessment Grant as an active member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) Consortium. PARCC will join participating states together to develop an assessment system for Mathematics and English Language Arts for grades 3-8 and high school in partnership with Achieve, Inc. that will be fully aligned with the new common core standards. The PARCC consortium's primary focus will be the development of summative assessments that use multiple item types to fully cover the depth and breadth of the Common Core Standards. The system will include computer-based summative assessments given at the end of the year, in addition to through-the-year assessments that focus on the typically hard-to-measure standards using open-response items. The consortium's plan for a balanced assessment system includes the development of interim assessments to provide instant feedback on student progress toward end-of-year achievement goals and a focus on the effective use of formative assessment practices.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has provided evidence of its full participation in a consortium of states (PARCC) for the purpose of developing and implementing common high-quality assessments. Currently, twenty-seven states are involved in the PARCC consortium.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced *STANDARDS*

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to leverage and expand the expertise of educators across the state during its transition to enhanced standards through the establishment of Arizona Regional Centers for Innovation (ARCI).Regional Centers will operate in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and the University Research Center (URC) staff to meet the goals and objectives of a coordinated system of support for the implementation of the Common Core Standards. The ADE will facilitate the development of training and related support materials. The Regional Center Standards specialists will work with local LEAs to assist in aligning curriculum with the new standards. They will also offer professional development opportunities including instructional support related to teaching the Common Core standards. The University Research Center will use evaluation data to determine effective implementation practices to share with the Regional Center network including dissemination of its work to LEAs and schools.

• Arizona's RTTT plan calls for a Common Core Committee (CCC), comprised of representatives of higher education, K-12 educators, district leadership, community college faculty, and curriculum specialists from education service agencies will meet throughout the summer of 2010 to refine a plan of support for transitioning to the Common Core Standards, consisting of both professional development and technical

assistance. The charge of the CCC will be to identify and develop engaging, rigorous and relevant instructional materials and professional development strategies to meet the needs of educators in implementing the enhanced standards. (Critical support documents will include crosswalks or comparison tables, gap analysis summaries, explanations and examples of learning expectations, connections to other academic standards, and sample lessons.) These resources will be available statewide on the ADE website and IDEAL portal—See comments Section (A)(2).

• Regional Centers will continue to refine and customize their work plans based on data collected from LEAs and findings from the annual evaluation of the Centers and the RTTT plan. Identifying innovative and promising models of implementation of the Common Core Standards will be an important goal. Similarly, building the capacity of LEAs to sustain the change momentum embedded in the adoption of the new standards represents a high priority. Standards specialists will continue to provide customized professional development and technical assistance to LEAs based on regional assessment data. Sustainability will be enhanced by promoting best practices as identified by the University Research Center.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to high-quality *ASSESSMENTS*

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to support the transition to high quality assessments by initially implementing the following strategies:
—Maintain and increase ongoing communication with the field to promote the use of assessment results;
—Develop items for the current Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) that will include items related to the newly adopted Common Core Standards;
—Seek consortium support for the Alternate Assessment of Alternate Academic Common Core Standards (for cognitively impaired students);
—Expand the Formative Assessment Tool on IDEAL (Arizona's Integrated Data to Enhance Arizona Learning System). IDEAL is a comprehensive learning platform designed to provide Arizona educators with a rich library of professional and curriculum resources, collaboration tools for immediate access to peers, professional development courses, and just-in-time learning resources. Expanding the Formative Assessment Tool will complement summative and interim assessments;
—Provide training and technical assistance to LEAs through the state's Regional Centers.

• Arizona proposes to hire data and assessment specialists to serve at the state's Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. The specialists will be responsible for the dissemination of information regarding the effective use of summative, interim and formative assessments in a balanced assessment system. The specialists will also be responsible for providing training in using data to inform instruction with a focus on instructional improvement systems. Of projected highest priority will be the responsibility of assessment and data specialists to provide intensive support to persistently lowest-achieving schools in the effective regarding the use of assessments, setting ambitious yet achievable learning targets, measuring progress and using data to inform school improvement plans. During subsequent years, Arizona will further develop and refine its efforts support transition to enhanced standards.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's plans to support the state's transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments are detailed and appear to have a realistic timeline for their implementation. It is especially noteworthy and commendable, in this reviewer's judgment, that Arizona is making provision for the implementation of job-embedded professional development and collaboration time for teachers in order to help them more effectively use data to inform their instruction as they transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments.

Total	70	70	70	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	**24**	**18**	**22**	[redacted]

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Proposition 301, passed by Arizona voters in 2000, provided funding for the state's Student Accountability Information System (SAIS) to improve school finance processes and services to LEAs. The SAIS is an integral part of Arizona's effort to fully implement a statewide longitudinal data system that currently includes 9 of the elements identified in the America Competes Act. **Elements 8, 9, and 10 are missing or incompletely addressed.**

• In 2008 the Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) was initiated in order to incorporate student demographic and achievement information within a master database. While this was a noteworthy achievement, according to the applicant it did not fully inform all critical educator decision-makers. Under its RTTT plan, Arizona proposes to improve and expand the capacities of the AEDW to include all early childhood-to-career data, specifically including preschool, K-12, postsecondary and workforce entry. This improved and expanded database will predictably enable teachers, administrators and policymakers to better understand how curricula affect achievement. It will allow identification of effective instructional practices and inform the development of policies that support their implementation. The estimated completion date for the enhanced AEDW is April 2013.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This criterion asks about the extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes specified elements described in the America Competes Act (ACA). This reviewer notes that while some ACA elements are in place others are under development and/or are in the process of being refined. Accordingly, since the Arizona statewide longitudinal data system is not yet fully implemented this is reflected in the reviewer's criterion score. Arizona is to be strongly commended for the excellence of its previous and continuing efforts to reach the goal of a fully implemented statewide longitudinal data system. This reviewer believes that an improved and expanded longitudinal data system, as envisioned in Arizona's application, will predictably enable teachers, administrators, policy makers, and others to better understand how curriculum and instruction affect achievement by allowing identification of effective instructional practices and informing the development of policies that support their implementation. The level of detail and thoughtfulness in Arizona's response to this criterion make it one of the highlights of the application.

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

This reviewer has modified the score assigned to criterion C (1) (1) based upon information provided by Arizona's Presentation Team—specifically including that of Associate Superintendent Butterfield—which clarified and amplified the strategic role of the state's Data Warehouse systems technology in fully implementing Arizona's longitudinal data system as described in its RTTT proposal. While the level of detail and thoughtfulness in Arizona's response to this criterion resulted in an initial high score from this reviewer, the additional information provided led to the awarding of additional points.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona's Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) has over 60 student-related measures available via a web-based portal to education stakeholders and researchers. It includes training videos, selected instructional resources, and user guides. More than 200 Arizona education researchers and district personnel have been trained to effectively utilize the AEDW and evaluate important questions related to their specific educational settings. Arizona proposes to enhance its AEDW support system using RTTT funds to accelerate this work. Arizona is placing substantial emphasis on building infrastructure in rural and high-poverty areas. The state has many small LEAs in these areas and hundreds of small charter schools that cannot afford to install a sophisticated technology infrastructure. ADE instructional technology experts and county school superintendents will assist these LEAs with student management systems, additional desktop support, workstations, servers and databases, bandwidth, and enhanced security and data administration.

• The ADE's Research and Evaluation Unit and the University Research Center will publish reports that provide relevant information to educators and policymakers. Reports and information may include annual P-20 pipeline reports, results of early warning systems, analysis of student enrollment and performance in STEM courses and pathways, evaluations of educator preparation programs and professional development, innovative and promising models of standards and assessment implementation, and best practices for school turnaround and transformation.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has a high quality plan to ensure that data from the statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders. Especially noteworthy for this reviewer is the creation of the Arizona Education Data Governance System (AEDGS) with representatives from multiple and diverse stakeholders. This entity is designed, among other responsibilities, to further integrate data acquisition, distribution and use among educators representing early childhood, P-12 and higher education and presumably other stakeholders, as well. Of special additional note is Arizona's substantial emphasis on building a sophisticated technology infrastructure in rural and high-poverty areas. Bold thinking of this kind is a basic characteristic of Arizona's RTTT plans.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**18**	**18**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	

(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	6	6	

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction

(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona presents impressive examples of its schools and LEAs that are long-term, ostensibly sophisticated, users of Instructional Improvement Systems (IIS). A total of 1212 LEAs have adopted an instructional improvement system developed locally more than a decade ago as a grassroots effort to inform and improve instructional practices. More recently, the Arizona Charter Schools Association (ACSA) launched a comprehensive performance management system called Success Center Online. This system incorporates formative, interim and summative assessments with rapid-time response to intervention techniques and teacher collaboration tools. The system will eventually serve Arizona's 502 charter schools and will also be available to the State's other LEAs.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

See below.

(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• The ADE proposes to further guide, support and evaluate the effectiveness of LEA instructional improvement systems. The State seeks to ensure that all LEAs use these systems to inform and improve instructional practices, decision-making and overall instructional effectiveness. Additionally, LEAs will partner with ADE, Regional Centers and the University Research Center to evaluate and continuously improve the acquisition, adoption and use of instructional improvement systems. ADE staff, representing the Academic Achievement, School Effectiveness, and Standards and Assessment Divisions, respectively, in partnership with Regional Center assessment and data specialists, will refine the School Improvement and Turnaround Processes for Persistently Low Achieveing (PLA) schools/districts. Among other LEA support efforts, the ADEproposes to prepare a cadre of LEA data coaches to train local users. ADE experts and regional assessment and data specialists will design Quarterly Data Dialogues (Summer 2011) and host professional development seminars in each region during the 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The primary purpose is to develop LEA data coaches who, in turn, will support the implementation of local instructional improvement systems.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

See below.

(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• The ADE proposes to establish a research agenda consistent with Arizona's RTTT initiatives and student achievement goals. The Arizona Education Data Governance Commission will approve the research agenda

and publish research reports and information from State and local data sources. The primary purpose of the AEDW is to provide tools, infrastructure and information necessary to evaluate accurately the effectiveness of programs, initiatives and funding relative to student performance. When linked, the rich data stores of ADE and ABOR will provide the foundation for this quality analysis. Center researchers will also receive data from regional center assessments, data specialists and data coaches necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies and approaches for educating all students —specifically including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students below and above grade level).

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The three subsections of this criterion address the use of data to improve instruction. Most noteworthy, for this reviewer, are: (a) the proposed beta-testing and expansion of a comprehensive performance management system (Success Center Online) which will incorporate formative, interim and summative assessments with rapid-time response to intervention techniques and teacher collaboration tools; (b) the proposed work of ADE's Academic Achievement, Accountability, School Effectiveness and Standards and Assessment divisions which will predictably provide valid, reliable and actionable data to support continuous instructional improvement; and (c) the robust agenda envisioned by the Arizona Education Data Governance Commission which will, among other responsibilities, publish research reports and information from State and local data sources.

Arizona's responses to this criterion and its subsections allows the creativity and boldness of the state's plan to shine through. This reviewer is reminded that Arizona is a large state with many rural and remote communities including those inhabited by its Native American population. Its effort to use data to improve instruction is challenging, logistically demanding and very much a work in progress.

Total	47	41	45	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**16**	**16**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	5	5	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	5	5	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• In 2010, the Arizona legislature adopted HB 2298 which expanded the options for teacher and administrator preparation to include providers other than institutions of higher education (IHEs). This action was designed to encourage alternate routes into the profession for those with demonstrably high potential to positively impact student learning. The SBE adopted regulations to implement the new legislation including language which allows "alternative preparation program institutions that may include, but are not limited to, universities and colleges, school districts, professional organizations, private businesses, charter schools, and regional training centers". The SBE proposes to evaluate alternative teacher and administrator preparation programs based on evidence of the provider's ability to prepare teachers and administrators. The SBE also requires provider applicants for program approval to submit criteria for entry into the program. All current routes are selective in accepting candidates and all require a Bachelor's degree, passage of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Exam (AEPA) in subject knowledge of teaching assignment, and 45 clock hours of Structured English Immersion—a state mandated certification requirement for teachers and principals irrespective of traditional or alternative certification programs. The programs that produce the largest number of teachers have adopted specific selection criteria to identify teachers with the highest likelihood of success in high-needs schools. Alternative certification routes significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses. However, the ASBE requires that teacher and administrator alternative preparation programs ensure that graduates have mastered State's teaching and administrative standards. Programs are given flexibility in meeting standards through their "description of required courses or alternative program/course of study".

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This reviewer notes that Arizona's provisions for allowing alternative routes to certification have recently been expanded by HB 2298. This appears to have been necessary given certain apparent inadequacies in prior policies. While evidence provided by the applicant is promising and essentially
responsive to the criterion, sufficient information is not yet available as to the functional effectiveness of the changes. This is reflected in the points assigned.

(ii) Using alternative routes to certification

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• SBE has approved professional preparation programs for teachers at ten institutions of higher education. Programs such as Teach for America, Phoenix Teaching Fellows and Transition to Teaching operate in partnership with these institutions. Teach for America (TFA) has a high bar for teacher candidate selection, with only 13% of applicants accepted. TFA teachers undergo a rigorous screening process to reveal characteristics including achievement, perseverance, organizational ability, critical thinking, influencing and motivating, personal fit with the program's goals and approach, and respect for low income communities.Phoenix Teaching Fellows selects teachers, through an initial screening and a day-long interview process, based on their potential to be successful in urban schools and on their demonstrated commitment, results in prior endeavors, deep understanding of and commitment to high-need schools, thorough critical thinking skills, and the personal responsibility to help close the achievement gap. The Transition to Teaching program supports the recruitment and retention of highly qualified mid-career professionals, including qualified paraprofessionals, and recent college graduates who have not majored in education to teach in high-need schools and districts through the development of new or enhanced alternative routes to certification. It is the SBE's expectation that a number of new alternative professional preparation programs will be created in the wake of recent legislative and regulatory actions.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's use of alternative routes to professional certification is presently focused on teachers. The state's expanded permissive legislation for enabling alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals was

only approved in 2010. The state's intent to use alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals is confirmed but actual use of these routes remains to be fully determined and evaluated. This fact is reflected in the points assigned to the criterion.

(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage

EVIDENCE SUMMARY

• The ADE identifies subject matter shortages, in part, by the number of non-highly qualified teachers reported to be teaching subjects that require highly qualified teachers. Pending or anticipated rules governing teacher subject matter knowledge or certification are also closely monitored. In addition, determination of rural shortages is informed by the U.S. Census Bureau's descriptions of "rural" communities. ADE uses current-year data to identify existing areas of qualified teacher need by mining its data collection system to create lists of highly and non-highly qualified teachers by subject matter and geographic location. To put current teacher shortage data in perspective and to refine the final list, ADE also considers past shortages and future educational policy changes. Beyond mined data, the ADE anticipates shortage areas when SBE adopts new rules requiring new types of certification. Arizona will need to anticipate teacher shortages in relation to the adoption of common core standards.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's application does not sufficiently address the issue of preparing principals to fill areas of shortage. It does state that it is Arizona's expectation that a number of alternative principal preparation programs will be created in the wake of recent (2010) legislative and regulatory actions. These facts are reflected in the points awarded for this criterion.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**55**	**55**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15	15	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	25	25	

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Measuring student growth

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to measure student growth for all students. Presently, with seed funding from the Rodel Foundation of Arizona and the Arizona Charter Schools Association, the state is developing a student growth model adapted from the Colorado Growth Model (via a MOU with Colorado). The Colorado Growth Model was developed by Damien Betebenner of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment. Student growth model calculations are performed by ADE's Research and Evaluation Section. Educators and parents are provided secure electronic access to the growth model reports for individual students.

The Arizona Growth Model will measures student progress from one year to the next in the context of a student's "academic peers." It compares each student's performance to students in the same grade

throughout Arizona who had similar AIMS scores in past years and calculates a growth percentile. Students will be compared to themselves from year to year so that results are not skewed by income levels, parental involvement, race or gender. The model will use multiple years of a student's test scores to show how s/he is progressing from year to year and to estimate expected future academic performance. In addition, the growth model provides a user-friendly data display, rather than tables and spreadsheets files.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The model for measuring student growth for all students now under development in Arizona is promising. Of special note is the commendable effort on the part of Arizona to reach across state lines collaboratively by adapting its new model to the Colorado Growth Model. Other commendable planning efforts are reflected in D(2)(ii) below.

(ii) Developing evaluation systems

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona observes in its RTTT application that the success of its reform plan rests on its work to ensure that all teachers and principals benefit from regular, actionable feedback on their professional performance in improving student learning. The state proposes to develop valid and reliable evaluation systems that differentiate professional performance. Past reforms -e.g., Proposition 301—did not produced intended results, in part because criteria for the development of systems to identify and reward performance were not clear or strong enough to guide LEA development or to win State approval required to ensure high quality systems. Under provisions of Senate Bill 1040, the Arizona SBE is now required to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth into the model professional evaluation framework. The law requires that student growth account for 33-50% of the evaluation outcome for both teachers and principals. Other measures of teacher and leader effectiveness beyond quantitative measures of student growth will be used including, in the case of teachers, observations of classroom practice correlated to student growth and measures of content pedagogy knowledge, and, in the case of principals, observations of effective leadership practice and instructional support. Strategically, as it proceeds to develop its model evaluation system Arizona proposes to convene a year-long SBE task force responsible for issuing recommendations for the model framework by November 2011. *The task force will include representatives from the SBE, ADE, Governor's Office, institutions of higher education, Arizona Education Association, Arizona School Boards Association, the Arizona Charter Schools Association and Arizona School Administrators Association, as well as district and charter teacher and principal representatives.* The task force will work with national experts and draw on best practices in teacher and leader evaluation and growth.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's response to this criterion is strong and comprehensive. Worthy of special note is the intent of the state to convene a year-long SBE task force responsible for issuing recommendations for a model statewide evaluation system. The task force will include representatives from the SBE, ADE, Governor's Office, institutions of higher education, Arizona Education Association, Arizona School Boards Association, the Arizona Charter Schools Association and Arizona School Administrators Association, as well as district and charter teacher and principal representatives. The task force will work with national experts and draw on best practices in teacher and leader evaluation and growth highlighted by organizations such as the National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality (NCCTQ), National Council of Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and TFA's Teaching as Leadership framework. This approach has substantial promise for ensuring the development of strong viable evaluation systems.

(iii) Conducting annual evaluations

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that provide timely and constructive feedback and that will provide reports of student growth to teachers and principals. These goals are supported by specific commitments:
—The SBE will provide recommendations for the process and timing of professional feedback by school districts and charter schools who must use the SBE-developed model framework to complete annual their evaluations of teachers and principals by the 2012-2013 school year.
—The ADE will ensure that teachers and principals are provided with student growth data for State-tested and local-tested grades and subjects at the school and classroom levels.
—The ADE will provide all educators with access to student growth data for students in reading and mathematics in grades 4-8. In addition to individual student reports provided by EDUACCESS (Arizona's new identity management system) and the Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) the state will provide student growth data to LEAs for uploading into instructional improvement systems. LEAs can then leverage those systems to provide growth model results by school, class and student. These data will be provided rapidly following administration of the State assessment in order to provide the critical information needed for teacher and leader evaluations and for prompt action where the results indicate that intervention is appropriate at the school, class, or student level. In addition, the State and Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform will assist LEAs in using their local assessment data to calculate student growth measures for students in non-tested grades and subjects. The ADE and the regional centers will provide training in the use of student growth data in evaluation systems.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has provided evidence of a strong start toward mandated annual evaluations for teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback including data on student growth for individuals, classes and schools.

(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes continued use of evaluation results to drive key educational decisions in keeping with the expectations of the RTTT legislation. It will improve policies and processes that embed evaluation results in all key decisions especially including instructional effectiveness. The State proposes to ensure that evaluation results are connected to professional development. SB 1040 requires that evaluations be tied to best practices in professional development and that all principals conducting evaluations must receive aligned professional development and training related to the conduct of their evaluative responsibiities.The ADE will incorporate into its annual teacher professional development survey questions to determine whether and how evaluation results are being used to inform professional development and will encourage use of evaluation results to compensate, promote, and retain effective teachers and principals. The ADE further proposes to align State and local compensation systems with evaluation results. The identification of effective teachers and principals is to be followed by additional compensation for those rated at the highest performance levels and who may also assume additional responsibilities. Of special note is the requirement that superintendent contracts include 20% compensation tied to performance pay, of which 25% must be determined by student academic growth.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's response to this criterion is comprehensive and far-reaching in terms of its potential impact. Using evaluations to inform key executive, policy and program decisions is fundamental to the success of Arizona's RTTT plans. In this section there is specific emphasis on using data to drive decisions about instructional effectiveness. By its response to this criterion which addresses teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance,

the state expresses awareness of the close tie between the two factors. It is noteworthy that Arizona will require superintendent contracts to include 20% compensation tied to performance pay, of which 25% must be determined by student academic growth.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	23	23	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	15	15	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	8	8	

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing an equity plan to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. The ADE is conducting a multi-faceted Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project in collaboration with the National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality. The intent of this project is to (a) identify common inequities throughout the state, and (b) provide intensive and ongoing technical support to participating districts. Twenty-five districts across the state were selected for this year's project. They were identified based on their Title I-A funding allocation for FY 2010; distribution of Title I and non-Title I schools within the LEA ; diversity of their geographic locations, grade levels served; and the LEA's improvement status under No Child Left Behind. The first phase of the Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project will consist of a comprehensive study of key school, teacher and student indicators needed to identify equitable distribution patterns in Title I and Non Title I schools. The results of this study will be made available to all stakeholders and the public. Results of the Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project are intended to be instrumental in helping districts make staffing decisions, allocate federal funds, and write competitive grant applications to remove identified equity and achievement gaps. The project is also intended to lead to an expansion of the teacher and principal pipeline to high-poverty and high-minority schools.

• HB 2011, approved by the 2009 Arizona legislature, prohibits school districts and charter schools from adopting policies that give employment retention priority to teachers based on tenure or seniority. This law is a major step forward ensuring that students in high-poverty and high-minority schools are not assigned to ineffective teachers. Principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools will receive intensive training and support in making hiring decisions and in the use of evaluations to inform continuous employment decisions about teachers including professional development, compensation, promotion, retention and dismissal.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

In this reviewer's judgment, Arizona is systematically seeking to ensure equitable

distribution of effective teachers and principals in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools. Of special note is the ADE's multi-faceted Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project in collaboration with the National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality. The intent of this project is to (a) identify common inequities throughout the state, and (b) provide intensive and ongoing technical support to participating districts.

