



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #2400DC-7

**A. State Success Factors**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	51	56	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	36	38	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	10	13	
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(A)(1)(i) DC offers a very good overview of its existing reform agenda and the steps it has taken in the last three years to make significant and sustainable improvement in the education of its young people. The narrative sketches out the alignment between the specific and quantifiable goals of its reform plans and the priorities of RTTT. There is a clear theory of change and an explicit vision of the likely outcomes of the actions DC would like to take and of the actions it has already taken. DC has selected and supported good leaders, sought and built partnerships and coalitions to make things happen.</p> <p>(A)(1)(ii) DC has garnered the support of 35 LEAS through a process of involvement, engagement and communication. This covers 91% of students. The MOUs used by DC cover all four assurance areas of RTTT with specific actions around using data to improve instruction, making student performance a significant part of personnel evaluation and decisions and turning around low performing schools. This specificity and the clarity of expression bode well for implementation. The absence of union support in the case of the largest LEA - the District public schools which cover 50% of the students in the participating LEAS may impede statewide impact. But on balance this component of the district's plan scores in the high range.</p> <p>(A)(1)(iii) DC makes a persuasive case for statewide impact by laying out the specific student outcome goals it plans to realize with and without RTTT funds over the next four years and by laying out the relative small numbers involved in non participating LEAS. It is less explicit about the absence of the one applicable local teachers' union signature. The lack of explicit discussion of this rather than the absence of the signature detracts from the plan's credibility holding it in the mid range.</p>				
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b>				
<p>(A)(1)(ii) The DC team clarified the processes they had used to engage teachers in the development of the plan and to secure LEA commitment. This increases the likelihood of sustained LEA participation.</p> <p>(A)(1)(iii) The panel described an inclusive process used to engage stakeholders in the RTTT implementation that moves the plan into the high range.</p>				
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	30	22	27	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	18	

(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	9
<b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>			
<p>(A)(2)(i) DC proposes to establish an implementation working group and a team of effectiveness managers responsible for execution. It also has plans to lift the oversight of federal grants management. All these point to some clear thinking about the need to lift implementation capacity - a need highlighted by the fact that the Superintendent's office (OSSE) is a new agency with limited expertise. Notwithstanding, the plan provides for reallocating and re-purposing federal, state, and local funds to align with RTTT priorities and cross allocation co-ordination. There is a reasonable analysis of how funds will be used to identify activities that will continue past the life of the grant. There is very good budget narrative in the Appendices. There is some attention to supporting the very small LEAS and to developing operations capacity. Overall this is a reasonable plan if not of the highest quality as it is relying on some as yet unproven structures.</p> <p>(A)(2)(ii) The one third of teachers and principals in non- union settings are involved or represented in RTTT planning and implementation groups. the only significant teacher union group has opted not to sign on because of the student growth component of personnel evaluation. While DC has rightly decided to proceed with out the union's participation the narrative makes no mention in this section of either ongoing dialogue or efforts to secure the union's engagement in other elements. There is also no explicit discussion of the engagement of principals from the unionized schools This places this plan component in the medium range.</p> <p>DC has secured the support from a wide range of other stakeholders with many impressive statements of support. There do not seem to be letters from significant community groups in the District which may indicate a lack of support for reform.</p>			
<b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b>			
<p>(A)(2)(i)The DC Superintendent illustrated how her office had increased its capacity to manage federal grants through selective recruitment, training of junior personnel, liaison with other agencies and clear communication lines. This clarified the assessment of the District's capacity to implement the plan in a cost effective and timely manner.</p> <p>(A)(2)(ii) The DC panel described more clearly the processes they had used to maintain communication with DCPS's teacher representatives and Charter school leadership representatives throughout the preparation of the plan increasing the likelihood that the plan will be implemented across the District with teacher support and sustained over time.</p>			
<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	30	24	27
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	4	4
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	20	23
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>			
<p>(A)(3)(i) DC describes significant progress on all four RTTT reform areas by enumerating turn around and school closures for under performing schools; adoption of better standards and some advances in data systems among other improvements. It has also made progress on teacher performance and alternative preparation paths. There are no references to strengthening school site leadership.</p> <p>(A)(3)(ii) (a) DC reports consistent growth in NAEP scores since 2003 in both grades and domains. Progress measured by DCs re calibrated and more rigorous assessment since 2006 has also been consistent and significant.</p> <p>(A)(3)(ii)(b) DC has some strong examples of narrowing the achievement gap but in many cases the significant progress of all sub groups to DC's improved instructional culture has overwhelmed efforts to reduce gaps between groups. For example while low income students had strong gains the gains by wealthier students were greater, widening the achievement gap. DC argues that comparison of its sub</p>			

groups with nationwide sub groups shows how much local performance has improved. This is a reasonable argument and illustrates how low performing DC schools were historically; so much so that the performance of all groups was depressed. It is also reasonable to expect more advantaged sub groups to respond more quickly and more dramatically to improved conditions. But that expectation might also have shaped DC's policies and practices to focus even more explicitly on the performance of specific sub groups. Still DC shows attention to the issue of performance gaps and is effectively monitoring and analyzing them.

(A)(3)(ii) (c) DC has made progress since 2006 in improving graduation rates and has a good basis for further gains.

Overall this places DC in the bottom of the high range.

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

(A)(3)(ii)(b) DC officials in their panel presentation and subsequent discussion provided insights into how the District monitored, assessed, used and reported student achievement data by sub groups to monitor the performance. This lifts the score towards the top of the high range

Total	125	97	110	
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(1)(i) DC is participating in the Common Core Standards group which is internationally bench marked and oriented to college entrance and work. The Common Core group covers a majority of States.				
(B)(1)(ii) DC proposes an adoption date before August 2 and has a clear process of consultation and public comment that will build consensus around adoption and hopefully smooth implementation. This merits high points.				
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(2)(i) DC says it is a lead state in the PARCC consortium which appears to have 27 members - Appendix B2.2 as of May 25, 2010. There is no indication of office holders for PARCC or of its legal status. The MOU for the partnership does not require members to commit to its application for an RTTT assessment grant "until a later date". It also sets out two classes of membership- Governing States- including DC- and Participating States.				
The narrative in this section and elsewhere in the submission shows that DC has a good recent track record in developing and using assessments aligned with standards which make it a credible leader in this				

work although consortium is new and the "goal" for roll out is 2014/2015 which is at the boundaries of the grant period.

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	20	18	18	
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(B)(3) DC's implementation plan is designed around goals which align with the key elements of the criterion: consistent leadership and communication to build and maintain LEAS buy in; formative and final assessment aligned with standards and a connection with higher education selection criteria. Its plan sets out four key strategies with set tasks, timelines and responsibilities. The timelines are a little aggressive but achievable. It is a high quality plan which could have been strengthened by more attention to the relationship with higher education institutions,				
<b>Total</b>	70	68	68	

**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	24	14	14	
<b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(C)(1) DC claims to have nine of the America Competes elements and Appendix C1.1 provides evidence to support the claim. A close reading of the text reveals that DC has only partially met elements 11 & 12 This reduces the eligible elements to seven.				
<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	5	5	5	
<b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(C)(2) DC has a clear and well developed plan to improve access to and use of State data. It addresses the different needs of sets of stakeholders and acknowledges the different technology capability of groups . As in other parts of the plan there are specified goals, performance measures and broad timelines. Overall it is well conceived.				
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	18	13	15	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	3	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	5	5	
<b>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(C)(3)(i) This component of DC's plan is not as strong as some others in its plan. It seems to struggle with how to help DC Public School teachers make use of data to improve performance or how to inform principals about the student growth in their schools. This challenge is compounded by the complexity of dealing with so many small LEAs with variable human capacity and a multiplicity of existing systems and some with no systems. The goal and performance measure are less convincing and the plan falls into the mid range.				

(C)(3)(ii) The main action proposed in pursuit of this goal is to appoint and train data leaders or data coaches in every school in participating LEAs or to fund additional training if they already exist. The responsibilities of data leaders/coaches are limited and the act of supporting teachers to use data to improve practice is second from the bottom of the list above only "updating school leaders in results of data analysis". The other key expenditure item is to provide teachers with planning time. This is a strong plan.

(C)(3)(iii) This element is well structured and described with a clear commitment to facilitating access to data - providing priorities for research but also encouraging research on topics of scholars choice.

**(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)**

(C)(3)(i) The DC officials clarified the plan's provisions for supporting teachers in the use and application of performance data through training and technology platforms. This lifts the score into the high range

Total	47	32	34	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

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

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

(D)(1)(i) DC's text - with an incorrect heading - for this element and Appendix D1.1 show that the State allows alternative pathways of preparation for teachers and principals and that these include pathways that allow for providers other than higher education institutions. The pathways all meet the required elements - selectivity, work place practice, ongoing support , testing out and identical form of certification.

(D)(1)(ii ) The narrative and Appendix D1.3. show that the pathways are in use by significant numbers of teacher and principal candidates.

(D)(1)(iii) As a small and geographically compact system with a deep labor pool DC has few vacancies but the narrative shows that DC school officials have a simple but effective mechanism for monitoring and responding to shortages and sharing information with preparation providers.

<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	12	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24	24	

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

(D)(2)(i) DC has experience in assessing student growth through its IMPACT value added tool. This experience coupled with the goals, targets and performance measures set out on the document produce a good quality plan that will allow LEAS to measure growth for individual students.

(D)(2)(ii & iii) DC has launched its IMPACT system for schools in the DCPS and it again underpins future developments. It does take into account student growth as a significant factor in teacher assessment and, to a lesser degree, in the assessment of principals. The planned next steps will expand the scope and coverage of IMPACT to other grades and subjects and build on the performance management framework of the DC Charter School Board with the later also aiming to make student performance a substantial element in teacher evaluation. The aim for both DCPS and charter LEAS is to have procedures which give timely feed back on performance and produce information that can be used for a range of personnel decisions. In the case of DCPS principals, many personnel decisions are already made on annual assessments. The timelines for this work are ambitious but given DC's experience, leadership and scale , achievable. At times the plan lacks some clarity about sequence and allocation of responsibilities that detracts from its quality but it is clear that annual evaluations will be conducted using some student growth measures and that they will inform a range of personnel decisions .

(D)(2)(iv) DCPS already uses evaluations to inform personnel decision including annual renewal of principals and clearly proposes to continue this practice with any new student growth based mechanism. The DCPS is also seeking in its current contract negotiation the capacity to dismiss ineffective teachers after two consecutive years of ineffective performance. Table D2.2 gives a succinct over view of how the State sees personnel evaluation information being applied in the future at teacher and principal level and in DCPS institutions and in Charters, and this includes informing professional development, promotion, retention, tenure and removal of ineffective personnel. The timelines for this work are very general as might be expected for an industrially difficult and complex domain. But the goals are appropriately ambitious. The plan falls into the bottom of the high range.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	11	11	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5	5	

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

(D)(3)(i) DC's plans in this area are appropriate to its circumstances as a relatively small "majority minority" system with a system wide strategy to lift quality and effectiveness of all teachers. But it has set out a reasonable process for aggregating data on distribution of effective teachers against a poverty map of the State, requiring plans from LEAS which need to address the coincidence of poverty and concentrations of less able teachers. It has a timeline and appropriate associated strategies to assist LEAs through "smart targeting" in recruitment to get the best teachers into the neediest schools.

(D)(3)(ii) It has a similar straight forward approach in the hard to staff areas but its goal setting is not convincing as it lacks data on teacher effectiveness by subject. It makes provision in later sections on ways to build a pipeline of subject and speciality teachers. This part of the plan is hampered by lack of data.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	4	4	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	4	4	

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

(D)(4)(i) DC sets out an administrative process to gather and evaluate data on the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs beginning with a Prep Program scorecard which will be designed with stakeholder input. The planned process will probably produce the desired end if there is a clear focus on

student growth measures- a focus that is not guaranteed by the process. Further, the process is attenuated by a two year pilot period with the first formal point of feedback to providers being in 2016 which is unlikely to effect the programs delivered to aspiring teachers before 2017 or later. Overall this is a medium quality plan.

(D)(4)(ii) This section of the plan is confined to charter LEAS and to teachers - there is no reference to school leaders. This limits the quality of the plan to the mid level.