(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas based on provisions in HB 2298. This legislation allows the SBE to expand alternative pathways into the teaching profession. Emphasis will be placed on recruiting, selecting and preparing teachers in mathematics, science, special education, language instruction programs, as well as Arizona's other areas of teacher shortage, by increased use of alternative professional preparation pathways. The SBE will also seek to expand state initiatives to encourage its surplus of elementary teachers to attain certification in shortage areas including mathematics, science and special education. It is unclear from the application just how this action will relate to the criterion. More information needs to be forthcoming.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has responded adequately to this criterion. However, this reviewer would have liked to see the responses developed more fully.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**12**	**12**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	7	7	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	5	5	

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to analyze and report the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs and to provide incentives to expand those with proven effectiveness. The State believes that it already has a strong foundation for this work given the T-Prep program, a collaborative project among Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, University of Arizona, pre-K-12 schools, state government and business partners. T-Prep focuses on research design and data analysis. T-Prep's purposes include the development of an assessment model to study teacher effectiveness and to provide feedback to teacher IHE preparation programs, teachers, schools and State policymakers. Arizona also proposes to link student achievement data from the Arizona Growth Model to the students' teachers and principals and to subsequently link this information to the Arizona's professional preparation programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing. The data for each credentialing program in Arizona will be publicly reported. The SBE,in partnership with ADE, Arizona institutions of higher education and other providers and stakeholders, proposes to convene (September 2010) an expert advisory council to develop a comprehensive teacher and principal preparation program evaluation system including results of the Arizona Growth Model based on the work of T-Prep. The new evaluation system will connect student

growth data to each teacher and principal graduate's electronic file from the granting institution of higher education. This connection will allow Arizona to ascertain the student achievement impact of graduates by program and by institution. This institutional evaluation system, like that of the system for teachers and principals evaluations, will inform meaningful decisions about incentives and support for programmatic improvement in the professional preparation of measurably effective teachers and principals.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

This reviewer is impressed with Arizona's response to this criterion. Specifically, the extent of the present and proposed inter-institutional collaboration and related electronic inter-connectivity promises development and implementation of a strong, functional linkage of student data totheState's professional credentialing programs. This is an initiative to especially watch.

(ii) Expanding effective programs

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona sees itself as being in the vanguard of teacher preparation nationally through the Sanford Education Project in which Arizona State University has joined forces with Teach For America (TFA) to address pressing educational needs including preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful in producing effective teachers. Through this partnership, ASU will adapt TFA's most successful tools to the university's undergraduate program and seek to bring transformative changes to the way ASU recruits, trains and supports future K-12 teachers. As it researches and adapts aspects of TFA's model, ASU's teacher preparation program will seek to produce teachers who are trained and equipped to use data to inform instruction and by doing so to continuously increase their teaching effectiveness as reflected in higher student achievement. Arizona also proposes to create a replication fund to support its colleges and universities in replicating and expanding practices from model programs identified as effective.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The applicant's response to this criterion is essentially forceful and convincing with respect to teachers but it fails to adequately address expansion of effective preparation programs for principals.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**17**	**17**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	9	9	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	8	8	

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Providing effective support

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Through its Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform and in partnership with LEAs, institutions of higher education and nonprofit and business partners, Arizona proposes to ensure that teachers and principals are provided with effective, data-informed induction, professional development, coaching, and common planning and collaboration time. The ADE will assist LEAs in developing and implementing

effective systems of support which provide continuous, job-embedded support from master/mentor teachers and principals. These efforts will be particularly focused on the lowest-achieving schools. The Arizona induction program will provide stipends and release time for mentor and master teachers within school districts to mentor, coach and support teachers who are new to the profession and are serving in high-poverty schools. In addition, LEAs will provide time through reduced/shared or full-time release from teaching responsibilities to enable mentors and master teachers to present demonstration lessons, observe new teacher teaching, and assist with curriculum development, classroom management and other on-the-job skills.

• The Arizona K-12 Center (The mission of the Arizona K-12 Center is to improve teaching and learning in Arizona's schools through high quality professional development and teacher leadership.) places experienced, accomplished teachers in school leadership roles as mentors or coaches for their peers. Teachers are designated as a Master Teacher or Master Teacher Mentor through an online application and evaluation. Once this professional designation is assigned, districts select from among the identified Master Teachers to provide mentoring or coaching in qualifying schools. Master Teacher Mentors provide observation, support and professional development primarily to teachers in their first or second year of teaching. In addition, they may provide to other teachers content-specific coaching and professional development opportunities designed to improve instructional practices and student mastery of the Arizona Academic Standards.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's response to this criterion is basically strong and carefully conceived. This reviewer would have liked to see more detail about acctual implementation.

(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona proposes to incorporate teacher and principal evaluation results into the assessment of professional development programs. The University Research Center on Innovation and Reform will select a representative sample of LEAs with different approaches to professional development in order to study their effectiveness in improving the performance of teachers and principals over time as measured by individual evaluation ratings including student growth. The ADE plans to report the percentage of teachers and principals with improvements and declines in individual professional evaluation ratings over time. This reporting will expand and inform ADE's current approach to evaluating professional development programs. Currently, ADE evaluates professional development activities through use of the National Staff Development Council's Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI). As statewide participation has grown from some 8,000 teachers in 2006-2007 to nearly 40,000 in 2008-2009, the ADE has expanded and refined its data analysis resources for schools and LEAs by partnering with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) to develop a co-branded manual that can be accessed on the state's password-protected IDEAL web portal. The manual provides step-by-step directions for analyzing results of the evaluation data and facilitating discussions about them. It also provides similar tools for school districts to use to reflect on the role of LEAs as capacity-builders and to determine how to specifically help schools based on their readiness for school-based professional development programs.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

It would have been helpful if Arizona had more fully discussed, in response to this criterion, the relationship between the proposed work of the University Research Center on Innovation and Reform and the present ADE evaluation professional development activities which uses the National Staff Development Council's Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI). Overall, this reviewer believes this is a strong response to the criterion.

Total	138	123	123	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	**10**	**10**	**10**	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona had the authority to intervene in its lowest achieving schools for most of the past decade by using its statutory authority and related state policies. Specifically, the state has the authority to place a district in receivership for either fiscal or academic mismanagement. The State has taken bold steps to bring about needed change in its lowest performing schools including replacing principals, providing instructional coaches and teacher leaders, revising curriculum, and altering governance structures. Eighty percent of the lowest performing schools (designated as "failing") have moved to "performing" status as a result of State intervention.

• Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-241, Arizona has statutory authority to intervene directly in "failing" schools defined as those schools that have received a third consecutive underperforming classification. A school designated as failing is evaluated by the ADE using an in-depth diagnostic review to determine appropriate interventions. Decisions are brought before the SBE for final approval. To date failing schools have entered into intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with the ADE to implement intervention models, or alternative operation plans, which may include, but are not limited to state designated turnaround leadership and instructional coaches at struggling school sites.

• In May, 2010, the SBE amended its policy to better align its definitions of "underperforming" and "failing" schools to the state's definition of "persistently lowest achieving" schools. This will give the State the legal authority to begin its school improvement process in all persistently lowest achieving schools.

• Arizona also has statutory authority to intervene directly in systemically failing school districts. If a failing district is identified, the ADE may submit to the SBE a recommendation for a hearing to determine whether the school district should be made subject to an alternative operation plan. SBE has the authority to appoint a governmental, non-profit or private organization or persons to implement an alternative operation plan, which authorizes the appointed organization or persons to do any of the following: (1) override decisions of the local school district governing board; (2) hire personnel; (3) terminate personnel; (4) cancel existing employment contracts; and (5) supervise the activities of the school district staff.

• One out of three failing Arizona schools is a tribal school located on an Indian reservation. Addressing the needs and intervening in the operations of those schools requires significant research and tribal governmental and community consultations. Efforts to change education policies effecting tribal schools must include thoughtful, respectful consultation with parents, students, community and education leaders, and tribal government. Arizona was one of the first states to implement tribal consultation policies throughout State government. In order to achieve flexibility in addressing the unique needs of their learners, many reservation communities request support for new charter schools. Charter schools that accommodate the political, social and economic conditions within the various tribal communities and that are managed by entities with the capacity and financial capability to operate such a school can be very

effective alternatives to PLAs. Because of its tribal college experience and success, Arizona could become, with funding support, a laboratory for melding both the charter and tribal college experience in support of K-12 education.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has statutory authority to intervene in its lowest achieving schools and claims to have taken "bold" steps to bring about improvement in its lowest performing schools with examples of the kinds of interventions it has used. More specific data regarding the scope, numbers of schools and overall impact of these interventions would be helpful. The fact that one out of three failing Arizona schools is a tribal school poses very special challenges. These challenges are discussed only in general terms by the applicant. However, it is understood by this reviewer that the State has limited jurisdiction with regard to schools located on tribal lands and therefore cannot be held accountable for failing to intervene in those instances where it would otherwise be warranted.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**35**	**35**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	30	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools

(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT

• Arizona has established a process to identify its Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools. The definition of "persistently lowest-achieving" was approved by the U.S. Department of Education using criteria and guidance issued for the School Improvement Grant 1003(g) (SIG) and aligns with the RttT and State Fiscal Stabilization Fund definition. Absolute student performance (combined reading and math proficiency) and lack of progress over a number of years (mean growth over three years) are used to determine the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement status (Tier I) and for secondary schools that are eligible for Title I but not receiving funds (Tier II). Included in the lists are Title I and Title I-eligible high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% for 2006, 2007 and 2008.

• On February 8, 2010, the ADE publicly announced the 30 schools currently identified as PLA throughout Arizona. Fifteen of the 30 PLA schools are charter schools—the majority being high schools (12 out of 15) in urban settings—with (11 out of the 15) serving some of Arizona's most at-risk students. Another 10 schools are located on Indian reservations or have high populations of Native American students. These schools are located in rural settings, some of which are very isolated. Communities surrounding these schools generally have high levels of poverty, with some plagued by gangs, drugs, violence and high rates of suicide. Challenges in these schools and districts include high mobility of staff and shortages of highly effective teachers.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has appropriately and adequately responded to this criterion.

(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT

• Arizona's plan for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools (PLAs) is a carefully developed and a fundamentally passionate component of its RTTT application. The state is especially confronted with a compelling need for educational reform among many of its tribal schools, charter schools, and high schools. In this reviewer's opinion, the scope of these challenges may be the reason why Arizona's timeline in response to this criterion is extended to 2014. Arizona's plan for turning around the State's PLA schools encompasses three major goals and five strategies designed to produce dramatic increases in student achievement. By 2014, Arizona proposes to: (1) improve achievement in persistently low-performing schools; (2) raise achievement of Native American students; and (3) close achievement gaps. Arizona recognizes the immense challenges facing its PLA schools. The strategies identified above include strong state-level support for LEAs including provision of highly effective teachers and leaders to engage in the turnaround process. Over the last two years, in an effort to continually improve the State's system of support, the ADE has made significant policy changes based on emerging research on effective practices reported in the turnaround literature and by lessons learned through the state's own efforts to address the PLA schools issue. The ADE is currently working with the Center for Innovation and Improvement to further strengthen its statewide system of support (SSOS).

• Of exceptional note are Arizona's proposed efforts to expand Teach for America (TFA) to reservation schools in response to the needs of underserved populations and high-need schools specifically including PLA schools. Nationally, TFA has launched a Native Achievement Initiative, through which TFA seeks to dramatically scale its commitment to bring more teachers and leaders to Native communities. Arizona's PLA turnaround plans include a proposed scope of work for the Native American Center for Innovation and Reform including creation of LEA-Tribal Community Partnerships—a model established by the State's First Things First (FTF) Initiative.

• Arizona's PLA school turnaround plan also focuses on evidenced-based approaches to address high school dropout. A significant number of PLA schools are high schools with alarmingly high dropout rates. The establishment of the University Research Center for Innovation and Reform will conduct rigorous studies to identify promising and effective practices in dropout prevention particularly including two areas of inquiry: re-enrollment and dropout prevention.
—Re-enrollment refers to the re-engagement of students who have dropped-out. Arizona has a large number of alternative high schools, both traditional and charter. Many of these schools have a long and impressive track record of re-engaging their students, many of whom have dropped out more than once. Arizona, by its own admission, has much to learn about the conditions, approaches and strategies that enable alternative high schools and charter schools to keep their students engaged in learning. This issue is being partially addressed by the Arizona Charter Schools Association (ACSA) which has begun discussions among the state's alternative schools through its Measuring Success in Alternative High Schools initiative.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's plan for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools (PLAs) is a carefully developed and fundamentally passionate component of its RTTT application. However, the state's plan for turning around its PLA schools is projected to occur by 2014. A fundamentally strong, comprehensive response to this criterion is weakened by the protracted implementation timeline.

Total	50	45	45	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority

(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• In FY 2009, public education in Arizona received a higher percentage of available State revenues than in FY 2008 despite the fact that, between those two years, Arizona's total General Fund revenues dropped by nearly 18%. Because spending cuts in education were significantly less harsh than the cuts imposed in other areas of government, the total percentage of State expenditures dedicated to education rose from 53.5% in FY 2008 to 59.5% in FY 2009. For purposes of this calculation, "revenue" is defined as total available revenues for General Fund expenditures and includes the following: base revenues (ongoing taxes), bond proceeds, fund transfers, and the balance forward. Expenditures include total appropriations, administrative adjustments, and reversions.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Applicant's response satisfies the requirements of the criterion.

(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• For many years, Arizona has provided an equalized funding formula in providing state funds to districts. The equalized funding formula ensures that all school districts have equitable access to budget capacity and revenues. The equalized system provides additional State funds to districts that have limited taxable property within their borders.Regardless of its taxable property, each district computes a district support level determined by:
—the total number of pupils;
—special program add-ons for academic assistance for pupils in kindergarten through grade 3;
—students with special needs; and
—the number of English language learners.
To assist with the increased costs of educational services to students served by small and isolated Arizona school districts, the State provides an additional upward funding adjustment in the district support level. A "small school" funding adjustment applies to districts with less than 600 students, and an even higher adjustment is provided for small school districts that are located in isolated areas of the state. Since the calculation of a district support level is determined not by taxable property wealth but, rather, by student numbers and characteristics, Arizona school districts have equalized access to budget capacity and revenues.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's response satisfies the requirements of the criterion given its citation of the State's equalized funding formula which ensures that all school districts have equitable

access to budget capacity and revenues. .

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**38**	**40**	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	8	8	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8	8	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	8	8	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	6	8	

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

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

(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona's charter schools operate under the favorable provisions of A.R.S. § 15-181 et seq., which recognize that charter schools provide "additional academic choices for parents and pupils" and "a learning environment that [improves] pupil achievement." State law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists. During the 2009-2010 school year, approximately 10% (101,000) of Arizona's K-12 students attended charter schools.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Applicant's response satisfies the requirements of the criterion: State law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists.

(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Charter schools enter into a contract with a charter authorizer to operate in accordance with academic and fiscal standards established in federal and State law. Charter schools are held accountable to their charter contract. Arizona charter schools also function according to a business plan that guides their overall governance and operational structure. State statutes empower the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), State Board of Education (SBE) and local school districts to authorize and oversee the charter schools they sponsor. A.R.S. § 15-182 established the ASBCS as an independent State agency to authorize and oversee charter schools. The ASBCS reports annually to the Governor and the Legislature. The ASBCS's role includes:
—evaluating applications and granting new charters;
—providing technical assistance and guidance to stakeholders;
—conducting ongoing academic and financial evaluations;
—taking appropriate disciplinary action against schools that fail to comply with local, State and Federal laws or the terms of their charter contract.

• With respect to charter approval, A.R.S. § 15-183 governs the process for approving new charters and charter requirements. Arizona Administrative Code, Title 7, Chapter 5, Article 2 provides additional guidance for those seeking charter approval through the ASBCS. Title 15, Chapter 1, Article 8 of the Arizona Revised Statutes sets forth the responsibilities and regulations concerning charter schools, provides for periodic review and evaluation during the contract period, and outlines the requirements for reauthorizing a charter. Since its inception, the ASBCS has received 609 new charter applications and 22 replication applications, and has approved 413 total applications, granting more charters than any other authorizer in the United States. At the same time, consistent with its commitment to school accountability, the ASBCS has revoked the contracts for 12 charter schools that failed to meet the requirements of the law and their charter contracts.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

The ASBCS has established a policy related to the components of a comprehensive charter school review that includes examination of academic performance. Schools not meeting the ASBCS level of adequate academic performance are subject to a Performance Management Plan. Performance Management Plans are intended to assist schools in addressing academic performance deficiencies with a plan that clearly articulates the academic achievement area in need of improvement, the tools intended to measure improvement, and the degree of improvement to be achieved.

(iii) Equitably funding charter schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools and a commensurate share of local, State and federal revenues. Both charter schools and traditional school districts are allocated tax dollars through the State's base level funding formula. Based on ADE FY 2009 data (the most recent fiscal year for which full-year data are available), charter schools educated over 9% of Arizona students and received approximately 14% of the State's $676.3 million General Fund appropriation for K-12 education. During that fiscal year, the State's funding formula yielded an average of $6,396.40 per charter school student and $5,435.25 per traditional public school district student. Arizona's equalized funding system ensures that charter schools and district schools are funded equitably and competitively.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Both charter schools and traditional school districts are allocated tax dollars through the State's base level funding formula.

(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona provides funding to charter schools for facilities, assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, and the ability to share in bonds and mill levies. As further evidence of Arizona's commitment to equitable facility support of charter schools, the legislature has enacted two key bills to help charter schools acquire facilities:
—Zoning: A.R.S. § 15-189.01 was amended to specify that charter schools be classified as public schools for the purposes of municipal and county zoning. The amendment also requires municipalities and counties to allow charter schools to operate at locations or in facilities that would be permissible for district schools.
—Property Tax Relief: A.R.S. § 42-11132 was amended to provide significant financial relief from

burdensome property taxes for non-profit charter schools that lease their facilities.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona provides funding to charter schools for facilities, assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, and the ability to share in bonds and mill levies.

(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

• Arizona's local educational agencies (LEAs) have the flexibility and authority to operate innovative, autonomous public schools in addition to charter schools. As a result, Arizona LEAs have accumulated a robust portfolio of "traditional," alternative, extended-year, focus, magnet and virtual schools. More than 170 alternative schools provide a diverse array of options for elementary, middle and high school students with special needs or extenuating circumstances. These schools follow distinct educational philosophies and generally offer self-paced curricula, small classes and a focus on social and emotional development. In addition:
—A.R.S. § 15-881 requires each school district to make extended school year services available to all pupils with disabilities for whom such services are necessary.
—Magnet schools provide yet another option for students and parents. These schools offer specialized curricula with high academic standards in areas such as aviation/aerospace, business and finance, communication arts, international studies, law-related studies, marine science, medical arts and health, performing and visual arts, STEM and world languages.
—Nearly all of Arizona's large high school and unified districts offer online learning options or support distance learning academies. Students do coursework at any time of day and need only a computer with a high-speed Internet connection. These programs also include interactive online practice activities, tutorials, discussion groups, and instructor contact via e-mail.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

While the criterion is essentially satisfied, this reviewer was unable to determine the degree to which the applicant fully understands the term "autonomy" in the context of the criterion. Rather, the reviewer is left to imagine just how this term translates operationally, particularly including the ordinarily assumed responsibility for staff hiring decisions and/or other personnel decisions which generally occur in autonomous schools.

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

This reviewer has modified the score assigned to criterion F (2) (v) based upon information provided by Arizona's Presentation Team—specifically including that of Associate Superintendent Butterfield and Superintendent Cowan—which clarified and amplified the state's provisions for operating other types of innovative and autonomous public schools. This information responded appropriately to this reviewer's prior concern about the degree to which the applicant fully understood the term "autonomy" in the context of the criterion.

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

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

REVIEWER'S SYNOPSIS OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED BY APPLICANT:

Arizona's education reform history is marked by important milestones including:
—Teacher career ladder programs (A.R.S. § 15-918); since 1990, Arizona has pioneered the development of performance pay for teachers; the Arizona Career Ladder Program is a performance-based compensation plan that provides incentives to teachers in 28 districts around the state who choose to make career advancements without leaving the classroom or the profession;
—The language of this landmark legislation established a multi-tier system of teaching positions. This legislation has set the stage for successful implementation of Arizona's new SB 1040 which requires student growth to be a part of the teacher and principal evaluation process;
—Extensive participation in the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification program: in 2009, Arizona ranked 17th nationwide in the number of teachers who earned board certification;
—Open enrollment; beginning in 1994, Arizona students were allowed to attend any school within the school district, to allow resident pupils to enroll in any school located in or within other school districts in this state and to allow nonresident pupils to enroll in any school within the district, pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-816.01;
—Charter schools (A.R.S. §§ 15-181 to -189.03): beginning in 1994, Arizona has allowed and encouraged the establishment of charter schools (now numbering 502) throughout the state; the History Channel ranks Arizona schools as having the highest history standards among all states; further, the Fordham Foundation ("The State of State Standards") gave Arizona the highest possible grade for having high standards in history, geography and science;
—Joint Technological Education Districts (A.R.S. §§ 15-391 to -396): voter-approved JTEDs combine resources and facilities to provide upper-tier career and technical education. Total enrollment in JTEDs for 2009-2010 was 73,950 (18,475 full-time students);
—Education and Career Action Plan (ECAPS): In its application, Arizona notes that nine out of ten seventh and 8th graders aspire to go to college, but only two out of ten will actually complete college. To close that gap, ECAPS incorporate a student's academic goals, career goals, postsecondary education goals and extracurricular activities. ADE has been actively engaged in professional development of the ECAPS program. More than 3,000 educators have received professional development around ECAPS implementation strategies and resources;
—Passage of Move On When Ready (HB 2731 in 2010: this bill, known as "Move on When Ready," creates an optional "Grand Canyon Diploma" that students obtain by passing college-level mathematics and English board examinations. Students earning these diplomas are exempt from all other Arizona graduation requirements and may continue academic preparation for university admission or may graduate early to pursue career and technical studies. In addition, HB 2731 allows Arizona to participate in the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) Board Exam Consortium;
—Online instruction ((HB 2525)): Arizona's commitment to meet students' needs, particularly in rural areas,removed the caps on the number of school districts and charter schools that were allowed to participate in online education and directed the SBE and ASBCS to jointly develop standards for the approval of online course providers and online schools. Each new school approved to provide online instruction is placed on a probationary status until the school has clearly demonstrated the academic integrity of its curriculum and instruction.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's evidence of other significant reform conditions is impressive. Of particular note is the state's pioneering work in the development of performance pay for teachers. Other initiatives are commendable. It is difficult to identify a coherent strategy surrounding these other reform efforts. However, they provide strong evidence of state executives, legislators and education leaders who want to be more innovative and who are actively seeking to enhance Arizona's efforts to improve education for the state's K-12 students.

Total	55	53	55	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	**15**	**15**	**15**	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

EVIDENCE SUMMARY

• Arizona's STEM planning centers around a rigorous STEM course of study, cooperation with STEM capable partners, continued support of SFAz STEM (advanced STEM study and careers—especially for underrepresented groups), provision of graduate research fellowships, continuation of pathway programs, and other considerations.

• SFAz STEM (Arizona's existing STEM statewide program) initiative's purpose is to improve STEM education and economic opportunity in Arizona by:
—Increasing the number of qualified and motivated teachers of mathematics and science;
—Providing greater access to meaningful and effective formal and informal STEM learning experiences on the part of students;
—Exciting students and helping them acquire STEM-related skills needed to succeed in today's economy;
—Advocating for STEM education and its importance to individual success and to the success of the state and nation.