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	
(i) Providing effective support	10	7	7	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	4	4	
<b>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(D)(5)(i) DC points to eleven initiatives appropriately embedded in other parts of its plan. Against this backdrop DC outlines three additional strategies to allow teachers and principals to customize professional development and to learn from excellent practice in the district. These are very good ways to extend the repertoire of support strategies for personnel in DCPS and charter LEAs but there is no coherent plan synthesizing all the initiatives into a framework. One other qualification is the possibility that the plethora of opportunities may dilute the focus on improving student performance although this is addressed to a degree in (D)(5)(ii).</p> <p>(D)(5)(ii) DC provides the rudiments of an evaluation strategy in its brief narrative. These omit any references to relationships with researchers and evaluators at DC higher education institutions or to how evaluation results will be connected to professional development designers and providers. It is not clear if there is anyone ultimately responsible for the quality and relevance of professional development for teachers and principals. There is no reflection on how to evaluate professional development of principals and the performance measures and annual targets are arbitrary and with out justification. With these shortcomings this part of the plan falls into the low end of the mid range.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>104</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(E)(1) The State can intervene in low performing schools and LEAs based on the mayoral control provisions and the mayor's appointment power for the membership of the Charter Board. There is also a positive relationship between the current chair of the Charter Board and the State Superintendent</p>				
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35	35	
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

(E)(2)(i) DC has identified schools in need of improvement and the lowest achieving schools and has a solid process to do so.

(E)(2)(ii) DC has a strong record in turning around low performing schools and has harvested the lessons of its work ( Table E2.2.) and used them to refine and improve its plans which includes sensible activities and timelines and identifies who is responsible for action. DC's plan also recognizes the need for differential funding for students in the first years of a school's turn around and for strong managerial support. Overall this is a first rate package.

Total	50	50	50	
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**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(F)(1)(i) Table F1.2 shows that education funding as a % of DC's total budget increased between 2008 and 2009 in a time of declining revenues.				
(F)(1)(ii) DC's student financing formulae are per capita and needs based and are applied equitably across the district.				
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(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	
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(F)(2)(i) DC law does not prohibit or inhibit charter school establishment.				
(F)(2)(ii) DC law ensures open enrollment at DC charters and requires high performance for charters to continue to operate.				
(F)(2)(iii) DC financing formulae provide for equal treatment of charter students. See Appendix F1.2.				
(F)(2)(iv) Charters in DC also receive a facilities per capita allowance and access to a variety of loan and grant facilities as well as use of public school space.				
(F)(2)(v) DC has a number of autonomous and innovative schools operating and more may be established if DCPS becomes an authorizer.				

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(F)(3) DC preliminary narrative covering the history of recent education reform and the policy and structural framework established and being augmented is a very good backdrop for another generation of intensive change and improvement. This is extended by the State's commitment to universal pre kindergarten, a suite of special education developments, efforts to address the needs of "at risk" youth. All this combined by first class leadership at different levels sets a strong reform environment.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	

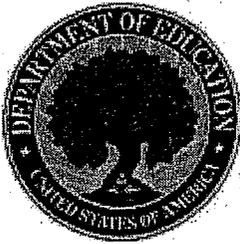
**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
DC has shown a willingness to integrate STEM issues into various plans and actions set out in its RTTT plan. It plans to augment this with a STEM learning network with 15 partners - all of high quality and relevance and many with considerable expertise and resources. The end result is likely to be better preparation of STEM teachers, better STEM pathways within schools and across schools to college and work place learning. The plan makes passing reference to women and science but overall there is an emphasis on STEM in DC's plan.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
DC's submission directly and comprehensively addresses RTTT's four areas of action and builds on actions its leadership has taken over the last three years to lift student performance and to make its educational institutions more effective and more responsive to individual needs. The array of reforms are usually well planned, grounded in evidence, respectful of local conditions, informed by past practice and shaped into a compelling and credible set of strategies. There are a few sections where the multiple actions proposed and underway do not cohere and tend to blur the concentration on student growth. Balancing that is the specification of goals, performance measures, responsibilities and timelines. The legal and fiscal frameworks are clear and well established.				
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>436</b>	
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #2400DC-5

**A. State Success Factors**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	54	59	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	37	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b></p> <p>(i) The applicant has presented a strong vision of comprehensive reform that builds on many related efforts that have taken place in recent years. The plan's ambitious yet achievable goals clearly address the four reform areas of ARRA.</p> <p>(ii) The state has required participating LEAs to sign on to every component of its RttT plan. Thus, the LEAs that are participating will be working cooperatively to implement 100% of the plan. Requiring participating LEAs to submit their own RttT work plans to the state for approval within 90 days of notice of planning is a step that will promote appropriate planning and alignment at the LEA level. The major participation problem, preventing a very high rating for this criterion, is the failure of the DCPS teachers' union to sign on to the plan. Because of this, the section is scored at the mid-high level.</p> <p>(iii) While fewer than two-thirds of the LEAs have signed on, the participating LEAs represent 87% of DC's schools, 91% of its students and 96% of its students in poverty. The LEAs that are not participating reflect small charter schools, seven of which are not Title I-eligible, with an average enrollment of only 276 students. The participating LEAs reflect broad statewide support for implementing the RttT plan and meeting the applicant's achievement goals, thereby earning the applicant a rating in the high range for this criterion.</p> <p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b></p> <p>In the application, DC stated that it was involved in negotiations with the Washington Teachers' Union at the time of submission. Based on today's conversation about DCPS's teacher evaluation system, it is reasonable to assume that there is greater support for the plan from DC teachers. Thus, the score for this criterion is raised.</p>				
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	30	23	25	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18	18	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5	7	

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

(i) In this section, DC has outlined its plan to implement its RttT plan. An RttT central office consisting of a Project Director and seven other full time staff members should provide sufficient oversight and support. (It is questionable that DC needs such a large central staff, but the cost reflects only 1.2% of the total grant funds.) The central office will also assist the state in improving its ability to manage all other grants and to coordinate other funds intelligently within the RttT programs, although the \$600,000 expenditure for grant administration software seems to be somewhat excessive. Project-specific task forces will also be formed to ensure collaboration on important components of the overall plan. While the state will create a significant RttT management infrastructure, about 85% of all RttT funds will go directly to its LEAs, some of it in the form of competitive grants that should lead to the development of best practices aligned to specific RttT goals. The vast majority of the state's RttT expenditures will, during the four-year grant period, build systems and create rigorous instructional practices that should last well beyond the grant period. While there is some concern about how the relatively large RttT office will integrate smoothly in the overall operations of DC's rather new Office of the State Superintendent of Education, this section is rated in the high range.

(ii) DC's RttT plan is supported by numerous important stakeholders, all of whom commend the reform work accomplished in the state during the past few years. However, the failure of the Washington Teachers' Union or any building administrators' association to express support for the plan reflects a lack of backing by the crucial school level personnel who will be needed to ensure its success; hence, this criterion is rated in the mid level of scoring.

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

Today's clarification about the DC/WTU negotiations that were going on at the time of the application's submission warrants an increased score for this criterion.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	22	22	

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

(i) DC has already made significant strides in all of the four ARRA reform areas. According to the proposal, DC's work on upgrading standards and aligned assessments earned an "A" from Stanford University's 2006 Hoover Digest report, "Keeping an Eye on State Standards." In 2007, DC received a Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant from USDOE to work on its statewide longitudinal data system, an effort that is ongoing. Regarding the quality of its teaching staff, the state created a Teacher Human Capital team that has been focused on improving the recruitment and assessment of its teachers, breaking ground in the use of student growth data to assess teacher effectiveness. As for turning around failing schools, since 2007 when mayoral control of the school system took place, 30 DC public schools have been closed for poor performance. Similarly, in the past five years, the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) has closed 12 poorly performing charter schools. For the reasons outlined above, this criterion receives the highest rating.

(ii) DC has experienced considerable improvements in student achievement since 2003, with the most significant gains coming since mayoral control of the public schools occurred in 2007. DCPS was the only urban district to have 2009 NAEP gains in both reading and math, and was the only urban district to grow more than five scale points in both elementary and secondary math. Further, since the DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC-CAS) was implemented in 2006, student performance increased by at least 10

percentage points in elementary reading, elementary math and secondary reading. Overall, gains in math achievement as measured by DC-CAS rose by almost 19 percentage points.

Many achievement gaps in DC have narrowed. Every subgroup made gains in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP between 2006 and 2009, and on all DC-CAS tests the black-white gap narrowed by an average of 9 percentage points. As for students with disabilities and poor students, while their performance improved, achievement gaps widened. The applicant admits that greater work must be done in these areas, as well as in graduation rates.

Because of the strong academic improvement and significant achievement-narrowing strides that have been made in DC, this criterion is rated in the high range even though particular target areas have not demonstrated sufficient success.

<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>111</b>	
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(i) DC's participation in the large consortium of states that produced the Common Core Standards for ELA and Mathematics has earned it the highest rating for this criterion.				
(ii) The state has implemented significant steps toward full adoption of the Common Core Standards. According to the proposal, DC expects to adopt the new standards before August 2, 2010.				
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
(i) As a governing state in the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), DC earns the highest possible rating for this criterion.				
(ii) Since PARCC is a consortium of 27 states, DC also earns the highest possible rating for this criterion.				
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

The proposal identifies clear goals and performance measures to ensure that the transition to enhanced standards and aligned assessments is effected optimally. All participating LEAs will submit a plan as to how they will train staff on the new standards; how they will inform families about the Common Core; and how they will provide staff training on how to differentiate instruction using the new standards. The state will create materials that will assist LEAs with these requirements.

Beginning immediately, DC will have its test contractor modify the current DC-CAS tests to reflect differences between DC's current math and ELA standards and the Common Core. All LEAs have agreed to adopt interim assessments aligned to the Common Core, and the state has already published a set of guidelines for the creation of these interim assessments.

Other noteworthy aspects of DC's plan to transition to the new standards include the following:

- Creation of a Common Core Standards Working Group, with required participation of all participating LEAs, to foster statewide collaboration on implementation of standards and curriculum alignment;
- Provision of teacher stipends for teacher leaders to work on aligning curriculum and training of teacher colleagues;
- Creation of a *Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning* manual; and
- Development of a P-20 Consortium to ensure that high school assessments measure skills and concepts required for students to successfully enter college.

While further details are needed about the state's plan to align high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments, the proposal has provided a strong plan for transitioning to the Common Core Standards and assessments aligned to them and therefore has been rated in the high range for this criterion.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	
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### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	

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

The applicant states that its longitudinal data system does not yet contain three of the twelve elements identified in the America COMPETES Act. However, based on the evidence provided, the state currently appears to have only seven of twelve in place. The following elements are not in place yet:

- 8. Other than for DCPS teachers, a teacher identifier is not yet used to match all teachers to their students.
- 9. Student transcripts are not available.
- 10. Individual student SAT and AP scores are not in the system yet.
- 11. Inclusion of information about students' successful transition to college, including their enrollment in remedial courses, is not yet a capability of the system.
- 12. The state is still working to identify other data fields to assess students' success in post-secondary education.

With seven of the twelve elements up and running as of the submission of the proposal, this criterion earns 14 points.

While points were granted for elements 3 and 5, it is not clear that these elements are fully operational in DC's longitudinal data system. Regarding item 3, questions exist about whether enrollment, discharge and completion information is currently on file for DC students' post-secondary education. Regarding item 5, it

is unclear as to whether the OSSE actually conducts audits at the LEA level to ensure the accuracy of data and the capturing of all important data sets.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>\$250,000 of RttT funds will be used by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to hire a vendor to create a web-based portal for the public to be able to access appropriate data that resides on the longitudinal data base. With the assurance that no individual teacher or student identification will be available, various stakeholders (parents, school staff, community organizations, researchers, education policy makers) will be able to view aggregate student data regarding academic achievement, attendance, and other information disaggregated by school, grade and ESEA subgroup. The data will be transferrable to spreadsheets for further study. This worthwhile plan supports a high rating for this criterion.</p>				
<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	3	5	
(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)**

(i) Regarding the building of an instructional improvement system for DC non-charter public school, the proposal first references the IMPACT system used by DCPS to connect student achievement to teacher effectiveness and then refers to Section (D)(5), in which the applicant describes an Individualized PD Platform that intends to match customized professional growth supports to a teacher's data on his/her students' assessment results and observation reports. This project appears to be overly ambitious and ignores the need for teachers to have quick access to their current students' testing histories, including summative and interim assessments, as well as real-time analyses of current interim assessment results as they occur, including item analyses for a whole class and standards attainment for individual students.

For charter school LEAs, a working group has already identified six important design elements for instructional improvement systems, and the OSSE will allow the LEAs to submit a plan for the creation of a system that will best meet their needs, with RttT funds allotted once the plans are approved.

The plan for charter LEAs seems simpler and more achievable than DCPS's. Thus, this criterion is rated in the middle range.

(ii) LEAs have committed to providing time for teachers to analyze student data and will identify a staff member to serve as a Data Coach. RttT funds will be used to pay stipends to support this key position in every school. Schools will submit best practices in the use of data to improve instruction, and these will be posted to the Individualized PD Platform. The hands-on, ongoing data analysis by teachers, supported by a school-based Data Coach, earns this criterion a very high rating.

(iii) DC will encourage educational researchers to delve into studies in priority areas that will inform the state's reform efforts. Research-ready data sets will be available to researchers for easy download. Through a new online request form, researchers' data requests will be easier to initiate and to respond to. The state will require researchers, once their studies are completed, to communicate with teachers and principals as to the significance of their findings. The proposal does not make clear who will be responsible for putting all of this into effect. This criterion is scored in the high range.

**(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)**

In her comments today, Chancellor Rhee clarified the vision for expanding the IMPACT evaluation system into a full-blown instructional improvement system. With funding from the Gates Foundation already in place to begin building the system, RTTT support will accelerate the creation process. The score for criterion C31 is being raised to the high range.

<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	5	5	

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

(i) According to the proposal, DC Municipal Regulations Title 5, Chapter 16, Professional Education Requirements states that successful completers of recognized alternative teacher certification programs, i.e., non-IHE, as well as traditional higher education programs, may be licensed. These new regulations also broaden the educational leadership requirement by recognizing school-based experience outside the classroom as well as allowing for non-IHE providers of administrator certification programs. Further, the Admission and Program Structure Requirements for State Approved Educator Preparation Programs, provide evidence that the state's alternative programs include all five elements of the definition of alternative routes to certification, as defined in the notice.

(ii) In 2009 the state approved four alternate certification providers for teachers and administrators, three for the former and one for the latter. At this time 272 prospective teachers are pursuing certification through the alternate providers, while 14 prospective school leaders are enrolled in New Leaders for New Schools. Apparently, no school leaders have yet been certified through such a program, but the criterion is still scored in the high range.

(iii) Keeping track of shortage areas is not difficult for DC given its small geographic area and its structure consisting of one large LEA (DCPS) with many schools and other small charter LEAs, each with just one or a handful of schools. At DCPS, centralized staffing specialists work each year to help principals fill their vacancies before the start of the school year. Information from these specialists will "trigger communication with alternative certification providers" when a particular license area is in shortage. The proposal also describes various methods that DC's charter schools use to fill their vacancies, as well as how DCPS ensures that school principals will be in place.

Other than reference to a need for special education staff, there was no information given about long-range tracking of staffing trends and projections of license areas that should be prioritized for future needs. DC's process for monitoring, evaluating, identifying and addressing areas of teacher and principal shortage seems to be rather informal, operating on a year-to-year basis. While the system may have worked in the past, it can be improved. This criterion, therefore, is rated in the low part of the high range.

<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>55</b>	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	14	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	9	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	23	27	

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

(i) This state has been at the forefront regarding measuring student growth through a value-added system, which is explained well in a document that was sent to all DCPS teachers. In agreeing to the RttT MOU, all other "participating LEAs have committed to measuring student growth with a common, statewide growth measure to be determined in 2010." A task force will be charged with creating the best way to make this happen. This task force will also identify a list of grades and subject areas not covered currently by ESEA examinations and will set out to identify appropriate assessments to be used to measure student growth in these grades and subjects. The proposal offers a detailed timeline for the completion of this work. This criterion is rated very high.

(ii) and (iii) During the 2009-10 school year, DCPS rolled out IMPACT, a teacher performance evaluation system that uses multiple measures to assess teacher effectiveness and to identify highly effective teachers. For teachers whose students take DC-CAS tests, 50% of their evaluation score is determined through "value-added" measures, i.e., the levels above or below expected growth that their students achieve, as measured by these tests. The other 50% of the teachers' evaluation scores is determined by a combination of other factors, i.e., observations of teacher performance, measures of teachers' contributions to the school community, and the school's overall achievement growth. The proposal states, "Teachers and principals have been actively involved in the creation and implementation of IMPACT," but it is noteworthy that the Washington Teachers' Union did not sign DC's RttT MOU because of its objection to "heavily weighting student achievement in a performance evaluation or using such an evaluation as the basis for key personnel decisions." [See Section (A)(2)(ii)(a) of the proposal.]

The state's other LEAs (charters) have committed to using measures of student growth through the Performance Management Framework (PMF) of the Public Charter School Board (PCSB). The PMF was designed to give PCSB needed information about performance of schools and not to measure teacher effectiveness.

In DCPS and all charter LEAs, principals are on one-year contracts. Charter school teachers are also on one-year contracts. The annual performance of these personnel is already measured in large part by student performance.

This section of the proposal also offers lessons learned from the creation and implementation of IMPACT, with future goals that have been informed by these lessons. The applicant states that teachers and principals will be involved in the refinement of IMPACT and in multi-LEA consortia that will align charter school evaluation systems to the requirements of using student growth data as a significant element.

Given the commitment to better engage teachers and principals in the refinement of these evaluation systems, these criteria are rated in the high range.

(iv) All participating LEAs have committed to using information contained in evaluations as a basis for "human capital decisions." As for using evaluation information to inform professional development, highly effective teachers can be identified as Master Teachers who not only observe their colleagues in action but also use the data compiled through the Teaching and Learning Framework component of the evaluation to develop professional development plans for teachers. (The Master Teacher program needs to be

expanded, but it does not appear as if RttT funds are earmarked for such an effort.) There seems to be an intent by the state but no clear plan for differentiating compensation based on evaluation results. However, examples are given as to how teachers are given greater responsibilities and often are promoted based on evaluation information. A newly negotiated contract with the Washington Teachers' Union (pending membership approval) will create a streamlined process for removing tenured teachers rated "minimally effective" for two straight years. Tenure does not exist in any of the state's LEAs for school leaders. Charter LEAs do not give tenure to teachers. Charter school teachers can be removed at the end of any year for poor performance as reported on the annual evaluation.

The proposal has done a fairly good job of explaining how the state will meet this criterion; thus, this section is rated in the high range.

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

Today's extensive discussion about DC's teacher evaluation system clarified information pertaining to this section, especially regarding staff evaluation's impact upon retention and compensation decisions. The scores for D2ii, iii and iv are therefore being raised.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	12	12	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	5	5	

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

Ninety-four percent of the state's students are non-white; the applicant therefore targets its equitable staffing efforts on schools that serve the highest proportion of students from poor families. Interestingly, the proposal provides data that shows schools with higher concentrations of poor students are more likely to have higher percentages of experienced teachers than other schools. The applicant rejects the likely conclusion that these schools therefore have more effective teachers, dismissing the notion that experience and effectiveness are necessarily connected. The state's plan for ensuring equitable distribution of teachers relies on two basic strategies--(1) implementing the human capital strategies outlined in (D)(2); and (2) using Smart Targeting strategies to give principals of highest-need schools first access in recruiting promising new teacher candidates. While the applicant explains its decision to not offer bonuses to new teachers who agree to placements in high-need schools, it does not discuss the possibility of instituting a compensation program for having highly effective teachers transfer from low- to high-need schools. Also, more detail is needed here about identifying qualified staff to fill shortage areas.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	6	6	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	2	4	

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

(i) The proposal describes an ambitious, achievable and effective plan to provide information to teacher preparation programs and the public as to the effectiveness of preparation programs, as measured by the eventual effectiveness of their graduates once they become DC teachers. The teacher effectiveness ratings will be readily available through the upgraded evaluation processes discussed earlier in the proposals. A clear timeline for this work is included, and the effort will be accomplished with assistance from the leaders of the state's teacher preparation programs. There is an apparent conflict pertaining to the timeline for completion of this project, with the initial timeline stating that the public will have access to

program effectiveness data in Fall 2014 whereas the chart at the end of the section indicates that the public will have access by the end of the 2011-12 school year. Despite this slight confusion, this criterion is rated in the high range.

(ii) The applicant presents an interesting plan to assist its charter LEAs in preparing prospective charter school teachers through activities such as apprenticeships that do not lead to certification. While such programs may be effective in ensuring that charter schools, which may hire non-licensed staff, have access to better qualified new teachers, the applicant has not fully responded to this criterion by not explaining how it will expand teacher preparation programs that are found to be especially effective. Therefore, this criterion is rated in the low range.

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

Today's presentation included discussion regarding the conversations that have occurred with the local teacher preparation programs. Especially enlightening was the identification of a particular DC university whose graduates are demonstrating significant success in raising student achievement. The score for criterion D4ii is therefore being raised.

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	
(i) Providing effective support	10	6	6	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	3	6	

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

(i) Throughout the entire proposal, the applicant describes targeted training efforts that will be put into place to ensure the success of various RttT projects. After listing these PD endeavors at the beginning of this section, the applicant subsequently relies on a discussion of the Individualized PD Platform that DCPS intends to build to provide customized staff development aligned to the IMPACT teacher evaluation system. While there does not appear to be a request for RttT funds for the creation of this system, it is a large component of the PD efforts that DCPS will implement to promote greater teacher professional growth and capacity to increase student achievement. There does not seem to be a sufficient plan, however, to provide DCPS schools with professional development support that is delivered through face-to-face training and collaborative work by teachers and principals. Further, overarching professional development principles or standards are lacking, as is a central office or staff member identified to work to ensure that a cohesive, comprehensive staff training program is implemented. In contrast, the RFP process described for charter LEAs to apply for funding for various data-based professional development activities seems to promote a more balanced approach to teacher training.

The limited expansion of the inter-school professional development work through the PLACEs project is a wise idea that promises to develop a successful PD model that can be further expanded to include more schools.

A plan for ongoing training of school leaders seems to be lacking.

For the reasons listed above, this criterion is rated in the middle range.

(ii) The only tracking and evaluation of professional development will be done through teachers' work with the Individualized PD Platform. There is no discussion about how other kinds of training projects will be connected to participating teachers through their identification numbers and eventually matched to student growth. Thus, this criteria is rated in the low part of the middle range.

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

The presenters spoke in detail about how all professional development efforts will ultimately be guided and assessed by student achievement. The score for criterion D5 is therefore being raised.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>112</b>	

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> The DC Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007, which established mayoral control of the DCPS, provides legal authority for the state to intervene directly in the lowest performing schools of DCPS, an authority it has used numerous times in recent years. Charter schools in DC, however, are chartered by an independent DC agency, the Public Charter School Board (PSCB). Each charter LEA is governed by a separate Board of Trustees. Insofar as the PSCB is the only entity with the authority to monitor and close non-performing public charter schools, the state does not have absolute direct authority to intervene in these schools. However, the Appendix E1.1 letter from the PSCB states that it intends to close or restart charter schools identified by the state as low achieving. There appears to be close cooperation between the state and PSCB on this issue, warranting a score in the high range for this criterion.				
<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	33	
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b> (i) The state has worked collaboratively with a coalition representing DCPS, PSCB and other organizations to identify a logical method of identifying its persistently low-achieving schools. Two types of schools have been identified for turnaround: (1) high schools with graduation rates below 60% over a two-year period; and (2) according to a creatively weighted formula, the lowest 5% of Title I schools identified for improvement under ESEA. Ten schools have been thus identified through Criterion 1 or 2, including one public charter school. Data will be reviewed annually, and the state expects the list to expand based on 2009 data.  (ii) DC has a successful track record in turning around low-achieving schools in recent years, and the proposal includes information about the numbers of schools in which all four of the required intervention models have already been utilized. Provided in table form are lessons learned and RtT turnaround implications based on the state's prior experience in school turnaround efforts. The applicant has offered excellent details about its turnaround plans under RtT, including how it will provide preparation support for turnaround teams as well as differential funding for these efforts. The proposal also details how the state plans to seamlessly incorporate the use of School Improvement Grant funds into the school turnaround work that will occur through RtT. Unfortunately, there are few details provided as to how PSCB will deal with the turnaround of the one charter school currently on the list or others that might be identified in the future. Despite this omission, the criterion is rated in the high range.				
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b> Based on today's discussion, it is apparent that there is strong cooperation among the Charter School Board, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education and OSSE, especially regarding charter school				

accountability and the need to close or turn around ineffective charter schools. The score for criterion E2ii is therefore being raised.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>48</b>	

**F. General**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	4	4	
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) Compared to DC's education funding in FY2008, funding in FY2009 increased as a percentage of its overall budgets for the two years. This earns the state full points for this criteria.</p> <p>(ii) Education funding in DC is done through a per pupil allocation to its LEAs, with special weighting given to students with disabilities and limited English proficient students. However, the applicant relies on federal Title I resources to provide extra money to schools that serve large numbers of economically disadvantaged students. For the reasons stated above, this criterion is rated in the high range.</p>				
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8	8	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	7	7	
(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	
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) The proposal states that the Center for Educational Reform gave DC an "A" for its laws governing charter schools. There is no cap on the number of charter schools that can operate in the state. In fact, 42.5% of DC's schools are public charter schools, with 38% of DC's students enrolled in them.</p> <p>(ii) DC's charter school law requires that all charter schools must have open enrollment, with a lottery used to select students when the number of applications exceeds available seats. According to the proposal, charter school enrollment reflects greater concentrations of non-white and poor students than in DCPS schools. Also, charter schools may not discriminate in enrolling students with disabilities. Only 34% of charter school applications have been approved by PSCB, and in the past five years, 12 charters have been revoked, although there is no evidence of specific charter schools that were closed because of poor student achievement. This criterion is rated in the high range.</p>				

(iii) All charter LEAs receive the same per pupil funding as DCPS schools and receive equitable allotments of federal funds as well, earning this criterion the highest rating.