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona has woven specific references to its STEM education reform policies and initiatives throughout its RTTT application. Additionally, a well developed response is given in the Competitive Preference Priority 2 section of its application. Substantial work remains for Arizona to do in terms of expanding and amplifying its STEM education emphases.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		**Yes**	**Yes**	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:

Arizona's Race to the Top proposal is uneven in terms of the quality of writing and

excellence of exposition. Some sections are rambling. Others are tightly written and effectively argued. THIS REVIEWER STRUGGLED AT TIMES TO BREAK THROUGH THE RHETORIC TO GET AT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL. Nevertheless, taken in its entirety, this reviewer believes that Arizona's application is solid and has presented ambitious yet achievable goals which are comprehensive and coherent—sometimes even passionate (e.g., discussion of reform goals related to its Native American student population). Arizona's plan effectively addresses the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria. Arizona clearly demonstrates that the state and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform and it provides substantial evidence that participating LEAs have a strong commitment to achieving the goals inherent in the Race to the Top legislation. Arizona also provides extended evidence as to how it, in collaboration with LEAs, will use RTTT funds to increase student achievement, decrease achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.				
Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	449	470	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Arizona Application #2100AZ-7

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**52**	**54**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	39	41	[redacted]
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	9	9	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(1)(i)

The applicant has set forth a clear and comprehensive statement of its vision for using Race to the Top (RTTT) funds to promote a reform agenda implementing goals across all four education areas described in the ARRA. The state emphasizes the state's pioneering charter school law (more than 500 charter schools in existence after 15 years of growth) and 25 years of experimentation with performance pay "career ladder" programs. The state's plan focuses on college- and career-readiness as the goal for high school graduates, with multiple pathways to earn a diploma. It also places intense focus on student achievement at the transition years—3rd, 8th, and 10th grades. The application builds upon the state's 2020 Vision Plan for transforming higher education in the state, promoting K-16 policy coherence. The state sets forth highly ambitious targets from 2009 to 2020 for 3rd and 10th grade math and reading scores at or exceeding state standards on state assessments and for 8th grade reading and math scores at or above basic on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The four strategies outlined establish a credible path to achieving these goals. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(A)(1)(ii)

The applicant's Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with its participating LEAs requires commitment to implement all of the elements of the state's reform plan. The MOUs closely follow the Model MOU provided by the Department with no discerned significant deviations to the scope of work descriptions. The MOUs asked for full participation of the LEAs if they signed on, and the data tables reflect that participation. As a result, the MOUs represent strong commitments by the 389 participating LEAs to implement all portions of the state's RTTT plans. Signatures were obtained from 100% of the LEA superintendents, 95% of the local school board presidents, and 50% of the applicable local teachers' union leaders, demonstrating broad but not universal leadership support with the participating LEAs. One potential concern is whether the lack of strong local teacher union support in half of the participating LEAs indicates that union resistance could diminish the effectiveness of the reforms being pursued. The state provides no explanation for why only 50 percent of local unions signed on or what the likely consequences will be for successful implementation of the state's RTTT full reform plan. An overall score in the "high" range is awarded for this subsection, reflecting very high points for parts (a) and (b) and medium points for part (c)

(A)(1)(iii)

The state sets forth ambitious yet achievable targets overall and for subgroups from 2009 to 2014 or 2015 (plus additional projections through 2020 or 2021) for 3rd and 10th grade math and reading scores at or exceeding state standards on state assessments and for 8th grade reading and math scores at or above basic on NAEP. Because of the transition grades chosen as a focus, the state reports targets on either the state assessments or the NAEP, but not targets for both exams. The increased gains under a RTTT grant are not contrasted with any baseline targets without RTTT funding, so it is not clear how much of the projected gains are likely to result from receipt of a RTTT grant. The applicant does not dedicate much discussion to how it set those targets.

When one compares the charts for subgroup gains on assessments and with regard to the 4-year graduation rate, it appears that RTTT funding is expected to drive significant closing of the achievement gaps, with full closure expected by 2020 or 2021. Thus, the applicant's RTTT plans are aimed at significantly boosting the achievement of under-performing subgroups, so that achievement gaps gradually shrink over the course of a RTTT grant.

The goals for postsecondary enrollment, success, and completion are also ambitious but achievable, although no subgroup information is provided.

The state's goals in the areas described above are likely to have broad statewide impact, as 63% of the state's LEAs are participating in RTTT, covering 82% of the state's schools, 92% of the state's K-12 students, and 92% of the state's students in poverty.

The data required in this subsection is not well organized, but most of it can be found in this subsection, in other parts of Part A, or in the appendices. A score in the "medium" range is awarded for this subsection.

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

In response to reviewer questioning, the panelists detailed how the state is a right-to-work state and that the local unions are considered to be education associations. Because of this, local education associations tend to have some but not all teachers among their membership. The state demonstrated a commitment to working with the state teacher education association, which has been tepid in its support for the state's application. The state did not provide much clarification on the reasons why only 50% of the local education associations chose to sign on to the RTTT MOUs, however. It did provide some evidence that implementation is not likely to be as hampered by the 50% level as had previously been considered, and increased points are awarded for (A)(i)(ii).

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**21**	**24**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	14	16	[redacted]
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	8	[redacted]

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(2)(i)

The state will create a 15-member RTTT Executive Board to ensure interagency accountability in implementing the reforms detailed in the application. The Executive Board will be advised by the Governor's P-20 Coordinating Council, and the Governor's Office will serve as the fiscal agent for RTTT funding. The state department of education will provide leadership and dedicated teams to ensure that the statewide implementation is conducted in a coordinated and comprehensive manner at the state and local levels, by focusing its existing divisions and a new Performance Management Office on the state's plan, and by establishing and partnering with Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. The state has developed a complex but coordinated structure for managing its RTTT reform plans and ensuring adequate supports are provided to districts, school leaders, and teachers.

For some years, the state has been shifting its focus to support and assistance with a results-oriented approach, in addition to compliance monitoring. The state's application, with its focus on expanding web-

based technologies and creating regional centers providing local support and technical assistance, demonstrates that the state understands what it is about to undertake and will be able to achieve an effective and efficient oversight and implementation of a RTTT grant if one is awarded. While the state may not have full capacity at present to implement all of its RTTT proposals, it has included a build up of its capacity in its plans. The State's budget is generally well designed to accomplish the State's plan and enable it to meet its targets, although several large line items are not broken down into specific enough detail to enable the reader to determine the potential effectiveness of certain line items in advancing the reforms at issue. Additionally, sustainability of the state's RTTT reforms after the period of the RTTT grant is not well addressed. Significant attention is provided, however, to coordinating the state's RTTT budget with other federal and state funds. Despite being in a significant fiscal crisis, the state has protected education funding in its budgets, and the state's voters approved in May 2010 a three-year increase in the sales tax to additionally protect education funding. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(A) (2)(ii)

The state's plan was developed with input from a broad group of stakeholders, but the application does not describe the process by which input was gathered and engagement with stakeholders achieved. Over 60 letters of strong support were provided from diverse, critical stakeholders. The letter from the state's teacher union, however, was notably cautious and tepid in its support, signaling lingering union concerns that the implementation of RTTT in this state may or may not end up being in the union's best interest. Also, there is limited indication of support from philanthropy, business, and community agencies included in the letters of support. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

In response to reviewer questioning, the state's leaders provided greater clarity on the state's commitment to sustaining RTTT reforms beyond the grant period, noting that the state has prioritized its education activities around the RTTT plan, has strong legislative leadership support for the RTTT reforms, and has and will continue to leverage other state and federal funds to sustain RTTT reforms. Additional points are awarded under (A)(2)(i).

The state's explanation of the state's relationship to the state education association as well as the status of the role of the education association in this right-to-work state have resulted in an increase of one point in (A)(2)(ii).

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**18**	**18**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4	4	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	14	14	

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(3)(i)

The applicant demonstrates that it has made solid progress in each of the four education reform areas and positioned itself to build upon those reforms with RTTT. This strong foundation has enabled the state to build an aggressive set of reforms into the RTTT program to take the state's K-12 system to a higher level of achievement.

(A)(3)(ii)

The state provides student outcomes on NAEP going back to either 2000 or 2002. For NAEP mathematics, both 4th and 8th graders had statistically significant increases in the average scale score and in the percent of students scoring "at or above" proficient between 2000 and 2009, although the levels of proficiency remain very low in the state. For NAEP math, 4th graders had statistically significant increases in the average scale score from 2002 to 2009, but 8th graders had no statistically significant increases since 2002, even though Hispanic grade 8 students made solid gains. Changes to the math and reading state

assessments between 2004-2005 do not allow for comparability across the 2002-2009 time period. Overall, however, the state's students demonstrated moderate increases in math and reading achievement, with most gains concentrated in elementary and middle grades. While some subgroup achievement gaps appear to have made solid progress in closing achievement gaps, the gaps for students with disabilities and students who are English language learners appear to have increased significantly in recent years on state assessments. Historical data for the state assessments was not provided for subgroups, however, limiting the ability to analyze student subgroup outcomes since 2003.

The state's overall high school graduation rate has improved from 71 to 75 percent from 2001 to 2008, but no subgroup data is provided.

A score in the "middle" range is awarded for this subsection.

Total	125	91	96	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1)(i)

The applicant is a member of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, involving at least 49 participating states and territories. Full points are awarded for this subsection. Requested documentation is complete.

(B)(1)(ii)

The applicant planned to adopt the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts on June 28, 2010. Full points are awarded for this subsection.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(2)(i)

The state is a governing member of a multi-state consortia formed to create and adopt high-quality assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Full points are awarded for this subsection.

(B)(2)(ii)

This assessment consortium, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), has 27 participating states. Full points are awarded for this subsection.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**14**	**14**	

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(3)

The applicant provides a detailed, thorough, and high-quality plan for how participating LEAs will deliver standards-aligned instruction, and for how the state will deliver comprehensive LEA supports for standards and high-quality assessment implementation. Specific foci include establishing and staffing-up Regional Centers for Innovation and Improvement and establishing IDEAL, a web-based professional development portal for high-quality instructional materials that have been developed by educator committees or the regional center specialists in workshops with teachers. A detailed and sequenced timeline is provided that identifies key activities relevant to the implementation of standards-aligned instructional systems in the state. The plan is stronger with regard to supporting the transition to enhanced standards than the transition to high-quality assessments, where it is less clear how the state plans to move from policy to concrete changes in classroom behavior. A score at the top of the "medium" range is awarded.

Total	70	64	64	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	**24**	**18**	**18**	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(1)

The applicant currently has 9 of 12 America Competes Act elements in its statewide longitudinal data system. Several additional elements will be developed (linking students and teachers by grade and course, student-level transcript information, and student-level college readiness test scores). Points are awarded for nine elements.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**3**	**3**	

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(2)

The State sets forth a fairly medium-quality plan for ensuring that data from the state's longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, key stakeholders. Recent legislation established a permanent state Education Data Governance Commission to oversee all work related to the state's education data systems and determine the most effective ways to further integrate data acquisition and distribution among early-childhood, P-12, and higher education. The state department of education's Education Data Warehouse will also provide customized dashboards and tools for a range of stakeholders. One concern is with the scope of portal hits expected by 2013-2014. Although the state plans to increase the number of Education Data Warehouse portal users from 70,000 to 1,000,000, the number of times these users access the portal will not increase per year but instead stays stagnant at 2 times per year. It is not clear that a user accessing the portal only twice per year will be able to sufficiently make use of the data warehouse to inform instruction. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**12**	**12**	

(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	3	3	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	4	4	

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3)(i)

The applicant has a thoughtful, detailed plan for how it will use data to improve instruction. To ensure implementation of local instructional improvement systems, the state will survey LEAs to identify systems in place and LEAs' satisfaction with them, will provide system quality standards and guidance to LEAs, and will assist LEA staff in implementing systems. Authorized users will be provided for the first time with single sign-on access to student-level data, and the plan focuses on improving the technology infrastructure of the state's rural and high-poverty areas. Each activity is sufficiently developed, with appropriate timelines and responsible parties. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(C)(3)(ii)

To support participating LEAs in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals, and administrators on how to use instructional improvement systems and resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement, the state's plan focuses on (1) developing customized dashboards and tools for various stakeholders, (2) enhancing the existing data warehouse portal based on stakeholder feedback, (3) publishing reports, and (4) holding statewide, regional, and local continuous improvement seminars. Each activity is fairly well developed, with appropriate timelines and responsible parties, but the impact of these specific reforms may not be sufficient or aggressive enough to produce stakeholders fully prepared to use the state's enhanced instructional improvement systems. A score in the "medium range" is awarded.

(C)(3)(iii)

The state plans to enhance access to the state's Education Data Warehouse to authorized researchers. A process exists for gaining authorization (Appendices (C)(3)-3 and (C)(3)-4), and it appears that all researchers and the public generally must use this process to gain access to the data in the Education Data Warehouse. The state will also establish a research agenda consistent with the state's RTTT initiatives and student achievement goals, and publish research reports and information from state and local data sources. It is not clear whether the access given to researchers will be sufficient to evaluate the effectiveness of all instructional materials, the strategies the state and LEAs are employing to raise academic achievement, or the approaches being used for educating different types of students. Each activity, however, is presented with appropriate timelines and responsible parties. A score in the "middle range" is awarded.

Total	47	33	33	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**15**	**15**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	4	4	

(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	4	4	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(1)(i)

State law permits alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals, including routes that allow for non-IHEs to be providers. The application demonstrates that these programs meet or are permitted to meet all five elements of alternative routes to certifications. "High" points are awarded for this subsection.

(D)(1)(ii)

The state board of education has approved programs at 10 institutions of higher education to provide alternative routes to certification for teachers through the state's teacher intern certificate program. Programs such as Teach for America, the Phoenix Teaching Fellows, and Transition to Teaching operate in partnership with these programs. Currently, no alternative routes to certification for principals are in use, although they are permitted under state law. "Medium" points are awarded for this subsection.

(D)(1)(iii)

The state identifies both subject matter shortages and geographic teacher shortages, using current-year data to identify existing areas of need, and mining its data collection system to create lists of highly and non -highly qualified teachers by subject matter and location. Several strategies are employed to fill these shortage areas. No information is provided concerning principals. "Medium" points are awarded for this subsection.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**51**	**51**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	12	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	25	25	

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(2)(i)

The state has committed to developing a statewide student growth model adapted from the Colorado Growth Model that will measure student progress from one year to the next in the context of a student's "academic peers." An appendix details the rigorous parameters under which the growth model will be developed. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(D)(2)(ii)

The state has recently passed a new law requiring the state board of education to develop a model evaluation system framework for both teachers and principals by December 5, 2011. Under the law, the state board of education is required to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth into the model evaluation framework, accounting for 33-50 percent of the evaluation outcome for both teachers and principals. There will be at least four levels of performance. A high-quality plan is provided for making this happen in the next several years. A task force including representation from teachers and principals, will be established to make recommendations to the state board informing the board's development of the evaluation system. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(D)(2)(iii)

Under the new teacher and principal evaluation law, the state will conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback, as well data on student growth for their students. A score in the "high range" is awarded.

(D)(2)(iv)

The new state law requires that annual teacher and principal evaluations conducted during the 2012-2013 academic year shall be a significant factor in (1) teacher and principal development to increase their instructional effectiveness; (2) compensating, promoting, and retaining effective teachers and principals; (3) informing the granting of full certification to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and (4) informing the removal of ineffective and non-continuing teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve. By the end of 2013-2014, 100% of participating LEAs will have approved evaluation systems for the elements covered by this subsection. A high-quality plan is detailed for how these elements will be developed into the evaluations of teachers and principals is included. One point that requires clarity is the extent to which Strategy 2 (use of evaluation results to compensate, promote, and retain effective teachers and principals) will be required or "encouraged". Although Strategies 1, 3, and 4 use the word "ensure", Strategy 2 uses the word "encourage." This could indicate that collective bargaining agreements may prevent Strategy 2 from being fully implemented by all LEAs for teachers. A score in the "high" range is awarded for this subsection.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**15**	**15**	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	9	9	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6	6	

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(3)(i)

The state has set forth a medium-quality plan with reasonably ambitious yet achievable annual targets to ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals. The state will expand the teacher and principal pipeline to high-poverty and high-minority schools and ensure that its equity plan is focused both on teachers and principals and the use of evaluation results. Much of this pipeline is provided through the philanthropic community's Rodel Exemplary Teacher Initiative and Rodel Exemplary Principals Initiative; however, it does not appear that the state has created or plans to prioritize the creation of state-funded teacher and principal pipelines. Specific attention is paid in the application to activities to ensure that students in the highest-need schools are not assigned to ineffective teachers. The annual targets for (D)(3)(i) seem appropriate, given the state's inability to set a baseline until 2010-2011, but not overly ambitious over the four years of the grant cycle. A score in the "middle" range is awarded.

(D)(3)(ii)

The state will focus on opening the pipeline of new teachers for shortage areas, particularly in rural areas of the state. In addition to creating a fund for high-needs districts to recruit proven programs for teacher recruitment, selection, and preparation focused on shortage areas, the state will expand its initiatives to encourage elementary teachers to attain certification in shortage areas. Additionally, the Rodel Exemplary Teachers Program will be focused on math, science, and special education. The annual targets for (D)(3)(ii) seem appropriate, given the state's inability to set a baseline until 2012-2013, but not overly ambitious, given that by the end of 2013-2014, only 80 percent of math and science teachers are expected to be rated effective or better. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**7**	**7**	

(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	4	4	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	3	3	

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i)

The state commits to linking the state's growth model to students' teachers and principals and to linking this and other information to the state's programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing. It will also publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the state. The targets are reasonably ambitious for teachers and principals, but the plan's strategy largely relies on the future work of an expert advisory council that will make recommendations about the development of a comprehensive teacher and principal preparation program evaluation, while providing minimal description of the guidance and parameters this council will be given. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(D)(4)(ii)

The state has an average-quality plan for expanding preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals. The state plans to support the state's colleges and universities in replicating and expanding effective practices from model programs identified as effective at graduating teachers and principals who contribute to student growth, particularly in high-poverty and high-minority schools. It is unclear the extent to which this replication fund, once implemented, will be sufficient to address the state's need to graduate sufficient numbers of teachers and principals prepared to dramatically impact student achievement, especially in high-poverty and high-minority schools, and to fill shortage areas. A score in the "medium" range is awarded.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**15**	**15**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	8	8	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	7	7	

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i)

To provide effective support to teachers and principals, the state, through its Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform and in partnership with other entities, will ensure that teachers and principals are provided with effective data-informed induction, professional development, coaching, and common planning and collaboration time. A teacher induction program will provide stipends and release time for mentor and master teachers within school districts to mentor, coach, and support teachers who are new to the profession and are serving in high-poverty schools. The state will expand the number of certified executive coaches and trainers able to provide hiring and evaluation training, as well as intensive coaching and mentoring for principals and assistant principals serving in high-poverty and high-minority schools. These strategies are well focused on providing effective supports to teachers and principals. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(D)(5)(ii)

The state will measure the effectiveness at improving instruction and, ultimately, of increasing student achievement, of its professional development supports by incorporating teacher and principal evaluation results into the assessment of professional development effectiveness. The strategies included in the plan (a rigorous statistical study of the effectiveness of different approaches to professional development and reporting on changes to evaluation results over time), appear likely to offer more "big picture" insights into improving the effectiveness of professional development supports over time, and to be less helpful to

improving specific supports on an ongoing, continual improvement basis. A score in the top of the "medium" range is awarded.

Total	138	103	103	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	**10**	**10**	**10**	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(1)

The state has strong legal authority to intervene both in the state's underperforming schools identified as "failing" (although not in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools) and in systematically failing schools districts. In 2010, the state board of education amended policy to align its definitions of "underperforming" and "failing" schools to the state's definition of "persistently lowest achieving" schools. If a charter school is designated as a school failing to meet academic standards, the state is required to immediately notify the charter school's sponsor, which must take action to restore the charter to acceptable performance or revoke the charter school's charter. The state has extensive tribal consultation policies to address failing schools on Indian reservations, which account for one of three failing schools in the state. Full points are awarded.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**37**	**37**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	32	32	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(2)(i)

The state has a U.S. Department of Education-approved definition for "persistently lowest-achieving" (PLA), and the state has already announced 30 schools identified as PLA, including some non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered PLA if they were eligible to receive Title I funds. Full points are awarded.

(E)(2)(ii)

The state has a long history of working to turn around struggling schools. The state's plan commits to providing ongoing support and assistance to LEAs and their PLA schools in implementing one of the four intervention models and to intervene as needed. The state also plans to build the capacity of leaders to do turnaround work by providing a pipeline of Turnaround Teachers and Leaders, and to improve the coordination of capacity-building efforts, community services, and strong family supports provided to reservation schools serving high-need Native American communities. The plan is of high quality and is awarded points in the "high" range.

Total	50	47	47	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**9**	**9**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	4	4	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(1)(i)

The state increased the level of its State General Fund expenditure support for elementary, secondary, and public higher education from 53.5 percent in Fiscal Year 2008 to 59.5 percent for Fiscal Year 2009. High points are awarded.

(F)(1)(ii)

The state has a longstanding equalized funding formula that provides state funds to LEAs. This formula ensures that all school districts have equitable access to budget capacity and revenues and provides additional funds to LEAs that have limited taxable property within their borders. To assist with the increased costs of education services to students served by small and isolated LEAs, the state provides an additional upward funding adjustment in the district support level. The system also limits the ability of districts with very high amounts of taxable property from generating additional dollars beyond the calculated district support level. A "high" level of points is awarded for this subsection.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**36**	**36**	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	8	8	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8	8	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	6	6	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	6	6	

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(2)(i)

State law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools in the state and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists. Full points were awarded.

(F)(2)(ii)

The state has a rigorous approval, monitoring, and reauthorization process for charter schools. The state has a strong record of revoking charters and not renewing charters for ineffective charter schools. If a charter school is designated as a school failing to meet academic standards, the charter school's sponsor must either take action to restore the charter school to acceptable performance or revoke the school's charter. "High" points are awarded for this subsection.

(F)(2)(iii)

The state's equalized funding system ensures that charter schools are funded equitable and competitively. In FY 2009, charter schools educated over 9 percent of the state's students and received approximately 14 percent of the state's General Fund appropriation for K-12 education. This amounted to $6,396 per charter student and $5,435 per district student. "High" points are awarded for this subsection.

(F)(2)(iv)

The state legislature recently enacted two laws helping charter schools acquire facilities. One statute classified charter schools as public schools for the purposes of municipal and county zoning and required municipalities and counties to allow charter schools to operate at locations or in facilities that would be permissible for district schools. The second law provided significant financial relief from burdensome property taxes for non-profit charter schools that lease their facilities. "High" points are awarded for this subsection.

(F)(2)(v)

The state's LEAs have the flexibility and authority to operate innovative public schools in addition to charter schools, although the application is not clear on exactly how autonomous these schools are under the law or in practice. More than 170 alternative schools exist focused on students with special needs or extenuating circumstances. Focus and magnet schools offering specialized curricula with high academic standards in their focus areas provide additional options for students and parents in other LEAs. Nearly all of the state's large high school and unified districts also offer online learning opportunities or support distance-learning academies. A score in the "high" range is awarded.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	**5**	**4**	**4**	

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(3)

The state emphasizes its 20-year history of experimentation with performance pay for teachers through its Teacher Career Ladder Programs, its longstanding open enrollment policies offering full intra- and inter-district enrollment, its longstanding support of providing educational choice through charter schools, and its high-quality standards, especially in history. The state is also developing a statewide technical skills assessment system in partnership with multiple entities, and it is expanding the use of Education and Career Action Plans to provide personalized learning and career guidance to middle and high school students. These reforms demonstrate the state has a long history of additional longstanding education reforms in areas of K-12 education outside the RTTT reform elements, as well as several new initiatives that seek to improve the reform conditions in the state's schools. Limited attention is paid to demonstrating how some of these reforms have led to increased achievement or graduation rates or decreased achievement gaps, or other important outcomes. A score in the bottom of the "high" range is awarded.