(iv) DC charter schools receive significant facilities support. In FY2010, charter schools will receive \$2800 per student for expenses related to facilities, reflecting a steady increase in such funding over the past several years. Also, charter schools by DC law have the "right of first offer" for any available space in DCPS schools or buildings.

(v) DCPS has established an Office of School Innovation which is promoting new visions for education among DCPS schools. A significant number of such schools have received autonomy regarding budget, instruction, professional development, scheduling and textbooks.

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
The applicant has described many reforms in areas such as Universal PreK, Special Education Interventions, Full-Service Schools and Alternative Education. Lack of sufficient evidence of the successful results of these reforms prevents this criterion from receiving the highest rating.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
Using RttT funds, DC will partner with an outside organization to create the DC STEM Learning Network to coordinate statewide efforts to improve outcomes in STEM education. Through this network, the state will build upon pockets of successful STEM projects in its schools to expand and spread successful STEM programs throughout the state. Also, an important aspect of these endeavors will be the upgrading of math and science standards and interim and summative assessments aligned to them. Along with human capital efforts to recruit, train and retain highly effective STEM teachers, the actions described in this section provide evidence that DC meets this competitive preference priority.				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
In this RttT proposal, DC has presented a coherent, comprehensive plan to build on its already significant reform efforts to further increase student achievement, narrow achievement gaps, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and careers. All four of the reform				

areas of ARRA are addressed throughout the inter-connected sections of the proposal. DC has certainly met the absolute priority of this grant competition.

Total		0	0	
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Grand Total	500	417	441	
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #2400DC-10

**A. State Success Factors**

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

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

The District of Columbia (DC) opens its RTTT proposal with great energy, thoroughness and a contagious spirit. The plan outlined is at once comprehensive, coherent, bold, well conceived and exceptionally presented. Building on a rapidly building reform agenda, RTTT funding would advance work already underway in each of the RTTT priority areas. With wonderful deftness, DC depicts how the current set of practices in each of the RTTT priorities will be continued and modified under RTTT funding. DC is crystal clear that the RTTT infusion would come at a critical juncture: at the point when aggressive changes in governance, leadership, school organization, standards and assessments, data use, teacher union contracts and relations, charter school evolution, and, most important, student performance require a big push to fully succeed.

DC has set aggressive performance goals for RTTT. Among the goals: increase annual assessment performance by five percentage points per year; close the minority achievement gap by five percentage points per year; close the poverty achievement gap by 3.5 percent per year; increase NAEP scores by 10 points over four years; raise high graduation by three percentage points per year; increase college enrollment by five percentage points per year. While bold, each of these targets is based on progress over the past several years. For instance, if DC can hit the NAEP target, it would surpass the highest four-year student achievement gains made by any urban district in the 2009 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) report scores.

DC introduces a strong theory of change. Incorporating all four of the RTTT priorities, the theory intends to dramatically alter the District's current portfolio of schools by:

1. Drastically reducing the number of low-achieving schools
2. Shifting all middle-range schools to higher levels of performance
3. Identifying and expanding/replicating high achievers

DC aims to shift the balance of schools from a preponderance of low-achieving and slightly mid-achieving schools to a preponderance of schools in the mid-achieving to high achieving range. Considered as a quality distribution, DC intends to have the smallest share be low achieving schools, instead of the current situation where the smallest share is the high achieving schools.

**(A)(1)(ii)**

DC's impressive pace continues into the second major section of the proposal and the District scores well for showing that "participating LEAs are strongly committed to the plans." Taking advantage of its scale

advantage, DC crafted its RTTT priorities and plans through a compelling participatory process. LEA representatives comprised more than half the members of diverse workgroups organized around each of the RTTT priorities. This collaborative approach signifies both DC's integrated vision for RTTT, as well as a savvy move to win early LEA ownership for the often challenging reforms.

The District's MOU 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 document is first-rate, requiring participating LEAs to implement even the most aggressive policies and procedures. The documents certainly address each of the RTTT priorities and criteria. Typical of the RTTT process, participating LEAs will be given 90 days after the RTTT announcement to finalize and sign their respective scope of work document, which then will be subject to close review and approval by District leaders. While giving some of the currently committed LEAs an escape option, the 90-day decision period is essential if participants are to be truly dedicated to the hard work.

In terms of signatures, 35 LEAs, comprised of 201 schools and serving over 65,000 students (91 percent of DC enrollment), have signed MOUs. Only 29 schools (out of all 230 in the District) are not participating in the RTTT process at this point. DC stresses that it has won signatures from multiple stakeholders, including the Mayor of DC, DCPS Chancellor Rhee, and superintendents and presidents of boards of trustees for 30 charter LEAs.

Unfortunately, at this point DC stumbles. According to charts in the Appendix, the president of the Washington Teachers' Union has not signed the RTTT MOU, but this critical fact is not mentioned in the narrative. Reviewers would benefit from discussion of the situation as a way to fully interpret the consequences for the RTTT process of the teachers union not signing the MOU. The lack of organized teacher support for high-stakes reforms and personnel decisions (as RTTT requires) is not typically a good omen for success. Without more analysis, reviewers are left to wonder if many of the most important reform elements may be in doubt without union backing.

Elsewhere in the proposal DC claims it can work around the union resistance. Several times there is mention of the "groundbreaking teacher contract" being voted on at the point of the proposal's submission. Later in the proposal (in criterion (A)(2)(ii)), DC takes a firm stance that the District can still pursue bold reforms despite the lack of union support.

On the whole, DC scores in the high range for this criterion. The sole reason for point reduction is the failure to acknowledge and analyze the lack of formal teacher union support as it relates to this criterion.

#### **(A)(1)(iii)**

DC makes a superb case for the participating LEAs prompting "broad statewide impact." Over 90 percent of key individuals and institutions are participating or directly affected by RTTT plans. Among students, 91 percent of all students will benefit, including 96 percent of all students in poverty. Nearly two-thirds of DC's LEAs will participate, including 87 percent of schools. The proposal provides a good explanation about why the small share of non-participating LEAs should not limit District-wide impact; in short, the non-participating LEAs are nearly all single-campus charters, with small enrollments, and not prepared for the aggressive nature of RTTT reforms.

Once again, DC weakens its case by not addressing the teacher union question relative to this criterion. Although DC discusses the role of the teacher union elsewhere, some attention to the matter would help at this point. We need a better understanding of the implications for "broad district-wide impact" of not having formal support from the representative for the vast majority of teachers in the District. The proposal lists 90 percent of teachers as being on board, but that is hard to judge when most are members of the Washington Teachers' Union. District-wide impact may only be minimally affected by the union's stance; the proposal is silent at this point on whether such an interpretation, or a far worse one, is warranted.

Returning to the positive, DC presents lucidly four major sets of goals for RTTT reform, each of which is ambitious and apparently achievable. As required, goals are set for increasing student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment. Annual gains are spelled out for each goal area over a four year period (2010-2013), with rates of growth

pegged to recent progress in each area and comparison to national benchmarks. Comparative projections are provided for growth with and without RTTT investments. The only deficiency in the presentation is the lack of explanation for how DC decided RTTT would produce specific differences in test results and graduation rates. Tying projected gains to specific interventions is difficult, but some explanation would help reviewers see that this is not a "moonshot," to borrow a quote from one part of the DC proposal.

All in all, DC scores at the high-end of the mid-range for this criterion. With attention to the union question, and some explanation of the projected results differences (i.e., RTTT funding versus no RTTT funding), the District would have scored well into the high range.

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

**(A)(1)(ii)** -- The DC presentation team did an excellent job of assuaging concerns about the role of the Washington Teachers Union (WTU) in the RTTT process. The lack of explanation of the union role at this point in the proposal had resulted in a drop in scoring. Now, after the presentation, all the points in this section have been awarded. The DC team made clear--tying back to the proposal--that the Washington Teachers Union, despite not being a signatory to the proposal, is involved in three vital ways:

1. The WTU and DCPS have arrived at a path breaking collective bargaining agreement, which was ratified by 80 percent of the membership and gives the district and union significant ability to advance RTTT reforms regarding standards, assessments, performance evaluation, and personnel decisions.
2. The WTU and DCPS leadership is working closely beyond the collective bargaining agreement on all aspects of the RTTT process and related reforms
3. DCPS is creating a series of teacher and school-level councils to involve a range of teachers in multiple aspects of the RTTT process.

As a result, DC appears to have created a robust approach to involving union leadership and members in the RTTT process, while ensuring that all parties still have full opportunity for interactions (i.e., grievances, etc) through traditional collective bargaining agreements.

**(A)(1)(iii)**-- As explained above, the DC presentation team did an excellent job of addressing major questions about the role of the Washington Teachers Union (WTU) in the RTTT process, prompting a revision of Tier One scores. Similarly, the presentation team convinced this reviewer that rigorous analysis had been conducted to arrive at the different sets of performance targets—one set showing the effects of RTTT support; the other showing the effects of no RTTT support. The Chancellor, State Superintendent, charter school representative and Chief of Staff for the Deputy Mayor all explained the reviews and meetings that had occurred to make projections, including attention to variations at the individual school level (whether in the DCPS or a charter school). Thus, all possible points in the (A)(1)(iii) section have been awarded.

<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17	19	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	8	10	

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

DC is nearly perfect in its proposal for "building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain plans" [(A)(2)]. The District 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)**

DC's new state educational agency (OSSE) has set as a top priority the proper implementation of the proposal. An implementation work group—staffed by OSSE, LEA representatives and the Mayor's office—has been established to hit the ground running if DC is awarded RTTT funds. While some 85 percent of

RTTT funds will be allocated to LEAs, the OSSE still requires a solid organization and staffing to ensure that RTTT succeeds. Wisely, it will establish the OSSE Race to the Top Office, which will consist of eight new positions: project director; fiscal director; reporting and implementation manager; grant and contract analyst; research and data manager; and three effectiveness managers, who will be responsible for supporting specific strands of the four RTTT priorities.

While the implementation work group and OSSE staff will oversee the reforms, the bulk of work will be underway at the LEA and school level. Later in the proposal extensive examples of content support for the LEAs is featured. At this point, the focus is primarily on how the LEAs will receive administrative and managerial support, with some attention to content areas. For instance, the reporting and implementation manager and the fiscal manager, will help LEAs assemble financial and other data into report-ready formats. Similarly, the effectiveness managers will serve as the main points of contact with all LEAs and provide guidance on RTTT initiatives, including support for developing applications for competitive RTTT district-level grants. They also will work with the project management team to identify promising practices across the LEAs and disseminate these district-wide. One of the effectiveness managers will have a focus on STEM.

The nuts and bolts of grants management will be handled by OSSE's Race to the Top Office. DC acknowledges in the proposal that until recently it has had a spotty reputation for the management and use of Federal grants. This record has improved over the past several years, but the high stakes of an RTTT grant require that OSSE make abundantly clear that the grant and funds will be carefully monitored and used. The Race to the Top Office will be fully integrated with the rest of OSSE's ongoing efforts to improve grants administration. A benefit will be that RTTT will serve as a model for OSSE's internal reform and capacity-building efforts.