Total	55	49	49	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	**15**	**15**	**15**	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The applicant provides a STEM plan that focuses on (1) expanding access to a rigorous course of study; (2) leveraging partnerships to prepare and assist teachers to integrate STEM content across grades and disciplines, promote effective and relevant instruction, and offer applied learning opportunities; and (3) preparing more students, especially underrepresented groups, for advanced study and STEM careers. The state has significant cooperation with STEM-capable partners. The plan is sufficient in scope and breadth to meet the competitive priority.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		**Yes**	**Yes**	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

This is a well-developed application that is clear, thorough, and detailed in how the applicant will use RTTT funds to implement significant reforms across all four education reform areas of the ARRA, as well as the State Success Factors Criteria. It meets the threshold for being considered for funding.

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The state provided a coherent and focused presentation and provided additional insight into how it works with the state's large population of minority students, especially the Native American student population. The panel's presentation and responses to reviewer questioning demonstrated strong engagement with and commitment to the state's RTTT application and reform agenda. The state has struggled to improve academic performance generally and especially in some subgroups over the past decade, and the state's plans provide strong alignment of policy changes with focused deployment of resources to spur greater academic achievement moving forward. All part of the state's plan components are of at least average quality and several of very high quality, with no segment of the application being significantly weaker than other parts. The state's plans for turning around the lowest-achieving schools are particularly strong.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	402	407	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Arizona Application #2100AZ-6

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**46**	**46**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30	30	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(1)(i)

The application describes a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that reflects the four education areas described in RTTT in a manner that could yield some improvements in the State's student outcomes. However, it's not clear that the strategies employed are sufficient collectively (e.g., a focus on transition grades 3, 8, and 10, implying a less intensive focus on the other grades) to achieve some of its ambitious academic achievement targets for all subgroups.

(A)(1)(ii)

(a) The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is strong. It hugely reflects the model MOU guidelines provided by the US Department of Education (USDE). Moreover, the requirements are well aligned with Federal goals and priorities. Participating LEAs agree to implement a specific scope of work and to otherwise support the State's implementation of RTTT in a timely fashion. The State agrees to oversee the implementation of the plan and provide support to LEAs and schools.

(b) The scope of work is consistent with the stipulated RTTT foci. For example, participating LEAs agree to: (1) help develop and implement enhanced high-quality standards and assessments; (2) use longitudinal student-level data bases to help inform their work and the work of their schools, teachers, and principals; (3) evaluate teachers and principals annually and to base these evaluations at least one-third (up to half) on growth models (changes in student achievement over time); (4) take steps to improve equity in the distribution of effective staff among schools; (5) support the effective development of teachers and principals; and (6) take progressive steps to turnaround their persistently lowest achieving schools.

(c) All superintendents of the 389 participating LEAs and 95% of their board presidents signed the state's MOU. While these 389 LEAs account for fewer than 2/3 of Arizona's LEAs, they account for over 90% of Arizona's public school students. Strong union support for the plan occurs for only half of the LEAs for which union support was applicable. However, an examination of the Detail Table for (A)(1) shows much stronger support among the largest Arizona districts (enrollment > 9,000) -- about 75% of schools, 73% of students, and 77% of students in poverty.

However, a letter from the head of state teachers' union suggests lukewarm overall commitment to the state's RTTT application. In his letter to Governor Brewer, John Wright, President, Arizona Education Association, states that AEA "...continues to have questions about the (RTTT) application and about Arizona's direction regarding public education." Specific issues mentioned in the letter for which the AEA

seeks clarity include: (1) "expand quality pathways" for teachers; (2) equitable distribution of effective teachers; (3) intervening in the support of struggling schools.

(A)(1)(iii)

The goals seem reasonably ambitious. Moreover, while only 63% of LEAs opted to participate in the state's RTTT initiative, the participants account for 92% of Arizona's K-12 students and 92% of the state's students in poverty. This level of LEA student participation is sufficient to yield a significant statewide impact on student achievement and graduation rates, and college enrollment, as well as closing the gaps among subgroups in these areas.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**21**	**21**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	15	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	6	

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(2)(i)

Plan is coherent. 57% of RTTT funding would go to LEAs. Balance of resources would be used to develop capacity and scale-up initiatives/practices that have proven effective in Arizona. Throughout narrative and budget, the plan indicates how various initiatives will be sustained.

(a) The plan includes strong leadership and dedicated teams. Members of the 15-member RTTT Board include representatives from the Arizona Board of Education, Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, Arizona Board of Regents, Arizona Department of Education, chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees, First Things First, community college, and three appointments made by the Governor. Given that teachers play a critical role in implementing the State's proposed reforms and given that the education of Native Americans is a critical focus of the plan, the extent to which these groups are represented on the Board is unclear.

(b) The State has a reasonable plan for providing support to LEAs. All resources appear directed toward aiding LEAs in implementing the state's plan. Multiple projects are offered with functions such as the following: research development and dissemination, technical support (regional centers), seeding LEAs with effective teachers and leaders.

(c) The plan for implementing RTTT is sensible. The Governor's Office of Economic Recovery (OER) would provide budget, accounting and sub-recipient monitoring support to the project. This organizational arrangement should help to ensure RTTT has it broadest reach. State-of-art of grants management tools would support efficient communication and oversight.

(d) The plans for using RTTT grant funds are clear and coherent. The budget shows how RTTT resources would be allocated to carry out RTTT initiatives. Much of the RTTT funding would be used to extend and/or expand extant projects deemed successful (e.g., TFA, Rodel teacher and principal initiatives). Some funding would be used to develop tools.

(e) While the State stipulates its commitment to education, given the fiscal difficulty confronting Arizona, the application does not make firm commitment to sustain RTTT programs that prove successful.

(A)(2)(ii)

The prevalence of strong support among key stakeholders (e.g., leaders in the Arizona Senate and House of Representatives, Arizona School Administrators, Arizona Board of Regents, Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Arizona Charter Schools Association, several foundations, and community organizations) bodes well for the implementation of the RTTT initiative. Unfortunately, however, uncertain commitment from the Arizona Education Association (AEA) potentially dampens prospects for full and effective implementation.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**19**	**19**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4	4	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15	15	

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(3)(i)

Arizona, often with federal funding, has taken numerous steps to develop and implement educational interventions that are aligned with RTTT. Examples include: (1) work to align standards with national standards, make graduation requirements more stringent, and improve assessment for special education; (2) used a $6 million Federal grant to build a data warehouse; (3) has adopted a growth model based on work done in Colorado; (4) recently passed legislation stipulating that between 1/3 and half of the weight for teacher and principal evaluations will be assigned to growth in student achievement (based on growth models); (5) makes significant use of Teach for America teachers, which has helped to improve the equitable distribution of teachers among schools; and (6) has begun to roll an Arizona Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative that will emphasize individualization of support for students. In many cases, however, the narrative does not quantitatively detail the scope and impact of these initiatives.

(A)(3)(ii)

Positively, assessment data (from the National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP and the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards or AIMS) show steady progress over time in the aggregate and for all subgroups except English Language Learners (ELL), special education students, and in some cases Native (American) students. The achievement gap has been relatively constant for most subgroups over the past several years. The application also notes that the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center found that between 1996 and 2006 Arizona had the third-highest gain (among states) in high school graduation rates (12.1 percentage point increase).

Total	125	86	86	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1)(i)

Arizona has joined with 49 states and territories in the Common Core State Standards (CSSS) initiative spearheaded by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. CSSS will produce world-class standards for math and language that will prepare students for college.

(B)(1)(ii)

The application anticipates that Arizona's State Board of Education will adopt the Common Core Standards on June 28, 2010 (over 1 month before the August 2 cutoff).

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

According to a letter submitted by Vicki Balentine, President, Arizona State Board of Education, the Arizona Board of Education adopted the Common Core of Standards in English Language Arts and Math on June 28, 2010.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(2)(i)

Arizona has joined the national Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) Consortium. PARCC will focus on developing state-of-the-art assessments for grades 3-8 that are aligned with the Common Core Standards.

(B)(2)(ii)

The PARCC Consortium has 27 members (i.e., over half the states in the United States).

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**13**	**13**	

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(3)

To support the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments, the State will establish Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform to implement several strategies: (1) align curriculum to the new standards; (2) provide assistance (professional development) to educators; (3) identify and develop resources; and (4) ensure that the new standards and assessments are well implemented and sustained. The Common Core Committee will identify and/or develop the instructional materials and strategies that the Regional Centers will use. The plan for conducting this work includes information on goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties. However, the plan is silent regarding the scope of these activities, e.g., (1) the number of teachers and principals in the state who will be served; and (2) the role of LEAs in the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments.

Total	70	63	63	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	**24**	**14**	**14**	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

America Competes Act (ACA) elements (reviewer's score for element is in parenthesis)

ACA 1 (2): The Arizona data system (Student Accountability Information System or SAIS) uses a unique, confidential student ID code that enables tracking of students from pre-K to college to, in some cases, work.

ACA 2 (2): SAIS variables include student school, program participation (e.g., Title 1, migrant, gifted and talented). It's not clear that the system will include info on student attendance and participation in an extended range of programs (e.g., Supplemental Educational Services, AVID, special education, etc.).

ACA 3 (2): SAIS will feature tracking of every student's movement within the system.

ACA 4 (0): It's not clear that SAIS communicates with higher education data systems.

ACA 5 (2): A data audit system is in place and seems reasonable.

ACA 6 (2): The state maintains student-level results on the state's annual tests.

ACA 7 (2): The state maintains data for all students, even those not tested.

ACA 8 (0): The Arizona Education Data Warehouse will link teacher identifier information to student data by grade and/or course. However, this is a plan, not a current condition.

ACA 9 (0): The state's response is fuzzy on particulars, e.g., student transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.

ACA 10 (0): The question of whether student-level college readiness test scores should be included in system remains at the discussion stage.

ACA 11 (2): Colleges have access to SAIS Identifiers of for all newly enrolled freshmen. ACA 12 (0): Response relates to data sharing, but not alignment or preparation.

ACA 12 (0) The response relates to data sharing but not to alignment or preparation.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**3**	**3**	

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

To enhance the access and use of data, the state plans to take steps such as the following: (1) provide higher quality data; (2) render user interface more user friendly; (3) expand access of system portals to rural and high-poverty areas; and (4) provide training and technical support. However, the baseline access level is low (70,000) relative to the need. Moreover, it's not clear how many users will have access to student-level data. RTTT funds would help improve access to some degree; but access may yet be limited.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	3	3	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	3	3	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	4	4	

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3)(i)

The State's plan for increasing the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement includes three activities: (1) survey LEAs to identify systems in place and the level of satisfaction with these systems; (2) provide guidance to LEAs; and (3) help LEAs implement systems. The narrative provides limited specificity regarding plans for using growth data to guide improvement for students, teachers, and principals.

(C)(3)(ii)

The State's plan for supporting LEAs and schools on how to use instructional improvement systems and data to support continuous improvement lists three activities: (1) convene leading LEAs to document and share effective practices and lessons; (2) arrange for exemplary LEAs to mentor other LEAs; and (3) prepare data coaches to train local users. The narrative provides limited specificity regarding professional development plans for using growth data to guide instructional improvement in LEAs and schools.

(C)(3)(iii)

The State plans to expand access of student longitudinal data with teacher identifiers to selected (authorized) researchers. Limiting access to "authorized" users may shorten the range of useful analyses undertaken by researchers and thereby stymie educational innovation.

Total	47	27	27	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**16**	**16**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	5	5	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	4	4	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(1)(i)

Arizona's plan clearly meets at least four of the five criteria for an RTTT "alternative routes to certification" program. Regulations recently (March 2010) adopted by Arizona's State Board of Education (SBE) allow "alternative preparation program institutions (for teachers and leaders) that may include, but are not limited to, universities and colleges, school districts, professional organizations (e.g., Teach for America), private businesses, charter schools, and regional training centers." All current certification routes require a Bachelor's degree, passage of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Exam (AEPA), and 45 clock hours of Structured English Immersion. Moreover, all routes require "school-based, directed field experience." The State sets the primary objective of certification programs as "to ensure all graduates have mastered state teacher and/or administrator standards." The amount of time required for certification may, accordingly, vary. With respect to teachers, all successful graduates of approved certification programs (including traditional programs) are eligible to apply for the Arizona Provisional Teaching Certificate.

(D)(1)(ii)

Arizona makes notable use of alternative certification for teachers. Over 10 Arizona colleges provide alternative certification, the two major ones being Arizona State University (ASU) and Rio Solado. Teach for America (TFA) accounts for nearly half of the teachers who acquired alternative certification in 2008-09. According to a table in the narrative, these programs do not limit the amount of course work and they are not provided by various types of providers. The discussion of alternative certification for principals is limited.

(D)(1)(iii)

Arizona employs a coherent set of strategies for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher shortage. Strategies the State employs to address teacher shortages include, for example, Phoenix Teaching Fellows, which strengthens the pipeline for elementary and middle-school math, science, and special education teachers; and "Grow Your Own," which re-trains and shifts teachers from surplus areas (e.g., elementary) to shortage areas (special education). However, the narrative is mum on processes related to principal shortages. The quality of these strategies is unclear.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**38**	**43**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	14	14	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	5	5	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	15	20	[redacted]

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(2)(i)

Arizona is implementing a growth model based on one developed for the State of Colorado. The model uses AIMS data in math and reading for grades 4-8. Apparently, this growth model will not be used for other grades (K – 3 and 9 – 12).

(D)(2)(ii)

The plan is coherent, has a reasonable timetable, involves key stakeholders throughout the process, and provides for oversight and technical assistance. Also impressive, the state is conducting a survey of current evaluation practices. An understanding of the gap between current practice and desired practice helps to inform the development of a path to the future.

(D)(2)(iii)

Arizona's plan calls for the annual evaluation of teachers and principals beginning no later than the 2012-13 school year. The plan notes that growth data reports will be provided to "all educators." Given that the growth model using AIMS data will be applied only to grades 4-8, the State and Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform will assist LEAs in using their local assessment data to calculate student growth measures. Because no details are provided regarding how the State Centers will calculate these measures, this leaves open the question of the extent to which growth data provided to teachers in other grades will validly and reliably aid them in improving their practice. The application does not indicate whether each principal will get (growth) data for the school as a whole, for individual teachers, for students, and/or for a combination of these.

(D)(2)(iv) The plan is reasonable but seems heavily conditioned on future developments in the state. A key challenge that may affect the state's ability to implement a strong teacher/principal evaluation system is that only 5 of 12 (or 13 counting K) grade levels are included in the growth model. Presumably, teachers in other grades will have to be evaluated largely through traditional means. Absent growth model data, the state may continue to be faced with the difficult task of monitoring the validity of teacher evaluations for these other grades. As a result, the validity of the link between evaluation results and compensation will be difficult to assess. Moreover, if the state does not find a way to apply a growth model approach to the vast

majority of grades, there is the risk that teachers in grades 4-8 may call into question the fairness of the evaluation system.

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The state panel clarified that the plan includes discussions at the state level regarding the application of growth models to the evaluation of teachers and principals in grades beyond 4 through 8.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**13**	**20**	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8	12	[redacted]
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5	8	[redacted]

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(3)(i)

The plan is logical and coherent but relies hugely on approaches that do not use student growth data as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of teachers and principals (e.g., Teach for America, Rodel Exemplary Teacher Initiative, and Rodel Exemplary Principal Initiative). (Note: RTTT defines an "effective teacher" or "effective principal" as one whose students achieve acceptable rates of student growth.) Without valid growth data, the measures of teacher and principal effectiveness may not be valid. As a result, it may remain unclear whether, in fact, teachers and principals are equitably distributed among schools.

(D)(3)(ii)

The plan has reasonable strategies for addressing supply and demand considerations regarding teachers in shortage areas. However, it is not clear that the effectiveness of these teachers will be evaluated partly on the basis of growth in student achievement.

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The State panel clarified that teachers and principals provided through alternative programs (including Rodel and TFA) would be selected based partly on the basis of their experience in producing growth in student achievement. This would help to ensure the equitable distribution of "effective" teachers (as defined by RTTT) for both high-poverty or high-minority schools as well as hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**9**	**11**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	3	5	[redacted]
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	6	6	

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i)

An expert advisory council will develop a new evaluation system that "will ...connect student growth data to each teacher and principal graduate's electronic recommendation from the granting institution of higher learning." These results will be reported to the public annually. Given that Arizona's RTTT plan is unclear on how valid and reliable student growth data will be developed for all grades, it's not evident that growth data would be connected to all teacher and principal graduates.

(D)(4)(ii)

The plan lays out a clear approach for expanding preparation and credentialing options for producing effective teachers. For example, the Sanford Project -- a collaboration between Arizona State University (ASU) and Teach for America (TFA) -- is laudable in its effort to employ evolving effective practices at ASU as exemplified by the work of TFA. However, the State's plan for expanding preparation and credentialing options for producing effective principals seems less grounded.

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The state panel clarified that the plan includes discussions at the state level regarding the application of growth models to the evaluation of teachers and principals in grades beyond 4 through 8.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**16**	**16**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	8	8	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	8	8	

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i)

The plan for providing support to teachers and principals is sensible. Through its Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform and in partnership with LEAs, institutions of higher education and nonprofit and business partners, Arizona will ensure that teachers and principals are provided with effective, data-informed induction, professional development, coaching, and common planning and collaboration time. The new Arizona teacher induction program will provide stipends and release time for mentor and master teachers within school districts to mentor, coach and support teachers who are new to the profession and are serving in high-poverty schools. The induction program will draw on best practices learned from teacher induction programs throughout the State, including ASU's BEST (Building Educator Support Teams) Program, a comprehensive induction, mentoring, teacher, and leadership professional development program. Through its AZ LEADS Arizona School Leadership Program, the State plans to expand the number of identified executive coaches and trainers able to provide hiring and evaluation training, and intensive coaching and mentoring for principals and assistant principals, particularly those serving in high-poverty and high-minority schools.

(D)(5)(ii)

The application articulates a clear and logical plan for insuring continuous improvement in the supports provided teachers and principals pursuant to improved student achievement. Under the plan, the University Research Center would systematically examine the relative effects of alternative approaches to professional development and use these results to inform program improvement. Teacher and principal evaluation results would be incorporated into the assessment of the effectiveness of professional development by reporting the percentage of teachers and principals with improvements and declines in individual evaluation ratings and student growth data over time. School Improvement coaches would be trained to assist LEAs and schools to use these resources for analysis and planning.

Total	138	92	106	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	**10**	**10**	**10**	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(1)

Statutorily, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) can intervene in low-performing local education agencies (LEAs) and/or schools. Because Tribal Schools, a critical target of Arizona's RTTT plan, fall under the jurisdiction of autonomous nation/states, ADE cannot statutorily intervene in these schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**35**	**35**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	30	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(2)(i)

Arizona's definition of persistently lowest-achieving (PLA) schools was approved by the U. S. Department of Education. For elementary Title 1 schools, the identification of PLA schools was based on student performance in reading and math and (lack of) growth over three years. At the secondary level, PLA schools include schools that are eligible for Title I but not receiving funds (Tier II) as well as Title I-eligible high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% for 2006, 2007 and 2008.

(E)(2)(ii)

To facilitate turn-around, PLA schools would employ one of the four models stipulated in the RTTT guidelines. The plan is coherent, has a reasonable time table, and includes critical key elements (e.g., use of effective extant initiatives such as Teach for America (TFA), and focus on Native American students in PLA schools).

Total	50	45	45	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**8**	**8**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	3	3	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(1)(i)

The percent of total Arizona state revenues devoted to public education rose from 53.5% in FY 2008 to 59.5% in FY 2009, an increase of 6 percentage points.

(F)(1)(ii)

To help eliminate the inequities associated with the use of property taxes as a basis for funding public education in LEAs, the state has long implemented a funding formula that effectively provides for horizontal and vertical equity among LEAs.

The narrative does not discuss the extent to which state policies foster intra-district equity. For example, once general funds are allocated to LEAs, it's not clear from the narrative whether LEAs must allocate

these funds to their schools in a manner consistent with how the funds were allocated by the state (e.g., students with special needs, ELL).

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**27**	**29**	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	6	6	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8	8	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	3	5	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	2	2	

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(2)(i)

According to the narrative, "State law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists." This is consistent with data indicating that 9% of Arizona's public school pupils attend charter schools, one of the highest percentages in the nation.

(F)(2)(ii)

Arizona's charter school laws and policies have strong, coherent strategies for authorizing, monitoring, reauthorizing (or, if applicable, closing) charter schools. Academic achievement is a key factor in decisions regarding charter school reauthorization and closure. Twelve (12) charters have been revoked because of problems with finances, contract compliance, and/'or academic achievement. It is not evident from the narrative that Arizona's charter school law requires or encourages that the characteristics of students attending charter schools should be similar to the characteristics of students attending traditional public schools. An independent State agency, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), is the chief agent for carrying out these functions. However, given ASBCS's small size (8 staff members), it's not clear how effective it can efficaciously perform all critical legislated functions. As charters begin to come up for their 5-year reauthorization, it is conceivable that ASBCS's organizational capacity may be taxed.

(F)(2)(iii)

For FY 2009, by funding formula, the State allocated about $6,396 for each charter school student, which was about 18 percent higher than the per-pupil allocation for traditional public schools (about $5,435).

(F)(2)(iv)

The narrative identifies two areas where the State provides facilities-related support to charter schools: (1) a law that reclassifies charter schools as public schools for the purpose of municipal and county zoning; and (2) property tax relief for non-profit charter schools that lease their facilities. Otherwise, it is not evident that Arizona provides funding to charter schools for facilities or enables charter schools to share in bonds and mill levies.

(F)(2)(v)

According to the narrative, "LEAs have the flexibility to operate innovative, autonomous public schools in addition to charter schools." However, while examples of innovative LEA schools were mentioned, little was revealed regarding the extent to which alternative LEA schools were autonomous.

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The State panel indicated that, by formula, charter schools receive funds for maintenance and operations. However, it was not stated that charter school receive funding for expenditures such leasing, purchasing,

building, and/or improving facilities. While charter schools do not participate in state bond issues, they are not legally precluded from pursuing their own bond initiatives.

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

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The state has taken steps historically to facilitate improved student outcomes. Examples include:

- Allows LEAs to implement career-ladder programs that included pay-for-performance.
- Permits students to attend any school within their district or outside their district.
- Encourages teachers to pursue National Board Certification.
- Is developing standards and assessments for career and technical education concentrations.
- Is expanding deployment of online instruction, particularly in rural areas.

Total	55	40	42	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	**15**	**15**	**15**	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona's application is infused with elements related to STEM. With respect to rigor in STEM courses, the State has worked with the American Diploma Project Network, the College and Career Readiness Policy Institute, and Achieve, Inc., to raise high school math and science standards.

As an extension of a joint industry–government effort started in 2006, in 2008 SFAz STEM was launched to expand access to rigorous courses and prepare more students, especially those from underrepresented groups, for advanced STEM study and careers. With an advisory council representing business, higher education, P-12 teachers, informal education and philanthropies statewide, SFAz STEM strives to better align, integrate and embed STEM principles and practices benchmarked to international standards. SFAz STEM would continue and expand under RTTT.

One of Arizona's most promising teacher pathway programs is the Teacher Industry Internship Program (TIIP). Teachers intern at high-tech companies (e.g., Raytheon, Texas Instruments) for three summers and take math and science courses throughout the year while earning a master's degree, thereby strengthening the ability of teachers to transfer the application of STEM from the workplace to classrooms.