DC's budget presentation is excellent. A laudatory content point is that 85 percent of RTTT funds will go to LEAs directly or through competitive sub-grants. The balance of 15 percent will go to the District for capacity-building and district-wide projects, including the OSSE Race to the Top Office. Already, thanks to the participatory planning process, DC is able to spell out the specific allocations of funds for LEA funding. As much as \$42.4 million in sub-grants will be awarded to LEAs. Of this amount, \$30 million will be for advancing evaluation systems; \$5 million for on-line professional development systems; \$3 million for interim assessments; \$2.5 million for data professional development; and \$1.9 million for standards professional development. With excellent precision, the proposal spells out the type of work that each set of sub-grants should be supporting. For instance, the \$30 million for evaluation systems will go, in the case of the DC Public Schools (DCPS), to launch versions 2.0 and 3.0 of IMPACT, its human capital management system used to connect information about student growth to teacher evaluations.

The presentation of project budgets also is first-rate. Most important, all line-items of large amounts are broken down to give a good understanding of cost drivers and intended use. DC obviously put a great deal of care into planning and is vitally committed to transparency.

Lastly, DC provides a rigorous analysis of the sustainability of the work to be started or boosted by RTTT funding. Much of the RTTT funded work will be focused on the creation of sustainable organizations, the development of infrastructure, the building of capacity, and the alignment of curriculum, assessments and instruction. As a result, DC argues that the majority of work supported by RTTT will be sustainable beyond the grant period. For instance, 54 percent of funds will go to building infrastructure supporting District and LEA reforms; 14 percent of funds will go to aligning curriculum with Common Core Standards; and seven percent will support strengthening alternative teacher and principal preparation programs.

For the 25 percent of RTTT funding going to initiatives with recurring costs, DC proposes multiple approaches to securing follow-on funding. It first will look to efficiencies in its current operations, such as with the provision of special education, which has some \$150 million annually that may be able to be effectively used. Generating new money through savings and cutbacks always is tough, but DC is wise to flag it as an option. More generally, DC intends to draw on its broad group of stakeholders to generate new sources of funding for those RTTT initiatives that must be continued.

On the whole, DC scores at a high level for this criterion. The slight drop in points is due to vagueness in how the OSSE as a new entity will handle the immediate challenge of a massive Federal grant. In addition, there is no discussion of how DC would overcome any major changes in leadership; the new governance

structure may mitigate individual leader changes, but this is not addressed adequately in the proposal. Lastly, sustainability plans do not go beyond a general statement about the hope for help from DC's plentiful philanthropic and business stakeholders.

**(A)(2)(ii)**

DC makes a good case for the support pending from a "broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans." As noted earlier, DC has done an excellent job of bringing LEAs and their representatives into the planning and implementation process, thereby generating vital ownership for the reforms. DC also has generated strong support from a wide array of stakeholders for RTTT, as evidenced by over 20 serious letters from state legislative leaders, charter school authorizers and membership associations, local leaders, community organizations, and institutions of higher education.

It is at this point in the proposal that DC finally tackles the lack of formal support from the Washington Teachers Union (WTU) for the RTTT proposal. The DC Public Schools (DCPS) are the only unionized LEA in the District, but comprise the majority of students, teachers and schools. DC acknowledges that the lack of WTU support will be a challenge, but may well be surmountable. DCPS has been working closely with the union over the past two years on the teacher evaluation system, IMPACT. Even without support from the union, DCPS can and will move ahead with a rigorous teacher evaluation system, as it has done already with IMPACT.

The DC Public Schools sought teacher union support for RTTT, but ultimately failed when the union opted not to sign because of the aggressive teacher evaluation requirements in the reform plan. According to the proposal, the WTU was not willing to be supportive of heavily weighting student achievement in a performance evaluation, or using such an evaluation as the basis for high-stakes personnel decisions. DC took the bold stand of proceeding without WTU support rather than weakening its RTTT plan and application, which it considers "bold, aggressive and unparalleled."

DC scores in the high range for this criterion. A perfect score is not possible given the lack of formal union support and the implications it holds for implementation of the high stakes personnel decisions central to RTTT.

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

**(A)(2)(i)**-- The DC presentation team made clear that the new statewide office, OSSE, is well organized, staffed and positioned to handle a massive Federal grant as represented by RTTT. The State Superintendent amplified the proposal's explanation as to how the office is being organized to reflect the RTTT proposal and is having good success at recruiting top flight staff.

The DC presentation team also explained well how leadership transitions will be managed. The team acknowledged that Mayoral Control is not a "silver bullet" in terms of ensuring long-term leadership stability. As a result, the team is clear on several aspects of the governance and RTTT structure that should allow DC to move through any leadership changes (i.e., change in Mayor, or change in Chancellor) with only modest disruption:

1. The new OSSE provides a larger governmental structure with which the Mayor and Chancellor work, providing another leadership and stability source;
2. The RTTT structures, in particular the larger grant agreement and individual LEA MOUs, provide a legal and design framework to guide DC through leadership transitions so that the goals, priorities and work of RTTT would continue.

As a result, the score in this section has moved up to nearly perfect. The remaining gap is strong explanation of how the RTTT work would be sustained through philanthropic and other future funding.

**(A)(2)(ii)** – Echoing earlier comments, the DC presentation team made the case that the state deserves full credit for its work to involve the Washington Teachers Union in the RTTT process. Both through formal collective bargaining agreements and regular coordination and interactions, the DCPS and WTU leaders are working on essential aspects of RTTT—in particular, high stakes personnel decisions.

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

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

**(A)(3)(i)**

DC has achieved many breakthroughs in the reform areas that matter most to RTTT. DC adopted significant learning standards in spring 2005, based on five focus groups consisting of Board of Education members, educational researchers, principals, teachers and parents. As evidence of its strong standards, DC points to the high ratings it received in a 2006 Hoover Institute (Stanford University) study by scholars Paul Peterson and Fred Hess. Regarding assessments, DC shifted in the 2005-06 school years from the SAT-9 to the DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC-CAS), which effectively increased the rigor, validity and reliability of the Districts' high stakes assessment. Another notable move has been to increase AP course offerings as a way to raise the rigor of curriculum and pedagogy. Of similar rigor value, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program has been instituted in a new charter high school, and more broadly STEM education is being rearticulated through the District science standards to be reviewed in 2011.

The District's work on data systems has been adequate, but, as is self-acknowledged, below the standard of what is occurring in other states. Apparently, DC's data system work was launched in 2007 with the receipt of a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant from the US Department of Education. DC has moved quickly to achieve at least nine of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. The District also is working to make sure that its diverse set of LEAs and schools are linked and able to work with a common data and reporting system.

DC's best progress has been with "great teachers and leaders" initiatives that are changing fundamental structures and policies regarding performance and incentives. The District has been overhauling policies and regulations that have kept effective and credentialed educators out of classrooms, and that have limited the pathways to certification. As will be discussed throughout this review, DC now benefits from highly effective teacher and principal preparation programs such as Teach for America, The New Teachers Project, the Center for Inspired Teaching, and New Leaders for New Schools.

Most important, DC has won a new contract with the Washington Teacher's Union that at its core provides increased accountability for results as measured by student outcomes. Teacher rewards and protection are now based on performance rather than seniority. In a related vein, DC has instituted IMPACT, a new teacher assessment system based substantially on student performance and growth, including a rigorous observation component. Low performers as measured by IMPACT are subject to dismissal at the end of one year—after adequate supports are offered—while high performers are eligible for significant performance pay.

On the downside in this presentation, the District gives minimal attention to efforts regarding principals. Mention is made of one innovative principal program, but there is no discussion of larger plans for advancing "great principals or leaders."

School turnarounds have been a focal point across the District in both the DCPS and the charter sector. Since Mayoral Control was instituted in 2007, 30 DCPS school have been closed due to underperformance, 11 additional schools have been turned around or restarted. At the same time, the charter school oversight body has closed 12 charters due to poor performance.

**(A)(3)(ii)**

The District is to be applauded for its record of the past several years with nearly all measures of achievement. Independent benchmarks indicate that DC has improved faster on student achievement and narrowing of the achievement gaps than nearly any comparable school system. DC's student performance

has risen on NAEP in both reading and math. Relative to similar urban districts, as analyzed by the 2009 Trial Urban District Assessment, "fourth and eighth grade students in DCPS increased their math proficiency at faster rates than in other large urban districts...According to the report, DCPS was the only school district to grow more than five scale score points in both elementary and secondary math." The proposal goes on to say that DC's fourth grade NAEP reading scores for blacks and Hispanics have shown greater improvement over the last six years than Boston, San Diego, Chicago, or New York City. On the DC-CAS, the new standardized assessment, DC has had proficiency levels in reading and math grow 11 percent and 19 percent, respectively, from 2006 to 2009.

The District has made good progress at narrowing achievement gaps. While the gaps remain large, they have narrowed significantly among all sub-groups other than special needs students. The racial gap (between white and black students) stands at nearly 46 percent in reading, but was at 53 percent three years earlier. For secondary school students, the gap dropped by 17 percentage points in three years. Similar improvements have occurred with Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students.

The achievement gap, however, has widened between economically advantaged and disadvantaged students. Similarly, it has remained static for special needs students. In addition, the gender achievement gap is widening, as the female advantage in most tested areas has been widening (i. e, 11 points in reading and 4 points in math on the DC-CAS).

DC's graduation rate has improved since 2006, rising from 66 percent to nearly 75 percent. The District is transitioning to a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (with the class of 2011), which will give a more detailed and accurate picture of graduation data.

The District falls just below perfect on this criterion solely because of the achievement gap problems regarding special needs students and boys relative to girls. Otherwise, while overall results are low, DC has nearly all performance indicators pointing in a strongly upward direction.

Total	125	100	119	
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<b><u>(B)(1)(i)</u></b>				
DC scores strongly for participating in a consortium of states that are working towards common standards. The District is part of the joint initiative of the National Governors Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State Schools Officers (CCSSO), which includes 48 states and three territories.				
<b><u>(B)(1)(ii)</u></b>				
DC also scores strongly for adoption of a common set of K-12 standards by August 2, 2010. At the time of the proposal's submission, the District was scheduled to have the Common Core Standards adopted by the State Board of Education on June 16, 2010. This vote follows over 12 months of intensive planning and coordination, which has drawn on a wide-range of stakeholders and been well explained to the State Board. Thus, a smooth and efficient adoption process is anticipated by the State Board and other key actors.				

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	5	5	
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5	
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<b>(B)(2)(i)(ii)</b>				
<p>DC obviously is a strong proponent of high-quality, benchmarked assessments aligned with content standards. To this end, the District adopted DC-CAS to replace the SAT-9. Now, with the advent of the Common Core Standards, DC has joined with other states to develop and implement shared, high quality assessments. DC is a "governing state" in the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Consortium (PARCC). As a leader of the consortium, DC has signed an MOU to commit to full collaboration with all 27 members.</p>				

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

DC earns a high score for "supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments" [(B)(3)]. The District has set an aggressive pace and plan for implementing the core standards and aligned assessments. From a theory of change standpoint, DC sees student academic growth as dependent on the alignment of instruction, assessment and internationally benchmarked standards. Indeed, without such alignment, DC argues, students' educational and eventually economic opportunities are limited.

Showing impressive sophistication, DC is basing its standards and assessment rollout on three tenets. Quoting the proposal directly:

1. Proper standards implementation is impossible without accompanying interim and summative assessments, as proper implementation of standards demands using assessment data to continually improve instruction;
2. All students must find standards challenging yet accessible, including students with special needs, as well as at risk and other high-needs students;
3. Standards implementation is not complete until high schools graduation requirements are connected with college and university entrance requirements.

DC deftly spells out two major goals and four performance measures, all aligned with the tenets. The proposal goes on to provide excellent clarity and depth on the four strategies that DC will use to implement standards and assessments.

1. Implement a Fast, Aggressive Rollout Plan for Common Core Standards and Assessments: The rollout plan is multi-faceted and evidences good attention to the range of needs and issues that will affect implementation. First, the standards materials will be provided to teachers, parents and other stakeholders via a user-friendly website, supplemented by hard copy materials for parent and community members lacking access to the Internet. Second, while the PARCC consortium is developing a new summative assessment, DC smartly will have in place an interim assessment to insure a strong accountability element for the standards during the assessment transition.
2. Create, Organize and Fund a Common Core Standards Working Group: Proving it has a great grasp of the keys to educational change, DC intends to have comprehensive professional development on the new standards and assessments available to all teachers in the District. A Common Core Standards Working Group will bring LEA leadership teams together to create and review plans for implementation, including professional development. Reflecting best practice, the

professional development will be job-imbedded, content focused and entail introductory sessions followed by regular meetings through the school-year. Curriculum specialists will be retained to focus on standards and assessment alignments, and training stipends will be available to hire trainers and coaches to work with teachers and staff.

3. Create Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning: An especially creative idea is DC's collaboration with other states in the development of the manual, *Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning*. The manual will outline the progression of skill and knowledge that leads to mastery of each standard. In an impressive attempt to have the standards accessible to all students, the manual and accompanying training will help teachers understand and target the entry points for differentiating instruction according to the starting point and particular progression for individual students.
4. Align High School Curricula and Graduation Requirements with College Entrance Requirements: DC rightly sees that aligning the next educational step for students with K-12 is critical to effective implementation of standards and assessments; it will help that the ultimate goal and incentive for students has a logical tie back to the earliest of grades. The District has a head-start on this approach thanks to the innovative Double the Numbers Coalition, which was created in 2007 by school officials, elected officials, the teachers union, businesses, foundations and higher education institutions to double the number of 9<sup>th</sup> graders who finish high school within five years, enroll in college and graduate in a timely fashion.

Altogether, DC's multi-faceted plan for standards and assessments is first-rate, covering all the elements of effective educational improvement and school change. The only failing is that the details are sparse on how the four strategies, including the heavy focus on professional development, will be tracked to ensure that changes occur in teacher behavior.

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

(B)(3) -- The DC presentation team clarified that it has a solid system in place for tracking how the four strategies, including the focus on professional development, will lead to changes in teacher behavior based on the new standards and assessments. Oversight by OSSE staff is part of the approach, as is the Chancellor's leadership team, the IMPACT system, aspects of the new collective bargaining agreement, and school-based leadership by principals and designated teachers. As a result of the presentation, the deducted points have been awarded.

Total	70	68	70	
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	24	14	14	

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

DC earns 14 points out of a possible 24 points for "fully implementing a statewide longitudinal system" [(C)(1)]. The proposal states that the District has met nine of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. On close examination, however, it is apparent that DC has implemented seven of the elements, with the balance of five due to be fully implemented over the coming year:

**Element 8: A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students.** Reviewer Comments: OSSE intends to begin work to implement this element by Fall 2011--thus, it is not yet established.

**Element 9: Student-level transcript information, including information on course completion and grades.** Reviewer Comments: OSSE will develop a course coding system and begin collecting transcript information by Fall 2011--thus, it is not yet established.

**Element 10: Student-level college readiness test scores.** Reviewer Comments: Proposal states that "will begin gathering student-level scores by Winter 2010," but no evidence that this work is completed.

**Element 11: Information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary schools to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework.** Reviewer Comments: Per the proposal, OSSE "is still identifying ways to better track" student enrollment patterns and selection of coursework at their higher education institution.

**Element 12: Data that provide other information deemed necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.** Reviewer Comments: Per the proposal, OSSE "is still identifying additional data fields to collect to address alignment with success in postsecondary education and ways to better track this data." Thus, this element is not yet established.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

DC does a fair job of explaining how it will ensure that key stakeholders are "accessing and using state data." The District's unique mix of schools—DCPS and charters—makes the accessibility, timeliness, and reliability of statewide data on school and student performance critical.

DC is smart to focus on a web-based "interactive and user-friendly" resource for data. With accommodations for those parents and community members who do not have access to the Internet, such a system will enable a wide set of individuals and organizations to make use of the data and information. The District understands that its current online resource is not adequate and must be substantially upgraded. Wisely, given how fast the District is moving, it will upgrade the current version by 2011 and implement a complete overhaul by 2012.

Another positive of the plan is that it recognizes clearly the multiple audiences and stakeholders concerned with data and information on the DC schools. The first priority are educators and parents, but attention also will go to providing access to researchers, businesses, foundations, educational nonprofits and other governmental agencies. The proposal rightly concludes that DC, more so than many other school systems, is under scrutiny and must be able to make accurate data and information widely available quickly.

The main shortfall in this section is that little attention is given to describing plans for helping stakeholders learn how to use the web based system. Community meetings with parents and community members are proposed, as well as creating an online research request tool. It seems likely that more intensive support will be necessary, but how that will occur is not explained.

<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	
(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)**

**(C)(3)(i)**

DC's plan to "increase the acquisition, adoption and use of local instructional improvement systems" is excellent. It will bring coherence to a decentralized set of charter schools and DC public schools, which are using a wide array of data systems to improve instruction.

The DCPS currently uses a robust instructional improvement system made up of various data components. In a savvy application of new resources, RTTT funding will not go to expanding DCPS student-level data

systems. Instead, the new money will go to support further development of the online portal associated with IMPACT, the new evaluation system used to measure teacher performance, which can also be an instructional improvement system. The range of data contained in IMPACT, combined with a PD Platform mentioned later, will give teachers and principals powerful data tools for instructional decision making.

The challenge with the District's charters is that, although many use instructional improvement systems, there is great variation in what and how they use the systems. In some cases, charters are using 3-5 systems requiring multiple data entry. Rather than allowing charters (as LEAs with multiple campuses or a single campus) to develop their own instructional improvement systems, the District will encourage a charter consortia through which they may obtain a standard instructional improvement system, which will be more efficient and cost effective. RTTT funds will be managed in an incentive mode to secure the collaboration of charters and to ultimately systematize their instructional information systems.

**(C)(3)(ii)**

At this point, DC's plan goes after the problem of securing teacher use and application of data for improving instruction. Earlier the proposal fell short for not addressing in detail how support would be provided to make sure the online data portal would be put to good use by parents and community members [(C)(2)]. The plan regarding teachers and principals is top-notch.

At the heart of the plan will be resident experts in each school who not only understand how to use data to improve instruction, but who also know students and staff personally. Participating LEAs have committed to providing teachers regular planning time for data analysis, and each school will identify a school-based staff member who will make sure the planning time is well used. In a clever move, RTTT funds will flow directly to the LEAs for stipends for a "Data Lead" or to pay for a portion of a full time "Data Coach" in every school. LEAs that already have such staff would be allowed to spend the funds on additional professional development.

**(C)(3)(iii)**

As noted in the previous criterion [(C)(2)], DC has a remarkably refined sense of its multiple external stakeholders, especially regarding researchers and other analysts who yearn for data and information on student performance and results. It is refreshing to have a school authority state, "DC recognizes that the research community can be a strong ally in informing its reform efforts and strategy."

Acting on its belief that researchers can be a big boost, the District will make available several research-ready data sets. Information will be stripped of personal identifiers and be available in simple, downloadable data formats. No doubt, this will allow local groups and researchers to provide better analysis of educational processes more quickly and comprehensively than is currently possible.

Obviously well informed on the challenges of managing divergent interest of scholars and researchers, DC will make use of the anticipated "P-20 Consortium" to develop and regularly update a list of statewide research priorities. The P-20 Consortium, consisting of LEAs and multiple universities, will be formed to ensure tight alignment between DC high school curriculum and local college entrance requirements (as a way to address criterion (B)(3)). The Consortium also will include a research group. Items already known as essential to the priority research list will include effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies and approaches for reducing achievement gaps and education different types of students (e.g., special needs, English language learners, and at-risk/off-track students). In exchange for access to the online data sets, researchers and analysts will have to commit to leading information sessions for teachers and administrators on the ways their research findings can improve classroom instruction.

The only negative is that potential higher education partners are not listed for the P-20 Consortium. There also is no discussion of how specific think tanks or nonprofit research agencies are reacting to the proposed plan. Thus, we do not have evidence of how they will respond to the availability of data and the stipulations that will accompany access.

All things considered, the District presents an excellent plan for engaging and guiding researchers. DC could soon become one of the best examples in the nation for how the products of scholars and analysts truly become usable knowledge for those on the front-lines of improving student learning.

Total	47	35	35	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	21	20	20	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	7	7	

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

Human capital development is the central piece of DC's RTTT theory of change. DC understands the well documented research findings that cite effective teaching as the largest within school contributor to student performance. Thus, the District has aggressively pursued reforms in state, district and school human capital policies and regulations so that all adults are held accountable for their impact on student achievement. DC's plans are a direct match with the priorities and criteria of RTTT [(D)(1)]. The district scores comfortably in the high range across each of the sub-criterion.

**(D)(1)(i)**

RTTT sets out five elements in its definition of "alternative routes to certification" [(D)(1)(i)]. With excellent documentation, DC easily meets all five elements: providers may be from various sectors, even independent of higher education; the programs are selective; they entail supervised, school-based experiences; coursework may be limited and test-out provisions are available; and, the certification awarded is comparable to that from traditional paths. In DC these policies predate the RTTT process, going back to 2008 when the District completely overhauled its teacher and principal licensure programs and approved new standards for post-baccalaureate, non degree educator preparation programs.

The one shortcoming in this section is that principals receive far less attention than teachers. Policies and procedures have been changed to allow for alternative paths to certification, but the new policies and programs are not as robust as those available for teachers.

**(D)(1)(ii)**

DC has been exceptionally methodical in approving and advocating for the use of alternative pathways. Once it instituted the new regulatory framework, DC approved three alternative programs for teachers: The New Teacher Project, Center for Inspired Teaching, and Teach for America (TFA). Of the 10 teacher credentialing program in the District, three are alternative providers. According to the proposal, 272 teachers currently are pursuing alternative certification, representing nearly 10 percent of the total number (3,316) of teachers in DC that are in positions requiring certification. As the proposal rightly concludes, at this rate a relatively high proportion of DC teachers will be alternatively certified.

For principals, the approved alternative pathway is New Leaders for New Schools (New Leaders). It is one of four approved certification programs in the District for administrators. New Leaders quickly has had a significant influence on the DC schools: it has trained and supported 103 school leaders. A total of 72 principalships (30 charter, 42 DCPS) and 30 assistant principalships (10 charters, 20 DCPS) have been held by New Leaders. Currently, 14 more principals are in the New Leaders pipeline. Given that the

District has approximately 220 schools, New Leaders is well on it way to shaping the principalship across DC.

**(D)(1)(iii)**

DC has a well-designed and effective system in place for tracking teacher and principal shortages [(D)(1)(iii)]. The proposal acknowledges that the District’s compact size provides an advantage other urban districts, not to mention entire states, do not have. Still, DCPS has an impressive system and record of success. DCPS boasts a teacher vacancy rate of less than one percent. It has a position control system and staffing specialists who work with principals to ensure all budgeted positions are filled before the start of the year. The alternative certification providers also help monitor shortages and address pipeline needs.

Regarding principals, DCPS’s principal recruitment team works year round to ensure that there are enough qualified candidates for every position. The goal is have vacancies for the subsequent year known no later than May and filled as promptly as possible.

Charter schools as independent LEAs have individualized approaches to monitoring and addressing teacher and principal shortages. Evidence is strong, however, that most of the charters are systemizing their human capital management through partnerships with alternative providers, such as New Leaders or TFA, or are collaborating with each other.

DC’s mixed model is obvious in this arena, in that the DCPS and charter LEAs, while all District public schools, have distinct systems for monitoring and addressing teacher and principal shortages. The dual systems apparently are working well.

<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	
(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	28	28	

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

DC’s commitment to “improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance” [(D)(2)] cannot be overstated. The proposal makes clear that LEAs across the District are taking carefully conceived steps to link teacher and principal evaluations to student performance, to provide individualized professional development, and to remove persistently ineffective adults from the school system. As a result, DC scores in the high range on all parts of this criterion.

**(D)(2)(i)**

Per the signed MOUs, all participating LEAs have committed to gauging student growth with common, District-wide growth measures to be determined later in 2010. This will mean that 91 percent of students will be enrolled in DC schools—whether in the DCPS or LEA charters—where teachers and principals will be evaluated using a common growth measure.

DC is well into the necessary work to implement an effective growth model. During the 2009-10 school year, DCPS implemented a value-added measure for student growth. Similarly, the Performance Management Framework (PMF) of the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) was introduced in 2009 and includes a student growth measure as a tool for gauging school effectiveness. Both measures were developed with major input from teachers and principals.

With RTTT help, DC will ensure that all LEAs have student growth data for tested grades. A task force will be established to identify the best way to ensure that student growth measures are being used effectively

across the District. Once the plan is in place, DC will move quickly to expand value-added growth measures to additional grades and subjects for teacher and principal evaluations.

(D)(2)(ii)(iii)

DC is exceptionally strong in its actions and plans for "designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals" [(D)(2)(ii)]. The presentation also distinctly documents that DC will conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals" [(D)(2)(iii)]. Per the signed MOUs, all participating LEAs have committed to design and implement evaluation systems that meet District criteria, including 50 percent of the evaluation being based on student growth; conduct evaluations annually; and use evaluations to inform all key personnel decisions.