Arizona plans to continue supporting models (e.g., the Rural Engineering Pathway) that create STEM pathways for students – including in-school courses and out-of-class activities that inspire students to pursue a STEM path during their K-12 years and beyond.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		**Yes**	**Yes**	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Overall, Arizona's application meets the conditions of the Absolute Priority. Arizona's RTTT application comprehensively and coherently addresses the four education reform areas specified in ARRA as well as the State Success Factor Criteria. Backed by a recent history of steady progress in growth in student performance on national and State assessments, the State is engaged in concerted efforts to develop, adopt, and implement and high-level standards and assessments. The State has a clear plan for improving the use of longitudinal student-level data to improve instruction, including giving growth data a significant weight (between 33% and 50%) in the evaluation of teachers and principals. The State will employ both traditional and alternative routes for developing and certifying teachers and principals, and includes plans for evaluating teacher and principal development programs partly on the basis of growth in student achievement. The State has clear plans for pursuing improvements in the allocation of effective teachers and principals among schools. The State solidly supports both operationally and financially the development of effective charter schools, with no cap on the number of charter schools. Slated LEA participation and commitment is high (over 90 percent of Arizona's public school students would participate in the State's RTTT initiative). The State has a history of implementing coherent STEM initiatives, and would continue and/or expand these efforts under RTTT. To facilitate effective implementation of these elements, the State continues to support public education at a high level relative to other functions. Moreover, the State has created a regional infrastructure for providing support to LEAs, schools, principals and teachers.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	368	384	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Arizona Application #2100AZ-5

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**44**	**58**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	5	[redacted]
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	30	40	[redacted]
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10	13	[redacted]

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(A)(1)(i)

Arizona opens its Race to the Top (RTTT) proposal with an excellent introduction to the State's comprehensive and coherent reform agenda. While the proposal falters later in a number of areas, the first section sets the stage for the strengths of the application and the work preceding submission. Several highlights are notable, each of which hold promise for successful reforms:

1. The planning brought together diverse stakeholders, including representatives of traditional and charter schools, higher education, elected officials, business, philanthropy, Native American tribes, and innovative educational agencies and programs.
2. Several pieces of new reform legislation were adopted this year addressing alternative certification for teachers and leaders, new teacher and principal evaluation, a systemic approach to managing education, and new efforts and measures regarding the achievement gap.
3. Despite serious statewide financial challenges, and major budget cuts, the state has increased the percentage of support for public education, and passed an emergency stop-gap 1.0 percent sales tax.
4. Building on reform experiences, the state will focus RTTT on "effective instruction for all students," by pushing leaders to support and hold teachers accountable, and by securing extensive backing from partners.
5. Similar clarity will come from intensive attention on preparing students for careers and jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
6. Lastly, definite benchmark points for gauging progress have been established at 3rd, 8th and 10th grade.

Arizona presents an impressive theory of action for RTTT. Four definite strategies frame the theory of action, across which the four RTTT priorities are engaged. Strategy One addresses public policy, through which standards and assessment, data systems, teacher and leader quality, and school turnaround are advanced by state law and regulation. Strategy Two strengthens and aligns partners—LEAs, charters, higher education, philanthropy, business and community—to take advantage of the new policy environment to bring each of the four RTTT priorities to life. Strategy Three sets the transition year targets (3rd, 8th and 10th grades) paying careful attention to the antecedents required if goals are to be met by each of these measurement points. Strategy Four systematically increases the education system's endeavors on STEM,

linking the work directly to ongoing efforts and plans to rebuild Arizona's economy around science, technology and engineering.

At the start of its proposal, Arizona does an excellent job of underscoring particular demographic, geographic and educational characteristics that influence schools, schooling and reform. Several of these characteristics bear repeating in this review, since they help set the stage for the remaining analysis. The sixth largest state in square miles, Arizona is the 14th largest in population. Although 98 percent of the state is considered rural, 70 percent of the population resides in urban areas, and Phoenix is now the nation's fifth largest city. Public school enrollment is growing faster in Arizona than in all but one other state. From 2000 to 2008, the school population rose by roughly 20 percent (from 840,000 to 1.04 million). Arizona is home to the nation's largest Native American population, with 30 percent of the state's lands in "Indian Country," which legally is a separate jurisdiction from Arizona. Latinos also are a major force in Arizona, comprising 40 percent of the student population. Throughout the proposal, Arizona links back to these factors in designing and explaining reform plans.

(A)(1)(ii)

Arizona struggles in its presentation of the commitment of participating LEAs to the type of far-reaching reform proposed in the opening section. Dedication to change appears deep and extensive in the MOU and scope of work documents, but the extent of signatures from teacher unions raises hard questions.

The MOU used by Arizona is strong and fits the standard model recommended by the RTTT process. It ties neatly to the scope of work exhibits and lays out definite accountability steps for non-compliance. The scope of work documents are especially solid, requiring participating LEAs to implement even the most aggressive policies and procedures, including growth models for performance reviews of teachers and leaders, interventions in low achieving schools, and improvements in teacher quality. The documents definitely address each of the RTTT priorities and criteria. Arizona apparently has established agreements between the state and LEAs that will be the basis for significant change in policy and practice at the state, district, school and classroom levels.

The primary problem pertains to the extent of signatures from LEA superintendents, school board presidents and local union leaders. Arizona has done well at obtaining 100 percent of superintendent signatures and 95 percent of school board president signatures from the participating LEAs. Unfortunately, just 50 percent of the local union presidents in the participating LEAs signed the proposal. The hopeful news is that the vast majority of participating LEAs with enrollments over 1,000 students won signatures from their union presidents. Sixty of such LEAs had their union presidents' sign, while 33 did not. It appears that the lack of triumvirate support (i.e., superintendent, board president and union leader) mostly is with smaller districts. The limited union support in these districts will make it difficult to adopt and implement several of RTTT's most important elements—most notably those related to teacher quality, performance reviews, and high stakes personnel decisions.

Arizona scores in the high range for its MOU and scope of work, but drops to a high midrange score due to the signature problem. The state did not explain the consequences of the union signature results. The 50 percent signature issue may apply to a small share of students, if indeed the bulk of non-signatures are in the smaller LEAs, meaning that the vast majority of students are in LEAs where there is a triumvirate of leadership. However, the state left it to reviewers to assume if this conclusion is accurate.

(A)(1)(iii)

Arizona presents a conundrum as to the potential for the work of the participating LEAs to translate into broad statewide impact. The good news is that Arizona's RTTT work will touch 92 percent of all students, including 92 percent of all students in poverty. The proposal has set ambitious and achievable goals for increasing student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment. Thus, thanks to RTTT reforms, nearly all of the state's students are positioned to be in a much stronger place academically and ultimately professionally.

A difficulty for assuring statewide impact is that only 63 percent of LEAs have signed on as participating LEAs. As noted above, only 50 percent of the union leaders in these LEAs have agreed to the proposal.

Moreover, the letter of support from the Arizona Education Association, while offering conditional support, flags in several ways that relations between state leaders and the state's teacher locals are delicate at best and feisty at worst.

In the end, Arizona scores high in the midrange on this criterion due to the broad reach at the student level. Despite getting to just 63 percent of districts, nearly all students will benefit directly from RTTT. In addition, as noted relative to the previous criterion, it appears that the lack of union signatures is primarily with the state's smallest LEAs (below 1,000 student enrollment). The state's most notable LEAs will more often than not have support from all three key leaders.

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(A)(1)(i) -- The Arizona presentation team did a superb job of underscoring the comprehensive, coherent reform agenda conveyed in the proposal. The panel represented all key leadership and stakeholder groups, spoke clearly to the systematic nature of the planning and proposal development, and left no doubt that the RTTT priorities all are being addressed. From the beginning to the end of the presentation, the Arizona team held to the important theme that it is a new era in education reform and school performance in the state, and that RTTT will be essential to advancing progress in the new era. As a result, the score is increased to a full "five."

(A)(1)(ii) -- The Arizona presentation team gave a major boost to the state's scores by mitigating concerns about the nature of teacher union support for RTTT--both statewide and with individual LEAs. The team took the definite stance that the teachers' association matters to RTTT at the state level and in individual LEAs, but that the state is a "Right to Work State" and that in most organized LEAs the teachers' association represents less than half of all teachers. Amplifying key points in the proposal, state and LEA leaders, as well as most key stakeholders, are moving ahead with the RTTT plans despite reticence from teacher association leaders. Witness the backing of state legislation and district policies, important RTTT priorities in the Great Leaders and Teacher area--relative to performance evaluation and high-stakes personnel decisions--are fully possible within current collective bargaining laws. To the team's credit, it hit the theme of "a new era" at this point in the presentation, acknowledging that it is a challenge for teachers and their associations as the state moves into a new form of performance reviews, but that the change, as argued for in the proposal, must occur and completely aligns with RTTT's priorities. As a result of the presentation, the score in this section is moved into the high range, with the only loss of points pegged to the failure to fully address the teacher union question in the proposal.

(A)(1)(iii) -- The score in this subsection also is increased to the high range based on the team's presentation. The primary reason for the score being reduced in Tier One was due to the proposal's handing of the role of the teacher union. As explained above, the presentation team clarified the proposal and Arizona collective bargaining laws and environment such that the score is now moved into the high range.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**22**	**28**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	18	[redacted]
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	10	[redacted]

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona does exceedingly well when it turns to "building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain plans" [(A)(2)]. The State scores in the high range for plans to ensure the necessary capacity for implementation, and does nearly as well for its plans to draw on stakeholders.

(A)(2)(i)

Arizona has a top quality plan for securing high level leadership for RTTT. It will establish the "RTTT Executive Board" to ensure overarching interagency accountability in implementing the reforms detailed in the application. The appointees to the 15-member RTTT Executive Board will represent the State Board of

Education, Charter Schools State Board, Board of Regents, Department of Education, community colleges, and House and Senate Education Committees. The roles and responsibilities as described in the proposal cover the correct level and range of oversight: reform plan implementation, use of RTTT funds as proposed in the budget, progress toward benchmarks in student achievement, recommendations of policy changes, reviewing research and evaluation studies regarding RTTT, and publishing a state-wide report card that will provide transparency. The board is well placed in the State's education governance structure, ensuring that RTTT is the priority reform effort, not a side-bar. Indeed, several important commissions and councils will report to the RTTT Board, notably a Data Governance Commission and the P-20 Coordinating Council.

While the RTTT Board will oversee the reforms, state level work will be directed out of the Arizona Department of Education. Wisely, the State will reorganize substantial aspects of the department to align roles and responsibilities with the RTTT priorities. Associate superintendents and staff with content expertise in the four areas will lead the respective work. Monitoring all leadership and staff work will be the newly formed Performance Management Office. Arizona is smart to add this new entity as a way to provide high level reviews of leadership effectiveness and recommend changes in state-level policies and management when necessary.

In terms of supporting participating LEAs, Arizona understands that education reform is only strong if there is persistent attention to monitoring and supporting implementation. The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will need to accelerate the transition from a mode of operation based primarily on compliance to one providing support rooted in results. Working with partners, the department has laid out a savvy two-pronged support approach. Prong one will use web-based technologies—namely the State's Integrated Data to Enhance Arizona's Learning (IDEAL) professional development portal, which is managed by Arizona State. The portal and an accompanying email dissemination system will ensure the efficient coordination and integration of LEA and school reform planning, monitoring and reporting in one system. Inactivity on the system will be flagged and prompt follow-up from department and regional agency personnel. Prong two will be Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform; six of which will be created to ensure consistent, coordinated support and assistance across the RTTT reform priorities. At least one of the six centers will focus on Native American populations, especially those on reservations.

Especially critical in the proposal is the plan to establish the University Research Center for Innovation and Reform. It represents an impressive linking of the resources and talents of three major universities (Arizona State, University of Arizona, and Northern Arizona University) to the strategic needs of elementary and secondary school reform. The Center surfaces frequently in the proposal as the linchpin to research and evaluation.

The nuts and bolts of grants management will be handled by Office of Economic Recovery (OER). The State is smart to use the same agency that has been managing all of its ARRA funding. It is positive to note that the OER turned to the likes of KPMG and Deloitte (internationally recognized organizational development and financial management consulting firms) in establishing internal controls, sub-recipient monitoring protocols, performance management tools, and processes for preventing waste, fraud and abuse. A forte is that OER has strong interagency processes to facilitate the effective disbursement and use of RTTT funds.

Arizona's budget presentation is excellent. The narrative plainly shows alignment of other Federal and state grants with RTTT, providing good details and examples. Particularly striking is the clarity on allocations (proportionally) to the RTTT priorities. As summarized, the proportions align with the stated priorities, as well as the logic of how funds should be applied for effective design and implementation. The largest share (32 percent) will go the improvement of teachers and principals; the next largest shares (with 18 percent apiece) will go to the state's data system and improved standards and assessments; turning around low performing schools receives the next highest share (11 percent); building a technical assistance infrastructure for rural states gains a good share (7 percent); and, research and evaluation of RTTT will receive five percent. The proposal goes on to show how existing Federal and State grants will be leveraged by RTTT: most notably, $4 million for Teach for America (TFA); and a $33.4 million Teacher Quality Partnership grant for Arizona State's professional development school program.

Nevertheless, Arizona's budget explains poorly several large line items. For instance, in the project budget for the pivotal University Research Center for Innovation and Research, a $6 million allocation for "Contractual" is not well explained. A similar vagueness problem occurs with a $10 million "Contractual" line item for the project budget for the Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. In the project budget for the Student Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Enhancements, $14.5 million under Contractual is not broken down into decipherable pieces.

A related budget weakness is that many of the RTTT reforms will depend on sub-contracting and letting of request-for-proposals (RFPs) to agencies yet to be determined. Not addressed is whether there is enough quality in the pool of contractors (national and state based) to make sure all of the proposed work is undertaken effectively and efficiently.

Lastly, Arizona essentially does not discuss the sustainability of the work to be started or boosted by RTTT funding. The proposal underscores the severe financial health of Arizona, citing a series of major fiscal challenges. The Governor and other elected officials reportedly are committed to continuing key RTTT work. However, there is no explanation provided for how that will occur, other than to promise that "the Governor, Legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction, SBE, Board of Regents and philanthropic and business communities [will formulate plans] to implement a long-term commitment to RTTT success."

All in all, Arizona scores just inside the high range for this criterion. The high score is secured by the leadership strengths, support plans for LEAs, grant management efficiency, and overall budget presentation. The noted weaknesses reduce the score slightly.

(A)(2)(ii)

Arizona makes a good case for the support pending from a "broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans." As a result, the State scores at the top of the midrange on this criterion. The greatest strength is the broad, documented support for RTTT. Over 60 serious letters of support are included in Appendix (A)(2)-5. All critical stakeholder groups have voiced their support.

As discussed earlier, the only letter of mixed statements is from the Arizona Education Association (AEA). A tough, yet relatively balanced letter, it makes clear that the AEA locals are ready to support RTTT, but are concerned that the proposal was assembled too quickly for ample input and comes at time when teachers are feeling threatened by State and other Arizona leaders. The letter combines with the 50 percent signature issue, discussed earlier, to underscore the primary challenge for RTTT success in Arizona: winning over teacher union support on all high stakes personnel elements.

Keeping Arizona from a high-range score on this criterion is the union issue, as well as the failure to address thoroughly how the State's external partners—philanthropy, business and community agencies—will help advance and sustain RTTT reforms that prove worthwhile to student learning. Witness the 60-plus letters, Arizona has broad support for RTTT. The specifics of that support for ensuring a long future for successful reform are not vibrant at this point of the proposal.

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(A)(2)(i) -- The Arizona presentation team made the case that it is giving good attention to the sustainability of RTTT work beyond the life of the grant. This issue had been a reason for the score in Tier One being in reduced slightly. While sustainability of all work is impossible to predict, the team underscored that it has a governance and oversight structure for RTTT that will be regularly assessing how to sustain the RTTT work that must be continued. The array of business, philanthropic and nonprofit partners, as represented by one presentation team member, are "expecting and pushing for continuation of RTTT programs," and will be looking for how public funding can substitute for philanthropic support. Based on the presentation, the score has been increased.

(A)(2)(ii) -- Echoing reviewer comments in Section (A)(1), the Arizona presentation team assuaged concerns about the role of the teachers' association in the RTTT process. Based on the same findings, the score in this section is being increased. Similarly, the presentation team made a strong case that the range of philanthropic, business and nonprofit partners for RTTT will have an organized presence through the

governance and oversight structure for the grant. This will enable important coordination and organization of external partners.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**21**	**21**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4	4	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	17	17	

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona hits the high range in "demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps" [(A)(3)]. Scoring quite high on the first part of this criterion, the State also does well to be near the top of the midrange on the second part.

(A)(3)(i)

Arizona has a sound record of work on each of the RTTT priorities.

- **Standards** have been a priority for over 10 years, with recent attention to alignment with national standards, graduation standards, college and career readiness, elementary reading, and special education.
- Less strong has been attention to statewide summative or formative **assessments**. The attention gap between standards versus assessments is the primary reason a perfect score is missed on this criterion.
- **Data** is a strong theme: a statewide longitudinal data system (e.g., Arizona Educational Data Warehouse--AEDW), has established web-based access to the system (through IDEAL), and begun work on a growth model for gauging student performance.
- **Great teachers and leaders** has been a longstanding Arizona priority; Teach for America (TFA) has been a major actor in the state, and path-breaking legislation on teacher/leader quality (discussed later) was recently passed.
- Support for struggling schools has been a concern. The state has launched Arizona Response to Intervention, and has the capacity to intervene in both low performing districts and schools. Arizona also has turned to the expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) programs as a way to increase student academic opportunities and leverage change in school curriculum and pedagogy.
- Most significant may be the state's extraordinary record with supporting and sponsoring **charter schools.**

(A)(3)(ii)

Arizona students have demonstrated moderate increases in math and reading achievement over the past seven years as reflected on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) assessments. Most gains occurred at the elementary and middle grades, with no gain in 8th grade reading on NAEP but some improvement on AIMS. The proposal outlines briefly the reforms that have made the most significant difference to student performance, giving primary credit to teacher recruitment and selection in high poverty schools (through TFA, Phoenix Teaching Fellows, and other local teacher recruitment programs), professional development, and an intensive focus on reading.

Achievement gaps have declined. Hispanics, who comprise 40 percent of the school population, made strong increases across grades and subject areas as measured by NAEP and AIMS. Other populations saw the gap narrow on the AIMS assessment, although not on NAEP. The overall gaps still remain far too high, holding at about 20 percentage points between Hispanic and Whites, and 30 percentage points between Native Americans and Whites. Similarly, special education and limited English proficient students have not seen much progress in narrowing the achievement gap.

High school graduation rates have increased at a nationally significant clip. According to an *Education Week* report Arizona cites in its proposal, the State ranked third to only South Carolina and Tennessee in the graduation rate gain between 1996 and 2006.. Using the State's four-year graduation rate calculation, the rate grew from nearly 71 percent to 75 percent between 2001 and 2008. The State credits these gains to the Native American Dropout Prevention Initiative and the State's college- and career-readiness agenda (in partnership with the American Diploma Project).

Total	125	87	107	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1)(i)

Arizona scores a perfect "20" for participating in a consortium of states that are working towards common standards. The State is part of the joint initiative by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Offices (CCSSO), which includes 49 states and territories.

(B)(1)(ii)

Arizona also scores a perfect "20" for adoption of a common set of K-12 standards by August 2, 2010. At the time of the proposal's submission, Arizona was scheduled to have the Common Core Standards adopted by the State Board of Education on June 28, 2010. The timeline for adopting the Common Core reportedly has been a frequent point of discussion in the Arizona process, giving all participants a definite timeline goal.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona's presentation is strong in terms of "developing and implementing common, high quality assessments" [(B)(2)(i)]. The State receives a high score for its commitment to be an active member of a consortium working to jointly develop and implement common, high-quality assessments. Arizona has signed an MOU with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Consortium (PARCC). The state also earns high points for the second part of the criterion [(B)(2)(ii)] since PARCC will include 27 members, thus meeting the scoring requirement that a consortium includes a majority of States in the country.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**15**	**18**	[redacted]

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona scores in the high range for "supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments" [(B)(3)]. The State is strong on both the standards and assessment portions of this criterion.

With the implementation of Common Core Standards, Arizona will draw on experiences with standards dating back to 1997. Arizona's current standards are revised every five years, so the State has a good system for supporting adoption and modification at all education levels. At the heart of the work will be the Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. These centers are experienced and well positioned as dispersed regional entities to implement four strategies, all of which together represent a logical sequence of implementation steps from statewide policy to school level action:

1. Align curriculum to Common Core Standards
2. Build educator capacity by developing a system of support, including professional development and technical assistance
3. Identify and develop instructional resources
4. Ensure successful implementation and sustainability at the school level.

The implementation plan has several features that should bolster local adoption and use of standards. First, every LEA must sign a "Declarations of Alignment to State Standards," which holds the LEA accountable for ensuring that every student has an opportunity to learn the academic standards. Second, a multi-year, phased approach will be followed, in which work will intensify as the focus shifts from general adoption to subjects with difficult standards to master and low performing schools. Third, professional development and resource provision will be both web-based and in-person. The web-based support will be via the already established IDEAL portal and the in-person support via "standards specialists" who will work out of the regional centers.

Shifting to the assessment side, the implementation plan is bolstered by new legislation (HB 2211), which was passed in 2008 and established the Arizona Instructional Management System (AIMS) Task Force. Notable recommendations from the Task Force included maintaining the AIMS' reading, mathematics and writing tests as graduating requirements, but having future tests focus on college- and career-readiness; replacing the norm-referenced test (currently TerraNova) administered in 9th grade with a college and career potential test; and establishing a future high school graduation endorsement that signifies student readiness for college and career.

A multi-year implementation plan is presented for the new assessment system. During the process, the current system will have to be maintained while the new system is adopted. The Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform again will be at the focal point for implementation. Data and assessment specialists will be hired to disseminate information and provide training on the new summative, interim and formative assessments. Showing good prioritization, the plan calls for special attention to those LEAs with persistently low-achieving schools. By the second year, the products from the assessment collaborative (i.e., PARCC) should begin coming on line for piloting and dissemination. Jumping to 2014, Arizona intends to have its new assessment system fully functional. In addition to drawing on the expertise of PARCC, Arizona wisely intends to draw on the National Assessment Advisory Council and a State Assessment Advisory Council.

The reduction in points is because the details are sparse on the walk from policy implementation to changes in classroom behavior, especially related to assessment. Given the complication of getting busy teachers to take on new practices, especially in areas as technical as student assessment data, clear contingency plans and extra support steps are necessary to ensure effective implementation.

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(B)(3) -- The Arizona presentation team amplified aspects of the proposal that are designed to help principals and teachers with the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. The team underscored the theory of action and its two building blocks to ensure effective implementation: web-based resources and tools; and the regional resource centers. In both cases, specific personnel are charged with providing virtual and in-person coaching, support and guidance. At the state policy level, careful attention is

being paid to how the new standards and assessments can be adopted and implemented at the LEA and school level. Indeed, the Mesa superintendent gave examples in the presentation--drawn from the proposal--of how his district's teachers are already being guided to crosswalk from the old to new standards and align these with new assessments. Thus, the score in this section has been increased.

Total	70	65	68	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	**24**	**18**	**18**	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona earns 18 points out of a possible 24 points for "fully implementing a statewide longitudinal system" [(C)(1)]. The proposal indicates that the State has met nine of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. Three elements are not yet fully functional:

1. Element #8 – *A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students.* Reviewer Interpretation: The expanded Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) will have this functionality, but not yet.
2. Element #9 – *Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.* Reviewer Interpretation: This type of information is being phased-in, but is not complete yet.
3. Element #10 – *Student-level college readiness test scores.* Reviewer Interpretation: Future state tests will address this element.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**3**	**5**	[redacted]

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona is moving briskly to ensure key stakeholders are "accessing and using state data." Arizona has dedicated significant resources over the past three years to re-chart its education data management system. At the heart of the solution is the Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW). Highlights include a system with over 60 student related measures and availability via a web-based portal, which over 200 education stakeholders and researchers have already been trained to use.

The State has solid plans for expanding AEDW and its use. The first step is to enhance data quality, access and utility. Arguably most important to this end is a new governance authority for education data, established by HB 2733 (in 2010). The law established the Arizona Education Data Governance Commission to oversee all aspects of education data systems. Wise priorities of the commission will be to improve the existing system technically, to build an infrastructure for the system in rural and high poverty areas, and to provide single sign-on access to student level data. Impressive in this push is a governmental inter-agency move to leverage the "State of Arizona Counties Communications Network" to be the technical bridge to a rural education data infrastructure.

A second prominent piece is plans for using the system to inform decision makers. One approach will be to customize data dashboards for a diverse set of users, thereby increasing access and use. Wisely seeing the web-portal as essential to decision makers, the Education Data Commission will regularly seek stakeholder feedback on how to make the portal more user-friendly and relevant. Of final note is a thoughtful plan for "multi-level continuous improvement seminars," which will be offered on-line and in-person to train coaches to follow-up at the LEA and school level on the use of AEDW data and information.

On the whole, Arizona has produced a comprehensive plan for improving access and use of AEDW. The lingering concern, and the one that keeps the State's plan from being entirely high quality, is that more

evidence and examples are needed in the proposal for how school level coaching and support will get local level educators to access and use the new and upgraded systems for data and information.

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(C)(2) -- The Arizona presentation team mitigated this reviewer's concerns about how school level coaching and support would get local level educators to access and use the new and upgraded systems for data and information. The presentation underscored that, through both web-based technology and in-person support emanating from the regional support centers, school level personnel would receive coordinated and regular coaching and assistance in the use of data. Moreover, the Mesa superintendent raised up examples in the proposal for how time already is being arranged in his district, as well as others, to allow teachers to work in teams to understand and apply data from the AEDW.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**13**	**13**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	3	3	

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

"Using data to improve instruction" [(C)(3)] is a strong point for Arizona. In terms of scoring, the State is in the high range on two of the three sub-criteria and in the midrange on the third sub-criteria. This solid performance emanates from a good history of many LEAs using instructional improvement systems. For instance, over 110 LEAs of varying sizes adopted the same instructional improvement system developed at the local level over 10 years ago. More recently, the Arizona Charter Schools Association launched a comprehensive performance management system known as "Success Center Online." The State intends to use RTTT funding to build on these and other inroads it has made in encouraging the use of data to improve instruction.

(C)(3)(i)

Arizona has set a full coverage plan to increase the acquisition, adoption and use of local instructional improvement systems. The thoughtful plan has three parts. First, the State will survey LEAs to see what systems are being used and the degree of satisfaction with these systems. Second, the survey findings will be used to establish system quality standards and guidance for LEAs. Stakeholder groups will be assembled to assist with the creation of standards and guidelines. When LEAs acquire new systems, they will have to document that they meet the standards and guidelines. Third, the ADE staff and assessment and data specialists from the Regional Centers will assist LEA staff in implementing systems. A continuous improvement cycle will be instituted to guide adoption, implementation, use and correction. The only weakness in this section is that more details are needed on how the close work with LEAs will occur and what are contingency plans if the continuous improvement cycle fails to facilitate effective front-line use.

(C)(3)(ii)

Arizona shifts in this section to make an excellent case for how it will support LEAs and schools in the use of instructional improvement systems. A clever theory of action is based on the concept of peer modeling and mentoring. The State intends to convene the LEAs recognized for solid work with instructional improvement systems. The intent will be to collect information and share lessons on best practices. Mentor districts then will be established from this set of excelling districts. LEA data coaches also will be established, drawing from TFA alumni with good data analysis skills who will work with school data teams. This creative design takes the implementation effort right to the school level, and in a team-based fashion. The only lingering issue with this plan is the ratio of data coaches to schools—the heaviness of the

workload—and contingency plans for getting school-level data use moving if even the mentoring and coaching do not work.

(C)(3)(iii)

Arizona is in the midrange of scoring with its plans to make data available to researchers. The centerpiece is the compelling University Research Center for Innovation and Reform, which provides a venue for multiple research institutions and researchers to coordinate their inquiry and evaluation of school reform in Arizona. The plan as presented in the proposal entails enhancing access privilege components to facilitate more use by researchers; establishing a research agenda relevant to RTTT initiatives and student achievement goals, especially as they relate to approaches for educating different types of students; and, publishing reports and information from the State and LEA data systems. These three elements are exactly right in that they promote access, get researchers working in a coordinated fashion, and promote the production of usable knowledge. Each element will be facilitated in practice by the structure and organization of the University Center for Innovation and Reform.

Despite these strengths, the outline of work is too limited for such a major proposal. Little more detail than what has been summarized in this review is presented in the proposal. At least two important concerns emerge as a result of the brevity. First, Arizona has monitored closely who has access to student data and for what purposes. Going forward, the State intends to broaden access, but no explanation is provided as to how the expansion will occur and how many new research entities or researchers are likely to be provided access. Second, it is not clear how much flexibility and autonomy researchers will have in pursuing evaluation topics and questions. Arizona is wise to develop a priority research agenda, but it is not apparent in the proposal what standards will be followed to ensure that researchers are free to tackle issues that are essential to student learning, but may challenge State policy and practice.

Total	47	34	36	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**11**	**13**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	2	2	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	2	4	[redacted]

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona's RTTT proposal carries the powerful through-line of "focusing everything on the effectiveness of instruction...Each policy, each partnership and each practice is shaped to maximize the impact of instruction on student learning." Unfortunately, the State does at best a midrange job at conveying the extent of plans for "providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals" [(D)(1)]. The presentation starts strongly, but weakens with the final two sub-criteria.

(D)(1)(i)

Arizona meets all five elements in the RTTT definition of "alternative routes to certification" [(D)(1)(i)]: providers may be from various sectors, even independent of higher education; the programs are selective; they entail supervised, school-based experiences; there are limitations to coursework requirements through test-out options; and, the certification awarded is comparable to that from traditional paths.

(D)(1)(ii)

The actual use of alternative pathways in Arizona appears to be limited, resulting in a low score on this criterion. Summary data presented in the proposal is less than clear: a key table reportedly includes duplicative counts across several preparation programs, making it hard to understand the total numbers of teachers produced through alternative pathways. The only programs producing sizeable numbers of teachers are Arizona State College of Teacher Education, Rio Salado College and TFA, which respectively generated 161, 135 and 184 teachers in 2008-09 (unfortunately, each of these counts are duplicative, according to the proposal). Only TFA is an arguably "non-higher education provider," even though all TFA teachers come from elite colleges and universities (albeit most on a non-educator track or major).

No programs for principals are listed or discussed in this section, reducing the State's score. The criteria call for comparable attention to teacher and principal routes to certification.

(D)(1)(iii)

Arizona has a basic system in place for tracking teacher and principal shortages [(D)(1)(iii)]. A good aspect of this section of the proposal is reference to a recent study on supply and demand by Arizona State that has been used to inform Arizona's understanding of shortage areas. A mix of major initiatives has been launched in response to these shortages. Evidence in the proposal, however, does not indicate that these have been assembled into a systematic approach nor have they been highly productive in addressing shortages. Again, this section fails to address the issue of principal shortages. All in all, the State scores in the low range on this criterion.

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(D)(1)(iii) -- The Arizona presentation team raised up aspects of the proposal such that it is well coordinated on tracking and addressing teacher shortages. This addressed the concerns this reviewer had at the point of Tier One scoring. Still not addressed, however, is the issue of principal shortages. The overall score in Tier Two moves into the high end of the midrange.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**45**	**52**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	12	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	18	25	[redacted]

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona is impressive with its plans to "improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance" [(D)(2)]. The State scores in the high range on all but one part of this criterion.

(D)(2)(i)

Arizona will measure student growth for all students based on a version of the Colorado Growth Model, which was developed by Damien Betebenner of the National Center for the Improvement of Education Assessment. Arizona is wise to draw on this proven model, and provides a clarion explanation of how the model works and what it measures. The State has signed an MOU to follow-through on this model development, which is secured by mandates from new state legislation (SB1040).

(D)(2)(ii)

Arizona brings a good purpose to "designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals" [(D)(2)(ii)]. The State underscores that educators need "regular, actionable feedback on improving student learning." Backed up by new legislation (SB1040), Arizona is

committed to having excellent performance evaluation by the 2012-13 school year. As much as 33-50 percent of teacher and principal performance will be based on student growth.

The State has set out a solid plan with several key steps. First, with broad stakeholder involvement, model frameworks will be developed for teacher and principal evaluation. A state board of education task force will be convened to establish the framework. The proposed criteria for the framework are spot on: include at least four levels of performance; use protocols for high-quality, valid and reliable assessments to measure quantitative student growth; provide recommendations for expanding state testing to allow for effective use of growth measures; and, identify other measures of teacher and leader effectiveness beyond quantitative measures of student growth, such as observations of classrooms (for teachers) or observations of effective leadership practices (for principals). Second, the State will implement the model frameworks. Most important in this design is the commitment to collaboration with teachers and principals in the development and continual improvement of the local evaluation instrument. Of similar value is the proposed Educator Effectiveness Unit, to be housed within the ADE. Together, these two elements should ensure front-line commitment with state-wide monitoring and accountability in the design and use of teacher and leader performance evaluation systems.

Arizona scores in the high range for this criterion. The only loss of points is that the plan largely proposes additional planning that will be required instead of outlining what will be directly implemented. This leaves some questions for reviewers about what likely will occur with RTTT support.

(D)(2)(iii)

Arizona scores at the top level on this criterion. The recently passed SB1040 requires LEAs to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals. Similarly, the legislation commits LEAs to base the evaluations in substantial part (anywhere from 33 percent to 50 percent) on student growth results. The State's goal is to have annual evaluations based in part on student growth models operational by the 2012-13 school year.

(D)(2)(iv)

Arizona has positioned itself well through SB1040 to gradually move towards using teacher and principal evaluations to inform a set of key decisions. Right away, the State will move to establish professional development for all those conducting and receiving evaluations. The State's theory of action requires that evaluations be followed by school-based, job-embedded coaching/induction support or targeted professional development designed to improve instructional effectiveness. The focus of this approach compliments leading research on best practices in both evaluation and effective professional development.

Using evaluations for high stakes decisions—compensation, promotion, tenure, removal or termination—will take longer to achieve. Notably, the language in SB1040 shifts at this point to "encourage," rather than "require," and establishes a series of rigorous, participatory processes to establish guidelines and pilots to maximize approaches to decision making on compensation, tenure and removal.

The submitted performance measures for this criterion indicate that flexibility increases as the personnel decisions move from modest to high stakes. For instance, 100 percent of teachers and principals should be using evaluations to inform professional development by the 2012-13 school year; in contrast the other four decision purposes will take until 2013-14 to achieve 100 percent participation. The targets on the four high stakes areas are curious, in that they jump from 20-25 percent participation in 2012-13 to 100 percent the very next school year. It is not apparent how Arizona will make a four-fold jump in participation in only one year, after a slow run-up in the preceding two years.

All things considered, Arizona scores in the midrange on this criterion. The plans and likely attainment are strong at the start of the section, but then trail off as the stakes for the personnel decisions increase. This may well be a wise reading of reality. However, it means that the plans are not as bold as necessary relative to the RTTT criteria.

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(D)(2)(iv) -- The Arizona presentation team gave a major boost to its score in this section. The team clearly stated, building on aspects of the proposal, that it has legislative and LEA policy commitment to using student growth data as a key factor in evaluating principal and teacher performance and making tough personnel decisions. The coherence across team members on this question served to convince this reviewer that the state deserves a high score for its plans to use evaluations to inform important decisions--as the RTTT criterion requires.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**11**	**19**	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8	11	[redacted]
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	3	8	[redacted]

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(3)(i)

Arizona makes a reasonable case for its work and plans regarding the distribution of teachers and principals in high poverty and high minority schools [(D)(3)(i)]. It shows commitment to the need to achieve excellence in teaching and leadership for all of the State's students and schools. Teach for America has been the primary vehicle for addressing equitable distribution of high quality teachers to high-poverty and high minority schools. Similarly, the Rodel Exemplary Teacher Initiative has attempted to address distribution issues.

Most promising is the fledging "Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution" project, which entails a comprehensive study of key school, teacher and student indicators to identify the equitable distribution patterns in Title I and Non-Title I schools. Twenty-five districts are part of the study, reaching 663 schools and nearly 24,000 teachers. Results from the study will be used to guide intensive workshops in the 25 LEAs for how to improve equitable distribution.

Arizona also plans to improve its teacher and leader pipeline. With the range of providers broadened by State Law (HB2298), Arizona intends to create a recruitment fund for districts to encourage them to add in special recruitment programs. One hope is that the TFA and Rodel Programs will expand their presence through the fund.

On the other hand, much of the work has been through philanthropic initiatives that are on the margin of the majority of work. In addition, the dependence on Teach for America as the source of high quality teachers is not analyzed in terms of the persistence of these teachers in Arizona schools and the likelihood that TFA can produce ample numbers to broadly address quality issues.

From a principal standpoint, Arizona's plans are sparse. One highlight is to expand the Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project to encompass principal equity and the use of evaluation results. Otherwise, little is offered for improving the distribution of principals.

The State scores in the mid-range ultimately for this criterion. The commitment is clear, but the dependence on philanthropic and marginal solutions, as well as the thin attention to principal distribution, brings the score down.

(D)(3)(ii)

Arizona's plans are not well developed regarding the provision of human capital in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas [(D)(3)(ii)]. The State rightly flags HB2298, which opened teacher and principal pipelines to additional providers, as an important vehicle for improving the supply pipeline of teachers in STEM, special education and language instruction. New providers alone, however, will not ensure that supply increases without other actions and incentives. One of Arizona's proposed actions is to create a fund similar to the one discussed above, but in this case encourage districts to recruit proven programs for

teacher recruitment, selection and preparation in shortage areas. The State also proposes to focus the Rodel Exemplary Teachers Program on math, science and special education. Ultimately, these are limited actions relative to a significant labor market challenge.

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(D)(3)(i)(ii) -- The Arizona presentation team did a good job of convincing this reviewer that the state deserves high scores relative to both of the criterion dealing with equitable distribution of effective principals and teachers. The team made clear that legislative actions and RTTT governance and oversight structures--all described in the proposal--will be essential to ensuring that the early innovations that philanthropy and private initiatives have sparked eventually become adopted by public funding and action.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**6**	**10**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	4	5	[redacted]
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	2	5	[redacted]

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(4)(i)(ii)

Arizona tackles the area of "improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs" [(D)(4)(i)(ii)] with a two-pronged approach. First, it will analyze and report the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs. Second it will provide incentives to expand those with proven effectiveness. The foundation for this approach is "T-Prep," a collaborative project among several major Arizona universities, pre-K-12 schools, state government and business partners. In its third year of implementation, with funding from the Arizona Community Foundation, T-Prep has developed an assessment model to study teacher effectiveness and provide feedback to teacher preparation programs, teachers, schools and state policymakers.

Based on T-Prep, Arizona will convene an expert advisory council to develop a comprehensive system for evaluating teacher and principal preparation programs, which will draw on results of the Arizona Growth Model. Annual reports will be provided from the evaluation system.

A related program of note in Arizona is the Sanford Education Project, which is a collaboration of Arizona State and TFA. Arizona State is adopting TFA's most successful tools to its university undergraduate program to make major changes in the way it trains and supports future K-12 teachers. The Sanford Project will not just facilitate the changes; it will track graduates to see what difference they make in schools and with student performance. With 5,000 students, Arizona State has the largest undergraduate teacher education program in the nation. The Sanford Project could have major impact on teacher preparation in Arizona and nationwide.

The expansion piece for quality programs will come through a replication fund for Arizona colleges and universities to adopt model programs. The proposed fund will provide support to three higher education institutions to adopt effective programs and practices from the model programs identified by the expert advisory panel. Ideally, the fund will help institutions draw on the best of T-Prep and the Sanford Project.

Unfortunately, these plans are too thin. Arizona is wise to build on the innovative T-Prep model and the impressive Sanford Project. For a proposal of this magnitude, however, the plans and analysis are too limited and lacking in depth. For instance, there is no explanation of how the findings will translate into new practice beyond what the replication fund can launch. With the replication fund, there is no discussion of how significant the three funded programs will be at sparking change within their own institutions or statewide at other universities. Lastly, there is no analysis for how the replication fund will operate after RTTT funds are expended. On the whole, Arizona scores in the midrange on the first criterion, but falls into the low range on the second criterion.

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(D)(4)(i)(ii) -- The Arizona presentation team did a good job of convincing this reviewer that the state deserves high scores relative to both of the criterion dealing with improving the effectiveness of principal and teacher preparation programs. The team made clear that the university research centers, which are featured in the proposal, are designed to be the centerpiece of advancing the quality of principal and teacher preparation programs through data-based evaluation and interventions. Three of the state's flagship higher education institutions are leading these centers, and they are a specific element in the overall "theory of action organizational chart and map" guiding Arizona's RTTT work. In addition, as noted earlier, the RTTT governance and oversight structures will be essential to ensuring that the early innovations that philanthropy and private initiatives have sparked eventually become adopted by public funding and action.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**11**	**16**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	8	8	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	3	8	[redacted]

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(D)(5)(i)

Arizona scores in the high range for "providing effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals" [(D)(5)(i)]. The state has developed an excellent mechanism for service delivery through its Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. Now, working in partnership with LEAs, higher education and nonprofit and business partners, Arizona will advance its support structure and programs to a higher level. Significantly, the priority will be new teachers and principals, especially in low achieving schools.

The State will create a teacher induction program for teachers who are new to the profession and serving in high poverty schools. The program's components are well designed to provide full support and coverage. Mentors and master teachers will be essential to supporting the new teachers and will be carefully selected and trained, as well as provided stipends and release time. The mentors and new teachers will have common planning time. The program will be guided by the Arizona professional teaching standards, ensuring assessment and accountability is substantive and relevant.

New principals are targeted for induction support as well. They will be buoyed by an expanded executive coach and training program. A creative idea drawing the best from other sectors, the executive coach model will help prepare the new principals to be both strong mangers and academic leaders. Aligning with models of best practice for principal development, the program will map to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards and use a cohort model, which ensures the formation of important peer networks.

Arizona is to be applauded for its creativity and cross-sector reach in plans to support new teachers and principals.

(D)(5)(ii)

Arizona has the outlines of a good approach in this section, but falls short in the extent of evidence offered for how well the plans are likely to work. In addition, the State fails to show how the various studies and evaluations will be applied to make improvements in support programs. The proposed plans, while sparse, are clear on the conducting of rigorous statistical studies, as well as reporting on changes to individual teacher and principal evaluation results over time. The next action step—how these findings will translate into programmatic changes or new policies—is not addressed.

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

(D)(5)(ii) -- The Arizona presentation team advanced its score relative to this criterion into the high range. Echoing points made earlier, the team clarified that the university research centers, which are featured in the proposal, will be the focal point of continuously improving principal and teacher support programs through data-based evaluation and interventions. The centers are central to the overall theory of action plan and map for the Arizona's RTTT work, ensuring that its evaluation and improvement functions are coordinated with the rest of state's reform plans.

Total	138	84	110	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	**10**	**10**	**10**	

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona receives full points for the criterion "intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs" [(E)(1)]. Based on evidence in the proposal, the State has full authority to intervene directly in both LEAs and schools.

The one exception to the State's intervention authority is with Tribal Schools, which comprise one of three failing Arizona schools. Owing to well known historical factors, and fundamentally different legal and jurisdictional structures, "the needs of these schools will require significant research and tribal government and community consultations. Efforts to change education policies for tribal schools must include thoughtful, respectful consultation with parents, students, community and education leaders, and tribal government." Arizona is thoughtful to present its proposal with such nuanced attention to the needs and concerns of its Native American students and families.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona is superb regarding the criterion "turning around the lowest-achieving schools" [(E)(2)]. The presentation starts and ends powerfully.

(E)(2)(i)

Arizona has a definite stance and approach for "identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools" [(E)(2)(i)]. The State has established a process to identify what it calls "Persistently Lowest-Achieving" (PLA) schools. The definition and criteria were approved by the US Department of Education as part of the School Improvement Grant process. In February 2010, the Arizona Department of Education announced 30 schools in PLA status. Interestingly, 15 of the 30 are charter schools, and another 10 are on reservations or have high proportions of Native American students.

(E)(2)(ii)

Arizona has an excellent plan for "supporting its LEAs in turning around schools..." [(E)(2)(ii)]. The plan is multi-faceted and draws on experience. Most impressive, it is nuanced to address the State's diverse populations and varied jurisdictions. Several aspects of the plan standout:

1. A clear focus on improving achievement in persistently low-performing schools.

2. Definite attention to raising achievement of Native American students and closing achievement gaps by implementing a strong consultation model; sharing evidenced-based practices among tribal communities and educators; leveraging charter school and tribal college experiences to develop K-12 models for tribal communities.
3. A commitment to identify, disseminate and replicate what works by providing support to LEAs and PLA schools to implement one of the four turnaround models; building a pipeline of turnaround teachers and leaders; coordination of capacity building and community support for children and youth in high-need Native American communities.

The proposal presents excellent details on action plans, timelines and partners to achieve each of these goals. More than any other part of the proposal, this section connects goals, objectives, targets, educators, external partners, capacity building, the four RTTT priorities, and evaluation systems to present a coherent and fully considered plan.

Total	50	50	50	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(1)(i)

Arizona has struggled to close what it describes as "catastrophic, record-setting budget shortfalls and imposed Draconian cuts in vital government programs and services." Nevertheless, the State has protected the share of the state budget going to education. Total dollars dropped between FY08 and FY09 by about $466 million—a decrease of nearly nine percent. At the same time, the share of the budget going to education rose from 53.5 percent to 59.5 percent. Thus, Arizona scores in the high range for this criterion, since "the proportion of total revenues available to the State that were used to support elementary and secondary, and public higher education, increased from FY08 to FY09."

(F)(1)(ii)

Similarly, the proposal provides sound evidence that Arizona's "policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs, and within LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools" [(F)(1)(ii)].

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**36**	**36**	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	8	8	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8	8	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	6	6	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	6	6	

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona has an exceptional record with the charter school movement. According to evidence provided in the proposal, it has the second largest number of charters nationally, has one of the fastest growth rates and serves one of the largest populations attending charter schools. Clearly, the state is highly dedicated to "ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools" [(F)(2)].

(F)(2)(i)

Arizona's charter school law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists. Thus, the State earns full points for this criterion.