Very important to note is that "every LEA in DC can evaluate its teachers and leaders using student performance, without being subject to or pre-emption by collective bargaining agreements or regulations." This statement is pivotal in that it enables DC to use its RTTT funding to pursue aggressive performance review standards and policies despite the lack of formal support for the proposal from the Washington Teacher's Union. Teachers may protest and resist through the union, but they will not have legal or contractual ability to block the performance review system.

The centerpiece of the DCPS teacher evaluation system will be IMPACT, the highly regarded evaluation process recently developed by a former national teacher of the year awardee, with extensive input from technical experts, teachers, principals and policymakers. The multi-layered evaluation system includes the following attributes:

1. The teacher evaluation score is calculated based on an individual value-added student growth measure (50 percent), performance on teaching and learning framework indicators (40 percent), commitment to school community (5 percent) and school value added (a composite of individual value-added scores, 5 percent);
2. Teachers receive five formal observations each year (two from school leaders and three from Master Educators who specialize in their grade/content area);
3. Feedback comes in three cycles, consisting of an in-person conference and a written report within 15 days of the observation;
4. Teachers receive growth information specific to their students and classes;
5. DCPS uses the IMPACT score to make decisions regarding teacher retention, dismissal and compensation.

Still brand new, IMPACT will receive important expansion and refinement through RTTT support. Primary refinements will focus on ensuring the system is widely implemented and effective for human capital decisions. Relative to RTTT criteria, one key addition will be to develop multiple rating categories.

Prudently, teachers and principals will be active in the updates and alterations. Given how far reaching IMPACT is in what it requires of all involved, RTTT support will be essential to help the system operate optimally.

Less comprehensive is the evaluation system under development for principals. At the start of the year, principals in the DCPS meet with the Chancellor and Instructional Superintendent to set specific goals and targets for their school, with at least one directly tied to student achievement. Principals are assessed twice per year by their Instructional Superintendent per a rubric that aligns with the DCPS Effective Schools Framework. RTTT support will focus on bringing elements of IMPACT's rigor into the principal evaluation process, including the addition of multiple rating categories.

Charter schools vary from well developed to very limited human capital systems. RTTT funding will provide a major boost to efforts to balance the independence of these schools with systemized, rigorous evaluation systems. A common framework and set of approaches will be developed by LEA charters in heavily facilitated consortia. By signing on to RTTT, each LEA charter has committed to this collaborative process.

(D)(2)(iv)

It already is obvious from the preceding analysis that DC fully intends to "use evaluations to inform decisions" in all the ways that are most important to RTTT:

- Developing teachers and principals through coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;
- Compensating, promoting and retaining teachers and principals;
- Granting, or not, of tenure and/or full certification to teachers and principals;
- Removing ineffective tenured or untenured teachers and principals.

To repeat, all participating LEAs signed an MOU committing them to each of these high-stakes decision points. In addition, it is essential to know that DC has the flexibility in its collective bargaining relationship to fully pursue high-stakes decisions. The new contract pending membership approval would codify the flexibility. DCPS is making remarkable progress at changing the fundamental nature of union-management relations and the nature of what collective bargaining agreements allow as to teacher performance oversight and interventions.

All principals have the immediate contractual ability to use evaluation to inform high-stakes decisions. The process has been underway; RTTT will help systematize and make it more rigorous—closer to what IMPACT offers teachers.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	13	13	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	9	9	

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

**(D)(3)(i)(ii)**

"Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals" [(D)(3)(i)(ii)] is a critical component of DC's reform efforts. The District is taking aim at equity: closing the achievement gap between low-income students and their higher income peers. For DC, a key step towards equity is ensuring that every student has access to high-quality teachers and principals, and that no schools or key subjects lack high quality teachers.

Setting clear goals and definite performance measures, as always, DC lays out compelling strategies for improving the distribution of high quality teacher and principals. Backed up by good specifics and timelines, DC proposes to:

1. Improve the process for analyzing equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals;
2. Improve the process for analyzing effectiveness of teachers in hard-to-staff areas and subjects;
3. Engage in smart targeting, which provides additional human resource management and recruitment help to the schools in most difficulty
4. Support effective teacher pipelines for hard-to-staff areas
5. Target professional development for teachers in hard-to-staff areas.

At this point in the proposal, the extraordinary logic and order of DC's proposed work surfaces. Showing excellent integration of strategic elements, DC connects readers back to three sets of plans that are designed to provide all students with high quality teachers and principals:

1. Plans for evaluation and human capital decisions addressed in Section (D)(2);
2. Plans for professional development outlined in Section (D)(5);
3. Plans for managing the quality of preparation programs described in Section (D)(4).

The clear connection of previous and pending sections underscores that DC's RTTT plans have been carefully constructed to be well integrated and mutually supportive.

The primary negative in this section is that DC provides little evidence for how it will address hard-to-staff areas, other than stating it as a strategic priority. It does not provide examples for how teacher and principal preparation programs will be tapped to address the problem.

<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	6	6	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	3	5	

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

**(D)(4)(i)**

DC has developed a tight and focused plan for "improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs" [(D)(4)(i)]. As is now clear in the proposal, DC is unafraid to break with tradition in order to guarantee that it has access to the best teachers and principals. Most notable is the move to approve new routes to certification that sit outside the higher education world. DC's mixed model system (DCPS and LEA charters) place great demand on the alternative preparation programs as a way to improve the pipeline for teachers and principals—both in quality and quantity. DC rightly notes that with the alternative pathways now open, it is extra important to be judging the quality of all providers and bolstering those that are most effective.

In terms of evaluating effectiveness, DC has a well-conceived plan to develop "Prep Program Scorecards" for each preparation program in the District. A clear timeline of tasks and responsibilities has been developed, which would involve DCPS officials, LEA charter representatives and preparation program faculty and staff. The charge is to develop a rigorous and understandable measure of program quality and a way to report it publicly. The first version would be piloted for two years before formal rollout and release to the public.

The slight drop in scores in this section is attributable to a mismatch between the presented timeline and evidence chart. The timeline indicates that the "Prep Program Scorecards" would not be public until Fall 2014; whereas the evidence chart says 100 percent of the preparation programs in the state would have public information on their quality by Fall 2012. The discrepancy, and how it may affect implementation plans, is not explained.

**(D)(4)(ii)**

Atypically, DC's approach to expanding effective programs [(D)(4)(ii)] is not well developed, at least as it is presented in the proposal. The District proposes to build pipelines of effective and highly effective teachers, especially in hard-to-staff areas. While this is important, it will not directly address the expansion of other programs that may prove to be effective as measured by the Prep Program Scorecards. DC will develop additional competition for the providers by creating yet more providers, which through market pressures may drive improvements. Unfortunately, this approach does not address the intent of this criterion, which is to expand those options and programs that are having demonstrable success.

Another problem in this section is that it deals only with teachers, leaving out plans for principals. In addition, the proposal at this point apparently only addresses Charter LEAs, rather than all DC LEAs.

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

**(D)(4)(ii)** -- The DC presentation team clarified that the state and DCPS have been working closely with area teacher development programs on gauging their success and looking at ways to expand those that are most effective. It was a plus to learn about the direct work that has been underway with higher education institutions from the outset of the RTTT planning process on the need to concern themselves with results

and outcomes. A strong example of this work is the reported moves by American University to retool and expand its teacher development programs. Still unclear, however, is how much attention has been given to expanding high quality principal development programs, beyond the growth of New Leaders for New Schools.

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	
(i) Providing effective support	10	10	10	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	8	10	

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

**(D)(5)(i)**

This section reveals yet again the marvelous integration of DC's core strategies across multiple criteria. Throughout the proposal, evidence is strong that DC has a primary focus on "providing effective support to teachers and principals" [(D)(5)(i)]. Indeed, we have seen major professional development plans in the following ways:

- To advance the Common Core Standards (Section B3)
- To implement Interim Assessments (Section B3)
- To help teachers and principals work with "Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning" (Section B3)
- To help researchers access data and to make their results available in seminars to teachers and principals (Section C2)
- To support data-driven decision making and cultures in schools (Section C3)
- To support the development and adoption of Instructional Improvement Systems (Section C3)
- To make sure that Alternative Certification Programs include job-embedded professional development (Section D1)
- To have Master Educators provide coaching using IMPACT data (Section D2)
- To provide tiered support and training to principals (Section D2)

In a brilliant move, DC looks to tie all these elements together by proposing three strategies, each of which is designed to connect disparate professional development opportunities with groups of teachers and principals. The first is to launch an Individualized Professional Development Platform, which would be an online tool linking student and teacher data to specific professional growth options. The beauty of the PD Platform is that it would gather in one place all the professional development options available to teachers and principals, and to organize these options relative to particular student needs. The second strategy would be to support charter professional development solutions tied to evaluations. The wise intent is systemizing the professional development that the LEA charters are providing by grounding it in teacher and principal evaluations. The third strategy is to launch Professional Learning Communities for Effectiveness, in which schools from particular areas will join a professional collaborative anchored by high-achieving schools.

**(D)(5)(ii)**

DC has built evaluation of professional development into most of the proposed initiatives. However, to provide collective understanding and analysis, DC is designing the Individualized PD Platform to be an evaluation tool. By capturing teacher, principal and student data, including which professional development programs teachers and principals joined, analyses can be run as to the relative effectiveness of different professional development programs. The District will mine these data to determine which professional development options should be expanded, modified or discontinued. The information also will be made available to researchers as they study instructional improvement and other key priorities.

Once again, the District takes a critical step to weave together potentially disconnected elements of its work. The result is a reform process that will be much stronger for its mutually reinforcing elements.

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

(D)(5)(ii) -- The DC presentation team underscored that it has an excellent system in place for continuously improving the effectiveness of support for teachers and principals. The presentation amplified the value of the Individualized PD Platform and its links to the impressive IMPACT system. The state is exceedingly well organized and thoughtful on the challenge of tracking the effectiveness of support programs right down to individual principals and teachers. DC has earned a full score for this section.

Total	138	124	128	
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	10	10	10	

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

DC has full authority to “intervene in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs” [(E)(1)]. Despite the District’s unique structure as a city-state, the governance arrangement is now such that the Mayor and the equivalent of the state board (the OSSE) can intervene in low achieving schools or LEAs. While technically an independent entity, the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) is accountable to the Mayor through member appointments. Ultimately, the Mayor has the full oversight authority for all schools in DC-- those in the DCPS and those authorized by the PCSB.

The evidence is strong that interventions have occurred in DC's multiple types of LEAs in schools. Over the the past five years, the District has closed 47 schools, transformed 13, turned around seven and restarted four. More recently, the PCSB has had to close over 10 charters and has one identified for intervention as part of the RTTT process.

<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	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)**

DC has a definite approach for “identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools” [(E)(2)(i)]. The District and Public Charter School Board (PCSB) to date have used federal accountability measures to identify and target the lowest achieving schools for restructuring or closure. In the future, the approach will be modified to include preparation of an annual list of the persistently lowest achieving schools, followed by meeting of the DCPS and PCSB to set plans for turnaround.

In a sound data-driven fashion, DC has a identified two types of schools for turnaround. First, those schools with graduation rates below 60 percent over a two-year period. By this measure, three high schools are due for turnaround. Second, the lowest achieving five percent of Title I schools identified for improvement. Seven elementary schools have been identified for intervention, representing five percent of the 133 Title I schools identified for improvement. DC arrived at these decision rules in a collaborative process including the DCPS, PCSB and area thought partners.

**(E)(2)(ii)**

DC has an excellent plan for “supporting its LEAs in turning around schools...” [(E)(2)(ii)]. The plan draws on the District’s extensive history with implementation of the four turnaround models outlined in the RTTT notice. As a result, the District has developed a strong set of lessons, which it carries into the RTTT process.

DC has a big, bold plan for turning around schools through RTTT. The headlines on this plan underscore the sophistication with which DC leaders approach the complex, multi-year challenges of altering a school’s trajectory. Reading just the headlines shows a good logic and detail to the work plan:

1. Identify and plan for the turnaround, revisiting the plan annually:Finalize list of schools eligible for turnaround; examine rankings and eliminate those not truly needy or ready; publish list of schools; establish detailed plan and timeline; plan for additional turnarounds.
2. Provide preparation support for potential turnaround teams: Establish new organizational chart, job responsibilities and staffing in the Office of Human Capital; from list of turnaround schools, determine when each one will start in each of the next three years and assemble administrative team to lead turnaround; fund planning years (one year) for administrative teams who will take on turnaround in the following year.
3. Align school modernization efforts to support school turnaround:Make sure that turnaround efforts fit well within five year modernization that is underway for entire DCPS.
4. Provide differential funding for turnaround schools: DC’s turnaround plans provide additional per pupil funding over four years, starting with \$1,000 in year one and phasing down to \$500 by year four; Develop plan for use of differential funding for each school; provide differential funding for turnaround schools based on number of students.
5. Ensure capacity for strong management of turnaround partnerships: Establish new organizational chart, job responsibilities and staff for Office of School Innovation; Hire new team members.