(F)(2)(ii)

Arizona also earns a perfect score for setting and abiding by rigorous standards and accountability systems regarding charters [(F)(2)(ii)]. Arizona law empowers the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), State Board of Education and local school districts to authorize and oversee the charter schools they sponsor. The bulk of charters are sponsored by the ASBCS; the state board no longer authorizes new charters. Since inception, the ASBCS has approved 413 of the 609 charter applications it has received. It has revoked the contracts for 12 charter schools.

The ASBCS has a comprehensive review and oversight system, which examines all key governance, management, financial, academic, facility and extracurricular aspects of a charter school proposal and the charter school in action. All charters go through an extensive five-year review and an annual independent audit; they also submit an annual performance report.

(F)(2)(iii)(iv)

Arizona's funding for charters meets RTTT's criterion that "a state's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools" [(F)(2)(iii)]. Similarly, the State meets RTTT's criterion that it provide charter schools with facilities assistance [(F)(2)(iv)]. In Arizona's case, the financial assistance is in the form of zoning amendments and property tax relief.

(F)(2)(v)

Regarding support for "innovative, autonomous public schools" [(F)(2)(v)], Arizona provides a good explanation of the more than 170 alternative schools operating across the state. The evidence in the proposal indicates that all but two of the required elements for "innovative, autonomous public schools" are met by these schools. No explanation can be found that these schools have the authority to hire or fire personnel, or to control their budgets. Such may be the case, but reviewers need evidence to ascertain if this is true. Arizona does score in the high range, however, since it otherwise makes a strong case for its support of "innovative, autonomous public schools."

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

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona scores in the high range for "demonstrating other significant reform conditions" [(F)(3)]. An intriguing set of reform efforts is listed, all of which are central to work related to the RTTT priorities. Two of particular note--teacher career ladders and promotion of National Board for Professional Teaching Standards--are good examples of the State's overarching commitment to advance teacher quality prior to and separate from RTTT. Unfortunately, little evidence is provided for how the various efforts and initiatives have improved student outcomes.

Total	55	49	49	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	**15**	**15**	**15**	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona does a good job of featuring STEM throughout the proposal. Indeed, at the outset and at subsequent pivotal points, the proposal highlights promoting STEM careers and jobs as a joint priority of the RTTT proposal and economic development leaders in Arizona. Within each of the four RTTT priorities, Arizona discusses how STEM will be advanced.

In terms of the specific elements of the STEM criterion, Arizona provides definite plans that are systematic and multi-faceted. The call for a rigorous STEM course of study would be met by an expansion of STEM related AP courses and related increases in professional development for AP teachers. Such an effort would provide a capstone set of courses for Arizona's stronger students and make it possible for even more students to pursue AP courses and credit. Cooperation with STEM partners would occur in a variety of ways, both at the statewide level in pushing policies that advance STEM education and related economic development, and at the local level in internships and special courses and programs for students. STEM partners will be essential as the higher education sector expands its capacity to offer STEM course work and conduct STEM research and evaluation.

Arizona proposes several ways that more students would be prepared for study and careers in STEM, including those students, such as girls and women, who typically are underrepresented in the STEM arena. A graduate research fellowship program would be established, with special attention to underrepresented students. An ongoing statewide initiative (i.e, SFAz STEM) will be expanded to ensure that a wide range of students are taking a rigorous course of study in STEM related areas. Pathway programs also are supported such that students have coordinated in-school courses and out-of-class activities that promote STEM careers. For instance, the Rural Engineering Pathway was developed in a particular rural county to provide early college and international industry certifications to high school students in local community colleges.

In sum, Arizona earns 15 points for its STEM plans. They are woven throughout the proposal and they are tied together well in this closing section.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		**Yes**	**Yes**	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Arizona presents a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda. The planning for RTTT has brought together diverse stakeholders, including representatives of traditional and charter schools, higher education, elected officials, business, philanthropy, Native American tribes and innovative educational agencies and programs. Several pieces of new reform legislation were adopted this year addressing alternative certification for teachers and leaders, new teacher and principal evaluation, a systemic approach to managing education, and new efforts and measures regarding the achievement gap. Despite serious statewide financial challenges, and major budget cuts, the state has increased the percentage of support for public education, and passed an emergency stop-gap 1.0 percent sales tax.

Building on reform experiences, the state will focus RTTT on "effective instruction for all students," by pushing leaders to support and hold accountable teachers, and by securing extensive support from partners. Similar clarity will be provided for RTTT by intensive attention to preparing students for careers and jobs in STEM. Lastly, definite benchmark points for gauging progress have been established in 3rd, 8th and 10th grade.

Arizona presents an impressive theory of action for RTTT. Four definite strategies frame the theory of action, across which the four RTTT priorities are met.

- Strategy 1 addresses public policy, through which standards and assessment, data systems, teacher and leader quality, and school turnaround are advanced by state law and regulation.
- Strategy 2 strengthens and aligns partners—LEAs, charters, higher education, business and community—to take advantage of the new policy environment to bring each of the four RTTT priorities to life.
- Strategy 3 sets the transition year targets (3rd, 8th and 10th), with attention to the antecedents required if goals are to be met by each of these measurement points.
- Strategy Four systematically increases the education system's attention to STEM, linking the work directly to ongoing efforts and plans to rebuild Arizona's economy around science, technology and engineering.

On the other hand, the proposal has a couple of notable weaknesses. As documented in the budget, many of the RTTT reforms will depend on sub-contracting and letting of RFPs to agencies yet to be determined. Not addressed is whether there is enough quality in the pool of contractors (national and state based) to take on all of this work at a high level.

Of similar concern is that Arizona does not discuss in any detail the sustainability of the work to be started or boosted by RTTT funding. The Governor and other elected officials reportedly are committed to continuing key RTTT work. However, there is no explanation provided for how that will occur, other than to promise that "the Governor, Legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction, SBE, Board of Regents and philanthropic and business communities [will formulate plans] to implement a long-term commitment to RTTT success."

Ultimately, Arizona does an impressive job of designing a reform plan that reflects well its unique demographic, geographic and educational characteristics. As listed in the proposal, each of these characteristics is directly addressed by elements of the State's RTTT plans:

- While the sixth largest state in square miles, Arizona is the 14th largest in population, *requiring web-based reform tools that can span great distance.*
- Although 98 percent of the state is considered rural, 70 percent of the population resides in urban areas, and Phoenix is now the nation's fifth largest city, *requiring reform approaches that work in underresourced urban schools and communities.*
- Public school enrollment is growing faster in Arizona than in all but one other state. From 2000 to 2008, the school population rose by roughly 20 percent (from 840,000 to 1.04 million). *Reforms in a growth climate must create common standards and assessments so that there is a high-level touchstone for all new to the schools.*
- Arizona is home to the nation's largest Native American population, with 30 percent of the state's lands in "Indian Country," which legally is a separate jurisdiction from Arizona. Latinos also are a major force in Arizona, comprising 40 percent of the student population. *Reforms must address the varying needs of students and families, and the significant historical and legal aspects of a state's unique populations.*

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	384	435	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Arizona Application #2100AZ-8

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**62**	**65**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	42	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15	15	

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

A.1.i The guiding force behind Arizona's education transformation is the urgent need to prepare students to be leaders in a new economy that highly values knowledge and skills, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The plan seeks to realize dramatic improvement in educational outcomes for Arizona students by focusing on college-and career-readiness as the goals for high school graduates, with multiple pathways to earn a diploma and with intense focus on student achievement at the transition years-3rd, 8th and 10th grades, and at high school and college levels. Arizona's plan focuses on four strategies. Strategy I. Strengthen Policy, addresses the four policies need to improve instruction: Standards and Assessment, Data Systems to Support Instruction, Great Teachers and Leaders, and Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools. Strategy 2. Strengthening and Aligning Performance, seeks to establish new partnerships with local districts and charter schools. Strategy 3. Target the Transition Years, attends to the need to pay attention to transition years' performance benchmarks in determining progress. Strategy 4. Increase the Focus on STEM, ensures that students have the opportunities to develop talents needed to be competitive in Arizona's new economy. The implementation of each of these strategies unite to provide a comprehensive and coherent reform plan that clearly articulates the goals for implementing reform.

A.1.ii.a The MOU asks for full participation of the LEAs if they signed on. They have willingly agreed to participate in all aspects detailed in the Scope of Work as well as evaluations conducted by the State and the U.S. Department of Education. Signatures were obtained from all of the 389 participating LEAs. This is 63% of the total numbers of LEAs (616) in the State.

A.1.ii.b The Arizona Department of Education was asked to verify that the goals described in the common MOU were aligned to the work described in the application. In the Scope of Work document, the participating LEAS certify that they have all requisite powers and authority to execute the MOU. The Scope of Work clearly delineates the responsibilities of the LEAs, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), and joint responsibilities of the LEAs and the MDE. The number of committed LEAs is especially important since all participating schools have agreed to implement an aggressive set of policy and procedural changes. These include the Arizona Growth Model as one of the multiple measures in evaluating and compensating teachers and leaders; working in partnerships with the State, to turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools and increase the number of students who are taught by effective teachers.

A.1.ii.c The 389 LEAs who are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans represent 1,723 schools with a K-12 student population of 997,098. This is 92% of the total K-12 student population in the State. Arizona obtained nearly statewide support for local education agencies. These LEAS also represent over 92% of all K-12 students in poverty. Although the signature of the School Board President was not

mandatory, 95% of Board Presidents signed on to support the Superintendent's decision to join in Arizona's Race to the Top efforts. Furthermore 75 separate local teachers' union leaders signed MOUs. This represents 50% of locally elected union leaders. As was stated in the application "This was especially important because not all school districts in Arizona are members of teachers' unions and neither are the charter schools." Assistance given by the the Arizona Education Association (representing 34,000 teachers statewide) on the wording of the MOU was especially helpful in gaining the support of so many locally elected presidents.

In reviewing the preceding criteria, it is clear that there is a strong commitment by participating LEAs to the State's plan and that the LEAs are informed of their responsibilities. Although 50% of the LEAs that have locally elected union leaders signed MOUs, it would have been helpful to know why more leaders were not involved. Might this affect the implementation of the reforms?

A.1.iii. Arizona believes that its achievement goals are ambitious but attainable. They align with the goals the Arizona Board of Regents set in its 2020 Vision Plan to increase postsecondary participation in state universities and transform higher education in Arizona. The Summary Table provided for criteria A 1.iii indicates that 63% (389) of the 616 state LEAs are participating. This number represents 82% (1,723) of the total number (2,107) of LEAs and will serve 92% of K-12 students and 92% of students in poverty.

A.1.iii.a Examples of increasing student achievement: Mathematics, Grade 4: In 2009, Arizona, ELL 4th grade students scored significantly higher (201) than their peers nationally (195). Grade 8: Hispanic students showed a significant increase in scale scores in 2009 (274) versus 2005 (268). In Reading, Grade 4: Arizona Hispanic students who make up 45% of the Grade 4 population, showed a significant increase in average scale scores between 2002 (188) and 2009 (198). They also showed a significant increase in or at above proficient level between 2002 and 2009 (10%-14%). Grade 8: Arizona Hispanic students, who make up 42% of the Grade 8 population, scored significantly higher in 2009 (246) than in 2007 (241) and are not significantly different from their peers in the nation.

A.1.iii.b According to test results, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, migrant, African-American and Native American students have made great progress in "closing the gap" separating them and their peers. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards) (AIMS) data point to strong increases in student achievement across grades and subject areas by Hispanic students who comprise roughly 40% of the state's student population. Data also indicates that economically disadvantaged students, migrant, African-American and Native American students have made great progress in "closing the gap" in elementary and middle school math and reading.

A,1.iii,c,d Arizona seeks to realize a high school graduation rate of 93% by 2020, with an interim RTTT benchmark of 82% by 2014. Concerning recent high school graduates entering Arizona public universities, the goal is an increase from 45% in 2008 to 60% in 2020 . The freshman retention rate aims at an increase from 78% in 2008 to 86% in 2020, and the 6-year graduation rate from public colleges and universities is projected to increase from 56% in 2008 to 65% in 2020.

The responses to Criteria A.1.i,ii,iii are encouraging indicators of the State's commitment to the goals of Race to the Top. t

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

During the Panel discussion, the percentage of signatures of elected union leaders who signed the MOU's (50%) was discussed. The particular role of unions in Arizona was explained. The fact that not all districts in Arizona and charter schools are members of teachers' unions also clarified a degree of commitment that satisfied this reviewer.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**29**	**30**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	9	10	

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The capacity of the state to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans has been addressed by the following measures.

A.2.i Arizona's strong leadership in education begins with the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Education who provide committed leadership across the spectrum of P-20 education issues. Arizona's education leaders will provide oversight and accountability through a new Race to the Top (RTTT) Education Board to ensure overarching accountability in implementing the reforms detailed in the application. By selecting members to the RTTT Board from the gubernatorial appointed members of the Arizona State Board of Education, the Board of Regents, and the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, the State proposes to link its oversight management to the State's high ranking education policy board. The members of these boards represent diverse backgrounds and regions of the state. The Board also includes a member from the Early Childhood and Health Board and a community college member. The Chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees will also be members of the RTTT Board. The RTTT Board will be advised by the Governors' P-12 Coordination Council and the Arizona Department of Education will provide leadership and dedicated teams to confirm that statewide implementation is conducted in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

A.2.i.b The Arizona State Board of Education and its partners will be responsible for providing support and assistance to LEAs in their implementation of the State's RTTT Reform Plan. The ADE will ensure that the grants to LEAs are implemented with fidelity and accountability. To provide support and assistance to RTTT LEAs the ADA will employ a two pronged strategy: 1) Expand Existing Web-Based Technologies, and 2) Create Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform. The State will use its web-based professional portal, Integrated Data to Enhance Arizona's Learning (IDEAL), developed in partnership with Arizona State University to provide instructional resources and on-line training to Arizona educators. The State will use IDEAL's group e-mail functions to disseminate information directly and IDEAL's professional development and resources capability to provide support and assistance in implementing plans in each of the four federal reforms priority areas. Strategy 2 will enable Arizona to establish six regional centers with RTTT funds to ensure that local support and technical assistance are available to all LEAs in the State. Because these Centers will be located regionally and staffed with local educators who know the local content, they will be uniquely positioned to respond to regional and local issues/challenges such as rural and native American communities, border regions, and remote isolated settings. The two-pronged strategy described in this response is a well-planned implementation of the criteria.

A.2.i.c Arizona has effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its RTTT grant. The Open Education Resources (OER) serves as both a grants management office and a statewide coordinator of RTTT funding. As the fiscal agent for the RTTT grant, OER will provide budget, accounting, and sub-recipient monitoring to support to the project. The Arizona Department of Education and OER have strong inter-agency procedures to facilitate the allocation, disbursement, performance monitors, and oversight of RTTT and they they will utilize technology to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

A.2.i.d Historically, Arizona has used a combination of federal and State funds to support its education programs and policies. In particular, it has provided significant funding for increases for school districts, performance-based teacher compensation, English language learner students, and site-based programs to assist the most at-risk populations. Arizona's budget delineates how funding will be used to support the State's comprehensive education reform agenda as detailed though this application. The Arizona State Department of Education is refocusing all combined standards and assessment resources in the planning and preparation to adopt the Common Core. It anticipates using RTTT funding for charter schools and STEM and to enhance existing data systems to make all data readily available to educators, policymakers, parents, and the general public. The State intends to utilize almost $30 million dollars in school improvement funds to turnaround the lowest achieving schools.

A.2.i.e Indicative of Arizona's commitment to education is the fact that budget reductions have been significantly lower as compared to other State agency budgets. In an effort to protect education, the State has taken on an additional debt of 1.2 billion dollars over 10 fiscal years and has recently approved a three year increase in state sales tax rate on one cent on the dollar. The Governor and a majority of legislators share a long-term commitment for RTTT in Arizona. This will be viewed as a significant down-payment for

the State's commitment to improving educational performance. It is hoped that successes shown in the next three years will stimulate continued support for RTTT inspired programs.

A.2.ii.a.b The preparation of the application for Race to the Top has been an opportunity for Arizona's leaders to reach out to a wide range of stakeholders from across the state asking them for their input into the application process and support for it. The Race to the Top Reform Program has the support of school districts , county superintendents, the State Charter Board, community colleges, universities, businesses, chambers of commerce, STEM leaders, foundations and Congressional representatives. The Arizona Round 2 application was supported by educational stakeholder groups-Arizona School Administrators, Arizona School Boards Association, and the Arizona Education Association. Of special interest are the comments made by the President of the Arizona Education Associates about the process used to develop the Round 2 application. This allowed the AEA to provide input about how to write the Memorandum of Understanding to better emphasize the importance of collaborating between districts and their AEA affiliates. In addition to the signatures acquired from the 389 (100%) participating LEAs, there were signatures from 363 (95%) Local School Boards. Seventy-five (50%) signatures were acquired from Local Teachers' Union Leaders. It would have been helpful to explain why this percentage (50%) of signatures was so low.

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The response to (A)(2)ii questioned the 50% participation of Local Teachers' Union Leaders. Since this was addressed in Criteria (A)(1)ii, the score has been raised from 9-10.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**21**	**26**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	16	21	

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

A.3.i Evidence presented by the State of Arizona indicates that consistent progress has been made in each of the four education reform areas. This incudes an account of the utilization of federal and state funding in pursuing such reforms. Examples of these reforms follow. Under Standards and Assessments, the state had worked to align its mathematics and English language arts standards with rigorous national guidelines. More rigorous standards for graduation have been adopted particularly in the area of STEM. Credit requirements in math, social studies, and science have been increased for graduation. A six million State Longitudinal Data Systems Grant (SLDS) received from the U.S. Department of Education has made possible the construction of that Arizona Education Data Warehouse which will be the repository for longitudinal student data from early education through higher education and entry into the work force. Recent legislation requires the State Board of Education to adopt a model framework for teacher and principal evaluation. To support struggling schools, a new multi-tiered system of support which incorporates differentiated instruction, personalized lesson plans, and formal assessment of data. Attention is being given to the large population of English language learners. Accelerated language acquisition provides time on task with highly qualified teachers who use a structured, discrete approach to language acquisition. Arizona has focused on improving its rural and native American schools assisted by a three-year grant (2006-2009) from the U.S. Department of Education.

A.3.ii The State is making efforts to improve student achievement. An analysis of scores between 2003 and 2009 indicate that students demonstrated moderate ("yet insufficient") increases in Math and Reading achievements as reflected on both NAEP and AIMS assessment, with most gains concentrated in elementary and middle grades. Although improvements in reading were not seen on NAEP scores, AIMS results have indicated improvements in middle school reading. Actions taken to increase effective instruction have been to improve teacher recruitment and selection in high poverty schools and to improve teacher preparation and support. Lower increases in high school reflect the need for additional focus on secondary standards. Arizona's recently improved high school standards have begun to address this

serious situation. Arizona seeks to realize a high school graduation rate of 93% by 2020, with an interim benchmark of 82% by 2014. The 2008 baseline is 75%.

It is important to be aware that the tables that report test scores encompass a range of twelve years with the baseline at 2008, the benchmark year at 2014 and the target date is 2020. Progress can be made and scores can improve that do not correlate with the projected scores in the timeline.

An analysis of scores indicate that Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, migrant, African American and Native American students have made great progress in closing the gap separating them from their peers in elementary school math and reading. In spite of progress, Arizona realizes that the achievement gaps remain unacceptably high with gaps in the area of 20 percentage points between Hispanic and White students and 30 percentage points between Native American and White students. As groups, special education and limited English proficient students have not made demonstrable progress.

The State of Arizona has been forthcoming in its response to Criteria A (3). It is evident that Arizona is aware of its responsibility to its diverse populations. As indicated, there is much to be done to accomplish the goals defined in this report. In general each aspect of the response to this criteria was adequate. However, more informative data could have been provided in regard to decreasing gaps between subgroups especially for English language learners and special education students. They will have great difficulty in keeping pace with the timeline.

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

During the Panel presentation, the topic of student outcomes was discussed. The responses of panel members indicated that they were knowledgeable about subgroup differences, pace of improvement, and individual progress rates. However, more information about efforts to decrease gaps between subgroups should have been provided especially for English language learners and special education students since "as groups, they have not made demonstrable progress."

Total	125	112	121	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

B.1.i.a.b. Arizona, in partnership with 49 states and territories is participating in the Common Core State Standards initiative to develop standards in mathematics and English language arts for grades K-12. This initiative, dedicated to developing and adopting internationally benchmarked standards that build toward college- and career-readiness, is led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center,) in partnership with ACT, the College Board, and Achieve. The Memorandum of Agreement indicates that these standards will be aligned with college and work expectations, will include rigorous content and skills, and will be internationally benchmarked. The intent is that these standards will also be aligned to state assessments and classroom practices. A copy of the draft of the standards is appended. Another Appendix outlines Standard International Benchmarking Assurances.

B.1.ii The Common Core Standards are scheduled for adoption by the State Board of Education (SBE) on June 28, 2010. Arizona law also provides for the adoption and implementation of the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) and the Department of Education already has a process in place to ensure

involvement of many stakeholders in developing statewide standards. As a member of Achieve's American Diploma Project since 2007, Arizona was already committed to more rigorous college and career standards. Arizona participates in the College and Career Readiness Policy Institute (CCRPI) sponsored by Achieve, Inc. As a result of this work, Arizona has aligned its high school graduation requirements to college entrance, by increasing high school graduation requirements to four years of mathematics and three years of science. Arizona stakeholders developed, and the State Board of Education has adopted, the revised mathematics standards that align with national expectations.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	**10**	**10**	**10**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

B.2.i Arizona plans to participate in the RTTT Assessment grant as an active member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Consortium (PARCC). The purpose of this partnership presented in the Memorandum of Understanding states that this state-led consortium will collaborate on the development of high-quality assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics for grades 3-8 and high school. A primary goal of the partnership is to measure and document students' college and career readiness against common academic standards and to measure student's progress toward this target throughout the rest of the system.

B2.ii There are 27 states in the Consortium. The Common Core of State Standards for mathematics and English language arts contains extensive directives, plans, and activities for teachers, mentors, aides, and administrators. The goal of the Consortium-to develop summative assessments with multiple item types that fully cover the depth and breadth of the Standards assessments-will enable the State to fulfill its commitment to its diverse population of students.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

B.3. Arizona will draw on its extensive experience in adopting and implementing state standards to transition to the Common Core. Arizona has developed and rolled out State Standards for the first time in 1997 and since then, has revised its English language, art, music, science, social studies, fine arts, and English language proficiencies on a five-year cycle. Each time the standards were revised and updated, ADE developed a plan to engage stakeholders in a smooth transition to the new standards. Arizona is planning to leverage and expand the expertise of educators across the state through the establishment of Arizona Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform.

In order to ensure a smooth transition from the current assessment system to the new system aligned to the Common Core Standards, Arizona will implement several strategies among which are: maintain and increase ongoing communication with the field to promote the use of assessment results, develop items for the current AIMS that include items written to the Common Core, and provide training and technical assistance through the Regional Centers.

The State's plan for transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments embraces the expectations the state has targeted in Criteria B.3. Support materials aligned to the STEM areas will be provided on the IDEAL portal for K-12. Additionally, the dissemination of STEM-focused models and programs will be shared through the Regional Centers as strategies for STEM implementation in the elementary as well as secondary grades at the local level, Through the expansion of career pathway in high school and exposure in middle school, students will be better prepared to be successful in STEM-related careers and college majors.

On June 28, 2010, the State Board of Education will adopt the Common Core Standards in mathematics and English language arts. The established Common Core Committee (CCC) comprised of representatives of higher education, K-12 educators, district leadership, community college faculty, and curriculum specialists from education service agencies will meet to refine a plan of support for transitioning to the Common Core Standards, consisting of both professional development and technical assistance. The charge of the CCC is to identify and develop engaging, rigorous, and relevant instructional materials and professional development strategies to meet the needs of educators in implementing the enhanced standards. Critical support materials will include crosswalks, comparison tables, gap analysis summaries, explanations, and examples of learning expectations, connections to other academic standards, and sample lessons. All of these resources will be available statewide on the ADE website and the IDEAL portal.

The State's response to this criteria provides extensive assistance and a variety of carefully planned initiatives.

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

The Arizona State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics on June 28, 2010.

Congratulations!

Total	70	70	70	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	**24**	**18**	**18**	

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

C.1.The America Competes Act has twelve elements. Arizona's statewide longitudinal data system has nine of these elements. Element 8-A teacher identification system with the ability to match teachers to students-is not yet in place. Element 9-Student-level transcript information-is in the process of phasing in components, and Element 10-Student level college readiness test scores is currently being piloted.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

C.2 The Arizona vision is that key stakeholders (i.e., students, parents, teachers, principals, administrators, professors, postsecondary leaders, community members, businesses, policymakers, unions, and researchers) are regularly accessing, discussing, and using data to continuously improve performance and overall effectiveness. Arizona'a plan to further access and use its rich data stores depends on effective governance and customized decision-making tools. Once ADE has piloted and fully implemented the collection of data that supports connecting teachers and their students, EduAccess will be leveraged to enable Arizona's teachers and administrators to view defining information related to their specific learners. As Arizona improves, expands, and broadens the scope of the Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) and its longitudinal data systems, a significantly larger community of information consumers will have access to these important data.

The state's response has complied with the expectations of the criteria.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**17**	**17**	

(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	5	5	

(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The goals of this criteria (C)(3) are to ensure implementation of instructional support systems, provide effective professional development to support instruction, and fully implement a statewide longitudinal data system. Arizona's response to this criteria enables LEAs to use these systems to inform and improve instructional practices, decision making, and overall effectiveness.

C.3.i Goal 1. Arizona Department of Education representing the Academic Achievement, Accountability, School Effectiveness and Standards and Assessment divisions will create and administer an Instructional Improvement Systems Survey to LEAs to determine the types of products in use; extent of use; quality, relevance, and utility of products; and critical elements and satisfaction levels. The results will be used to establish quality standards, identify district mentors, disseminate best practices,and celebrate success stories.

The fact that the Systems Survey will be able to provide formative and interim assessments aligned with state content standards will be of great assistance to LEA teachers and staff.

C.3.ii Goal 2. Provide Effective Professional Development to Support Instruction-will convene leading districts to collect and share lessons, connect proteges with mentor districts, and prepare LEA data coaches to train local users. The LEA data coaches will facilitate regular collaborative planning time with small school teams of teachers and other instructional leaders to develop both technological and pedagogical skills.

The professional development activities offered will provide opportunities for teachers to learn about, put into practice, and become proficient in using the instructional improvement systems.

C.3.iii Goal 3. Make Data Accessible and Available to Researchers, will enhance access privilege components to authorized researchers, establish a research agenda consistent with Arizona RTTT initiatives and achievement goals, and publish research reports and information from State and local data sources. The primary purpose of the Arizona Education Data Warehouse (AEDW) is to provide tools, infrastructures, and information necessary to evaluate accurately the effectiveness of programs, initiatives, and funding relative to student performance.

A Timeline presented in a text box at the conclusion of Criteria C data addressed the three goals and indicated activities, responsible parties and the time frame in which each goal would be implemented. The Time Line added a concise complement to the clarity and content of Arizona's response to Criteria C.

There is a concern regarding accessibility and availability of data to authorized researchers. This infers that authorization controls acceptance as a researcher.

Total	47	40	40	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**15**	**15**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	

(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	4	4	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	4	4	

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

D.1.i There are five elements of Alternative Routes to Certification: A. Routes can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently of those institutions; B. Routes are selective in accepting candidates; C. Routes provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; D. Routes significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses, E. Upon completion, these routes award the same level of certification as traditional preparation programs. On March 22, 2010, the State Board of Education adopted regulations that allow for teachers and administrators "alternative preparation programs institutions that may include, but are not limited to, universities and colleges, school districts, professional organizations, private businesses, charter schools, and regional training centers. The 10 universities and three partnerships qualify for four of the five elements of Alternate Routes to Certification.

D.1.ii Alternative routes to certification are offered by ten universities and three partnerships. The three partnerships are Teach For America, Phoenix Teaching Fellows, and Transition to Teaching. The Application states: "One of the most important steps in improving student outcomes through enhanced instructional effectiveness is to ensure that the state policy encourages routes into the profession for teachers and school leaders with the highest potential to impact student learning." In recognition of this critical step, the 2010 enactment of HB 2298 expanded high quality alternative routes for both teachers and administrators to include providers in addition to higher education institutions. The majority of alternatively certified teachers are prepared through Teach for America and Phoenix Teaching Fellows, both highly selective programs focused on placing teachers in the highest-need schools. To date, the only providers in use are the ten universities and three partnerships.

Arizona has legal, statutory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals, including routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education. However, there is no indication that alternative routes to certification for principals are presently being offered.

D.1.iii Subject matter shortages are determined by the number of non-highly qualified teachers reported to be teaching subjects that require highly qualified teachers, and pending or anticipated rules governing teacher subject matter knowledge or certification. In addition, determination of geographic shortages is guided by the U.S. Census Department's descriptions of "rural" and the number of highly qualified teachers. ADE uses current-year data to identify existing areas of needs, mining its data collection system to create lists of highly and non-highly qualified teachers by subject matter and location. To put the data in perspective and refine the final list, ADE considers past shortages and future policy changes. ADE also anticipates shortage areas when SBE adopts rules requiring new certifications, such as the upcoming requirement that Early Childhood teachers be certified. When the adopts new subject matter knowledge standards such as the new standards for arts and sciences, ADE also anticipates the need to fill additional teacher positions.

The response to D.1.iii provided sufficient data about identifying areas of teacher shortage
Principal shortages were not addressed.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

D.2.i Arizona is calculating a student growth model adapted from the Colorado Growth Model. This model measures student progress from one year to the next in the context of a student's "academic peers." A Memorandum of Understanding is appended and was effective as of November 2, 2009. The State Board of Education will develop a model teacher and principal framework through a task force that will be convened in July 2010. This task force will recommend policies and procedures to use in validating and monitoring local evaluation systems to ensure accurate differential of the instructional effectiveness of teachers and principals. The Senate Bill 1040 states: "On or before December 15, 2011, adopt a model framework for a teacher and principal evaluation instrument that includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between 33 percent and 50 percent of the evaluation outcomes and best practices for professional development and evaluation training."

D.2.ii. To ensure that effective evaluation systems for teachers and principals will be in place in LEAs across the State by the 2012-2013 school year, Arizona has passed legislation which requires the SBE to develop a model evaluation system framework for both teachers and principals by December. 2011. School districts and charter schools will be required to implement, by the 2010-2013 school year, evaluation systems that meet SBE requirements. Under this law, SBE is required to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth into the model evaluation framework. The law requires that this student growth account for 33-50% of the evaluation outcome for both teachers and principals. The SBE will ensure the development of strong teacher and principal evaluation systems by convening the SBE Task Force to develop the model framework. Technical assistance will be provided to the LEAs by the Arizona Department of Education Division of Academic Achievement, the Educator Effectiveness Unit and regional centers. The procedures will be designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

The responses to criteria D.2.i and D.2.ii show that efforts taken by Arizona to meet student growth are linked to the development of evaluation systems. This will lead to the monitoring of evaluation systems to ensure that they are reliable and accurately differentiate the instructional effectiveness of teachers and principals.

D.2.iii. Arizona will provide all educators with access to data on student growth in reading and math in grades 4-8. In addition to providing student reports, the State will provide student growth data back to LEAs for uploading into instruction improvement systems. LEAs can then leverage those systems to provide growth model results by school, class, and students. Efforts will be made to ensure that evaluation results are used to enable teachers and principals to increase their instructional effectiveness by requiring that evaluation results will connect to professional development. Training and support will be provided to LEAs on the use of evaluation results to inform professional development. Teachers will be surveyed to determine whether and how results are being used to inform professional development.

D.2.iv.a. Arizona requires that evaluations be tied to the best practices in professional development and that all principals conducting evaluations receive aligned professional development and training. Criteria iv.a. ensures that evaluation results will be used to develop teachers and principals to enable teachers and principals to increase their instructional effectiveness. This will be done by requiring that evaluation results connect to professional development and by providing training to LEAs on the use of evaluation results to inform professional development. ADE's Educator Effectiveness Unit and the teacher and leader specialist within each Regional Center for Innovation and Reform will be responsible for this.

D.2.iv.b As its teacher and leader evaluation system is developed, the State will take actions to align its current systems of performance pay and teacher advancement to the evaluation framework. These systems will be focused in high-needs schools and in high-needs subject areas to further encourage the retention of the most effective teachers, particularly those in schools, subject areas, and specialties in greatest need. The Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform will provide technical assistance. When evaluation results are available, LEAs will identify master and mentor teachers and other coaches based on their receipt of the highest evaluation ratings.

D.2.iv.c The State Board of Education will ensure that evaluation results inform the granting of continuing status and/or state-issued certification to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined,

transparent, and fair practices. Guidelines will be issued in the use of evaluation results to make decisions about offering continuing status and/or qualifying for state-issues certification.

D.2.iv.d By the 2012-2013 school year, SBE will develop and issues guidelines for LEAs in the use of teacher and principal evaluation results to make decisions about removing teachers and principals after consistent years of receiving the lowest evaluation ratings, provided that they have received ample opportunities to improve and that rigorous standards and procedures are utilized. The Arizona MOU requires participating LEAs to use evaluation results to inform removal.

D.2 addresses Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance. Arizona's response to the criteria listed under D.2 suggest that the State is primed to carry out this responsibility through its planning and proposals.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**23**	**23**	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	15	15	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	8	8	

(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

D.3.i Arizona has a strong history of commitment to policies and programs to encourage equitable distribution of teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools. Goal I has three strategies that will enable Arizona to fulfill it commitment. Strategy 1 is to expand the teacher and principal pipeline to high-poverty and high-minority schools. This will be accomplished in the following ways: a) by creating a fund for targeted LEAs to attract proven teacher and principal recruitment, selection, and preparation programs; b) by creating new pipelines of principals for principal recruitment and training for high-need schools; c) by expanding the successful Rodel Exemplary Teachers Initiative to fund an additional 10 Exemplary Teachers and 20 Exemplary Student Teachers per year and focus on rural areas and math, science, and special education teachers; d) to expand the Rodel Exemplary Principal's Initiative to fund an additional 5 Exemplary Principals and 15 Aspiring Principals per year. Strategy 2 ensures that the state's equity plan is focused on both teachers and principals and the use of evaluation results. This will be accomplished by expanding the Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution project to encompass principal equity and the use of evaluation results. Strategy 3 ensures that students in the highest-need schools are not assigned to ineffective teachers. Intensive training and support for principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools on making effective hiring decisions will be provided.

D.3.ii In order to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and speciality areas, Arizona plans to open the pipelines of new teachers and of current teachers for shortage areas. This will be done by creating a fund for high-needs districts to recruit proven programs for teacher recruitment, selection, and preparation focused on shortage areas. Efforts will be made by ADE to expand state initiatives to encourage elementary teachers to attain certification in shortage areas. The Rodel Exemplary Teachers Program will focus math, science, and special education.

The response to D.3.ii indicates that Arizona has undertaken several initiatives which will contribute to providing teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. However, opening pipelines, creating funds for recruitment, and encouraging teachers to obtain certification do not seem to be sufficient measures to resolve these situations.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**14**	**14**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	7	7	

(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	7	7	

(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

D.4.1 In September 2010, an expert advisory council will convene for the purpose of developing a Teacher and Principal Preparation Program Effectiveness Evaluation System. The system will connect student growth data to each teacher and principal program graduate's electronic recommendation from the granting institutions of higher learning. The evaluation will contribute to meaningful decisions about incentives and support for programmatic improvement, and for preparing measurably effective teachers and principals.

D.4.2 Arizona has embarked on innovative reforms to teacher and principal preparation through its connection to the Sanford Education Project. This is a collaboration of ASU and Teach for America which adapts TFA's most successful tools to the university's undergraduate program and brings transformative changes to the way ASU recruits, trains, and supports future K-12 teachers. The program will be producing teachers who are trained and equipped to use data to inform instruction, continuously increase their effectiveness, and strive toward higher student achievement. It will follow its graduates, provide ongoing support, and collect project data on student achievement to increase program effectiveness.

The measures taken as indicated in Criteria D.4.i.and D.4.2 are sound endeavors to improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**20**	**20**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	10	10	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	10	10	

(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

D.5.i Arizona will assist LEAs in developing and implementing effective systems of support for teachers and principals. These systems will comply with national standards and will provide continuous, job-embedded support from master/mentor teachers and principals with proven effectiveness. In its reform plan, Arizona will focus its school based, job-embedded professional development on new teachers and principals, particularly those within the lowest achieving schools. It will initiate a statewide induction program for new teachers and a new program to support leaders, particularly in turnaround schools. The reform plan proposes the creation of an Arizona Teacher Induction Program which will address Common Planning Time, Assessment and Accountability, and the use of best practices from Arizona teacher-training programs.

D.5.ii Arizona will measure, evaluate, and improve the effectiveness of the preceding supports by conducting a rigorous statistical study of different approaches to professional development. It will further examine the effectiveness of professional development and support by reporting the percentage of teachers and principals with improvements and declines in individual evaluation ratings and student growth over time.

The State's response to Criteria D.5.iand D.5.ii indicate numerous measures to be taken to provide and improve effective support to teachers and principals.

Total	138	130	130	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

E.1 The State Board of Education recently amended policy to better align its definitions of "underperforming" and "failing" schools to the State's definition of "persistently lowest achieving" (PLA) schools. This gives the State the legal authority to begin school improvement process in all persistently lowest achieving schools. Under A. R. S. #15-241.01 Arizona has statutory authority to intervene systematically in failing school districts. If a failing district is identified, ADE may submit a recommendation to SBE for a hearing to determine whether the school district should be subject to an alternative operation plan. If a charter school is designated as a school failing to meet academic standards, ADA will immediately notify the school's sponsor who shall immediately take action to restore the charter to acceptable performance or revoke the school's charter. One of three failing Arizona schools is located on Indian reservations. Assessing the needs of those schools will require significant research and tribal governmental and community consultations.

The data presented in this response indicates that Arizona can intervene in schools and LEAs. However, It does not have jurisdiction over all schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

E.2.i Arizona has established a process to identify PLA schools and the definition of "persistent lowest-achieving" was approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Criteria were established which would indicate Tier I schools (the lowest-achieving 5% of Title 1 schools in improvement status) and for secondary schools that are eligible for Title I but not receiving funds (Tier II). Fifteen of the 30 PLA schools are charter schools, the majority in 11 urban settings and serving some of Arizona's at-risk students. Another 10 schools are located on reservations or have high populations of Native American students. A detailed plan includes the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties. Measures taken to meet the criterion are indicated and a performance measure chart is included.

E.2.ii Arizona's plan for turning around the State's PLA schools encompasses five strategies designed to produce dramatic increases in student achievement. The first strategy plans to implement support and assistance to LEAs and their PLA schools in implementing one of four intervention models and intervene when needed. The second strategy aims to build the capacity of leaders to do turnaround work by creating a pipeline of turnabout teachers and leaders. The remaining strategies address the improvement of educational outcomes for children and youths in high-need Native-American communities, focusing on evidence-based approaches to address high school dropouts, and establish partnerships to coordinate services and intervention in persistently lowest achieving schools.

The responses to these criteria summarize Arizona's comprehensive efforts to turn around its persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Total	50	50	50	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**10**	**10**	

(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

F.1.i In FY 2009, public education in Arizona received a higher percentage of available state revenues than in FY 2008, despite the fact that between these two years, Arizona's total general fund revenues dropped by nearly 18% of the total revenue available to the State. Because spending cuts in education were significantly less harsh than the cuts imposed in other areas of government, the total percentage of State expenditures dedicated to education rose from 53.5% in FY 2008 to 59.5% in FY 2009.

F.1.ii For many years, Arizona has provided school districts with an equalized funding formula that provides State funds to districts. The equalized funding formula ensures that all school districts have equitable access to budget capacity and revenues and provides additional state funds to districts that have limited taxable property within their borders. Regardless of its taxable property, each district computes a district support level determined by: the total number of pupils; special program add-ons for academic assistance for pupils in kindergarten through grade 3, students with special needs, and the number of English language learners. The number is adjusted upwards for districts that have classroom teachers who are more experienced than the state average, and school districts transportation programs. To assist with the increased costs of educational services to students served by small isolated Arizona school districts, the State provides as additional upward funding adjustment in the district support level. A "small school" funding adjustment applies to districts with less than 600 students, and an even higher adjustment is provided for small school districts that are located in isolated areas of the state. Since the calculation of a district support level is determined not by taxable property wealth but, rather, by student numbers and characteristics, Arizona school districts have equalized access to budget capacity and revenues.

These two criteria have been met.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**40**	**40**	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	8	8	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8	8	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	8	8	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

F.2.i Arizona's charter school law restricts neither charter school growth or enrollment. State law imposes no caps on the number of charter schools and does not restrict charter school enrollment where capacity exists. Charter schools enter into a contract with a charter organizer to operate in accordance with academic and fiscal standards established in federal and State law, and the schools are held accountable to their charter contract. Arizona charter schools also function according to a business plan that guides their overall governance and operational structure. At the time of this report, there were 385 charter holders who operated 502 charter schools in 14 of Arizona's counties, comprising over 255 of the total public schools. Approximately 26% of the State's charter schools are in rural counties. Seventeen charter schools specifically serve Native American students.

F.2.ii Arizona statutes empower the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), the State Board of Education and local school districts to authorize and oversee the charter schools they sponsor. The ASBCS sponsors 356 of the charter holders (459) sites. The State Board of Education no longer grants new

charters. Consistent with its commitment to school accountability, the ASBCS has revoked two contracts for 12 charter schools that failed to meet the requirements of the law and their charter contract. A chart is included in the response which delineates Arizona Charter School Applications, Approvals, Denials, and Closings.

F.2.iii The State's charter schools and traditional school districts are allocated taxpayer dollars through the State's base level funding formula. Arizona' equalized funding system ensures that charter schools and district schools are funded equitably and competitively. Arizona law does not prohibit charter schools from applying for or receiving funding from the federal government, and charter schools receive significant federal funding in addition to their State appropriation.

F.2.iv Recent Arizona legislation included two bills to help charter schools acquire facilities. One specified that charter schools be classified as public schools for the purposes of municipal and county zoning. The amendment also requires municipalities and counties to allow charter schools to operate on location or in facilities that would be permissible for school districts. A Property Tax Relief Law was amended to provide significant financial relief from burdensome property taxes for non-profit charter schools that lease their facilities.

F.2.v Local educational agencies (LEAs) have flexibility and authority to operate innovative, autonomous public schools in addition to charter schools. More than 170 alternative schools provide a diverse array of options for elementary, middle and high school students with special needs or extenuating circumstances. these schools follow distinctive educational philosophies and generally offer self-paced curricula, small classes and a focus on social and emotional development. Several alternative schools specifically serve pregnant and parenting teenagers, others offer community resource centers that bring together health and education services for children and their families. Legislation requires each school district to make extended school year services available to all pupils with disabilities for whom such services are necessary. Arizona's focus and magnet schools provide yet another option for students and parents. These schools offer specialized curricula with high academic standards in areas such as aviation/aerospace, business and finance, communication arts, international studies, law-related studies, marine science, performing and visual arts, STEM and world languages.

The State of Arizona ranks second in the country regarding number of charter schools. The State's responses to Criteria F 2 bear testimony to the State's experiences and increasing proficiency in working with charter and innovative schools.

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

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

F.3 Arizona has developed new approaches which demonstrate its endeavors to achieve the goals stated in Section A. Milestones in its Education Reform History include Teacher Career Ladder programs and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. The State's Open Enrollment Policy allows students to attend "any school within the school district, to allow resident pupils to enroll in any school located in or within other school districts in this state and to allow nonresident pupils to enroll in any school within the district." Additional programs include Charter Schools, Joint Technological Education Districts, and Online Instruction. These endeavors have provided conditions which have increased student achievement and narrowed achievement gaps.

The response has demonstrated significant reform conditions.

Total	55	55	55	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

STEM Education has a strong foundation in Arizona and is woven throughout the education reform agenda. STEM education is about entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity. STEM-based curricula emphasizes appropriates levels of rigor to maximize success in college, careers, and life, embed project-based learning experiences so that students apply fundamental academic concepts in real work contexts, and include complex problem-solving applications that require "out of the box" thinking. The STEM plan will expand access to a rigorous course of study, leverage partnerships to prepare and assist teachers to integrate STEM content across grades and disciplines, and prepare more students, especially underrepresented groups for advanced study and STEM careers.

Rigorous STEM Course of Study. As early as 2006, Arizona had initiated efforts, in conjunction with the American Diploma Network, the College and Career Readiness Policy Institute, and Achieve, Inc, to significantly raise high schools math and science standards, assessments, and curricula to more effectively align them with the demands of college and career. The result was a notable change to Arizona's graduation requirements, increasing the prerequisites for math and science. The SBE also increased the level of math rigor required to graduate from high school. These requirements to evolve as Arizona works with Common Core to align standards and assessments through the P-20 continuum.

Cooperation with STEM-Capable Partners. In 2006, prominent Arizona business organizations and State government joined forces to create Science Foundation of Arizona (SFAz), a distinctive public/private organization led by a board of directors comprised of 11 nationally recognized leaders in science, engineering, and education. With all operational support provided by private sector contribution, funds invested by the State require a private-sector match. Thanks to a peer-reviewed, competitive grant process, that match yielded $2.18 for every dollar invested by the State. STEM Plan will expand access to a rigorous course of study. As early as 2006, Arizona initiated efforts to significantly raise high school math and science standards and to align assessments and curricula effectively with the demands of colleges and career. Data provided by RESPONSE addresses measures already undertaken to cooperate with STEM-capable partners. Provision has been made to assist teachers through integrated, streamlined math and science certification programs.

This priority has been addressed throughout the application. It is positioned as a critical component of all of reforms undertaken.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		**Yes**	**Yes**	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The State of Arizona has comprehensively and coherently addressed all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as State Success Factors. Although the responses to some of the Criteria were more extensive than others, the information provided matched and often exceeded the purpose of the criteria. It was obvious that serious effort was made to explain Arizona's reform plan and the Appendices provided valuable supporting evidence. The role played by LEAs in the implementation of the proposal was significant and critical to the realization of its goals. It was also evident that Arizona, because of its terrain and the diversity of its population, has already had experience in dealing with situations that connect with their responses to a good number of the criteria. It certainly has had a wealth of experience and success in promoting charter schools.

The State has clearly demonstrated how it will use Race to the Top funds to meet its standards, increase student achievement, decrease achievement gaps across sub-groups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.				
Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	472	481	