Not listed amongst these headlines is the particular turnaround model for each school. Of the 10 schools identified for turnaround, several will take a “restart” approach; several will pursue “transformation;” and the remainder will undergo “turnarounds.” These models were identified based on review of each school’s full battery of data and reform history, and the preferences of the particular administrative team charged with the turnaround.

Total	50	50	50	
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**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	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	
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
DC 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.” According to evidence provided in the proposal, the share available to education rose from 22.3 percent in FY08 to 23.5 percent in FY09, an increase in dollars of roughly \$200 million.				
<b>(F)(1)(ii)</b>				
Similarly, the proposal provides sound evidence that DC’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)].				

<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	
(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	6	

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

DC arguably is one of the nation's leaders in the charter school movement. According to the proposal, New Orleans is the only urban district with a higher percentage of charter schools and students in charter schools; DC is at 42.5 percent and 38 percent, respectively. DC also is recognized as having the strongest charter laws in the nation. Obviously, the District is highly dedicated to "ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools" [(F)(2)].

**(F)(2)(i)**

The charter school law governing DC, as imposed by Congress, mandates what should be considered a "high cap." It limits chartering authorities to approve no more than 20 new charter schools annually. There is no evidence, however, that this cap has been close to imposing a barrier to establishing charter schools. Typically five charters per year have been approved, which has more than met demand.

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

DC has set rigorous standards and accountability systems regarding charters [(F)(2)(ii)]. The District's "mature charter law" is definite on how charter authorizers are to approve, monitor, oversee, hold accountable, reauthorize or revoke charters. Enrollment is in no way limited as to population or otherwise structured to encourage charters that are different in population than traditional public schools. Indeed, DC's charters currently serve a higher percentage of minority and economically disadvantaged students than the DCPS schools.

The proposal documents clearly that charter school accountability is strong in DC. Between 2004 and 2007, 27 new charters were approved, 51 were denied, and four were revoked. Over the past five years, 12 charters have been closed—four charters were revoked and eight were returned after intensive monitoring.

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

DC'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)]. The District is especially helpful in providing charter schools financial assistance with facilities [(F)(2)(iv)]. Charter schools receive an additional \$2,800 per pupil that may be used for facility leasing, purchase, financing, construction, maintenance and repair. Adjustments to this amount are possible, if a school can argue the case. Charter schools also are eligible for low-cost, tax-exempt bond financing through the DC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development.

**(F)(2)(v)**

School autonomy is quite relevant to DCPS reform efforts, well beyond charter schools [(F)(2)(v)]. The proposal provides significant evidence that the DCPS has a coordinated, well-led plan to promote innovative school models. Currently, 17 DCPS schools operate under one of three autonomous projects, all of which meet the definition required by the RTTT notice: they provide flexibility at the school level over budgets, instructional program, professional development, schedule and textbooks. Not mentioned is

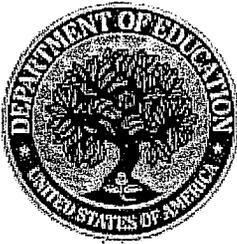
whether or not the innovative model provides flexibility over staffing, one of the RTTT definitional requirements.				
<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>DC's explains with precision how it "demonstrates other significant reform conditions" [(F)(3)]. Keeping with the RTTT requirement, none of the additional reforms are mentioned earlier in the proposal. Moreover, all are critical to improving learning and advancing school reform. For instance, DC features universal pre-kindergarten as a key step in readiness to learn; special education interventions as essential to a significant share of its student population; and, alternative education for disengaged and disaffected students, who are off-track for graduation. To quote the proposal, "from preschool through high school and beyond, DC is positioned to meet the needs of all its students."</p> <p>Points are lost, however, because DC fails to provide evidence for how the "other significant reform conditions" shaped student performance. The proposal is silent on whether the reform conditions, to quote the RTTT criterion, "have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes."</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>DC submits a superb plan for STEM. It acknowledges at the start that it has many pockets of excellence in STEM education, thanks to many partnerships, but that what is missing is a comprehensive and cohesive vision and strategy. DC's proposal, to be implemented in collaboration with Battelle and other partners, is a giant first step towards cohesion and effectiveness.</p> <p>Most impressive, the plan truly is a strategy, and one that aligns deftly with the RTTT framework. Six major strategy elements are outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a learning network, that leverages existing resources and programs for STEM</li> <li>• Establishing a strong foundation for STEM subjects by aligning with standards and assessments</li> <li>• Developing human capital resources for STEM by establishing new teacher pipelines and improved professional development</li> <li>• Developing a map of when and how students master STEM knowledge and skills to be prepared for college and careers</li> <li>• Using STEM as the key program component in one or more school turnarounds in DCPS</li> <li>• Coordinating partnerships between LEAs and university and industry sectors in STEM.</li> </ul> <p>DC provides a certain action plan for how these strategies will move from being good headlines to actual work. Good pre-planning has occurred, such that priority work, roles and responsibilities, and partners, are known for each of the strategy areas. Pertinent to the RTTT requirements, several of the strategies pinpoint attention to addressing the need of underrepresented groups and of women and girls.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<p><b>Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b></p> <p>DC's RTTT proposal is one of unique energy, thoroughness and a contagious spirit. The plan is comprehensive, coherent, bold, well conceived and exceptionally presented. DC has set aggressive performance goals for RTTT and has a strong theory of change. Integration of approach and work is a theme throughout the proposal: with impressive persistence, DC weaves together related and mutually supporting elements from multiple parts of the proposal.</p> <p>RTTT funding would advance work already underway in each of the RTTT priority areas. DC is crystal clear that the RTTT infusion would come at a critical juncture: at the point when aggressive changes in governance, leadership, school organization, standards and assessments, data use, teacher union contracts and relations, charter school evolution, and, most important, student performance require a big push to fully succeed.</p> <p>The biggest challenge to the proposal is the failure to the win the signature of the Washington Teacher's Union. On the downside, the lack of formal support from the union casts doubt about the likely success of the high-stakes use of performance systems and measures. However, DC argues with convincing candor that it sought the union's support, but stopped trying when it was clear that it would have had to compromise its top priority of using evaluation to ensure excellent human capital in the DC schools. In addition, DC indicates that it faces no collective bargaining limitations to the bold human capital approaches advocated by RTTT and proposed for the District.</p> <p>Lastly, DC's comparative advantages are notable. First, funds focused on DC may well go "further, faster" given the smaller scale: 72,000 students in a little over 200 schools. Second, DC is a poster example of the crisis of urban education, yet could be a lead story on how urban districts and schools can turnaround to become places of rigor, relevance and success. Third, the creative moves with charter schools, that has resulted in a system of entrepreneurial schools (rather than a school system) along side a traditional school district, demonstrates how a mixed model of governance and autonomy can work. Lastly, leadership consistency with Mayoral control, the presence of a dynamic public school chancellor, the generosity of philanthropic and business partners, and the engagement of innovative educational nonprofits, all combine to make DC fertile ground for a path-breaking RTTT and City-State partnership.</p>				
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>468</b>	



# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #2400DC-6

### A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	57	57	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	40	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

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

The applicant has articulated a comprehensive, coherent reform agenda based on successful work that has already achieved results. The application details plans to build on those successes and move forward more quickly with the infusion of the Race to the Top (RTTT) funding. There are signatures from the Mayor, the Chancellor, Superintendents and Presidents of Boards of Trustees for the 30 charter LEAs.

There is a chart included which delineates current practice and RTTT plans across the 4 education areas of ARRA. Basically the plan is to drastically reduce the number of low achieving schools; shift all middle range schools to higher levels of performance; identify and expand/replicate high achievers; require all LEA's to have evaluations for teachers and administrators based on student growth (at least 50%).

The applicant includes signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) representing a vast majority of schools, teachers and students. The 35 LEAs serve over 65,000 students (91%). This represents 47,151 students in poverty (96%), 201 schools (87%), 5,800 teachers (over 90%). The chart in the Appendix indicates a no from 23 LEAs which are choosing not to participate. While this seems like a large number of non participating LEAs, the numbers of schools (18 of the 23 districts have only 1 school, and 2 will be closing), students (average of 276 compared to 608 for participating) and teachers are quite small in contrast to the numbers which are participating.

The applicant has been in the negotiation process with the teachers union of the one traditional LEA. At the time of submission of this RTTT application, the vote had been taken, and results were being awaited. The applicant feels confident that the union members were voting to accept the new contract agreement which would tie teacher evaluations to student performance. If this occurred, then this would turn that no into a yes, boosting the numbers participating even higher than stated above.

The applicant has a small size and limited bureaucracy so implementation and statewide impact is much easier than it would be in most states. The MOUs signed by the LEAs specifically list the requirements for participation and the document delineates State, LEA, and joint expectations and responsibilities.

The intention is to increase scores overall and specifically reduce the achievement gaps of subgroups. For example, raising overall state reading proficiency rates by approximately 22 points over 4 years and for subgroups 4, (Whites), 6 (Asian), 24 (Hispanic and Black) 25 (SPED), 22 (ELL); National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores by 10 points in both math and reading (becoming the urban school district with the largest 4 year gains). The applicant includes a chart with projected results (both with and without RTTT funds) through 2014.

High school graduation rates will be accelerated by 12 percentage points by 2013 with RTTT reforms, 7 points higher than without RTTT funds. Tracking will be done by the current leaver rate and also with a new 4 year adjusted cohort rate during the transition period. The increases will be higher beyond the grant period as more students will have experienced the reforms earlier in their school career.

The applicant will continue work with the coalition Double the Numbers to increase college enrollment (5%) and credit earned.

While the applicant states the increases to expect and has shown prior progress in increasing high school graduation, there is not sufficient detail included in the application as to how this will be accomplished. Goals, activities, timelines and responsible parties are not detailed.

<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17	17	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	6	

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

The State has demonstrated leadership capacity through prior reform successes and through the formation of an implementation working group which will plan and coordinate the RTTT funds upon notification. The State's 5 year strategic plan focuses on data, accountability and human capital. As a very new State Office, the staff and procedures are not as entrenched as they might be if they had been in operation for many decades and, therefore, more open to change.

The State has shown through the budget narrative how it will leverage funds from other sources to coordinate the reform efforts and how RTTT funds will supplement existing resources. It also intends to reallocate or repurpose state and local funds as needed to align with RTTT goals. A successful alignment of the education budget has already been accomplished to support current reform which is another indicator of capacity to implement.

Grants management will be a strategic focus for this new State office as 85% of the budget will go directly to the LEAs to support the reforms. There will be a process for awarding additional funds to the LEAs and accountability is built into the system. There will also be a process for providing differentiated levels of support to LEAs as they are meeting the reporting requirements to ensure that the LEAs have autonomy, flexibility and capacity to meet the requirements. There are multiple means by which the applicant will provide support to the LEAs to ensure efficiency and effectiveness throughout the RTTT funding cycle.

The applicant states that 54% of the RTTT funds will be used to build a sustainable infrastructure and that 75% of the requested funding is for projects to be sustained beyond the funding period and won't require additional funds.

The system has conducted an audit, and special education out of district placements will be addressed. This will not only focus on the instructional services/academic achievement, but also the cost savings will allow recovered dollars to be reallocated.

There is evidence within the application that the applicant has support for reform from a broad group of stakeholders. There are letters of support from a wide variety of critical stakeholders such as the Chair of the Council, legislators, area colleges and universities, foundations, community groups, charter school organizations, current partners/collaborators, and business groups. These groups are also represented on a variety of teams, task forces and planning groups. Many have already been instrumental in the current reforms and upon seeing the successes will continue their support.

Missing from the support letters is one from the education association leader, which is understandable, since the contract was under negotiation at the time of submission of the application. Also missing are letters from parent groups, civil rights groups, special interest groups, teachers, administrators, and students.

It is unclear if the teams that have been and will be developed along with the effectiveness managers will be sustainable beyond the 4 years of funding. The plan for capacity building at the state level for continued support and monitoring is not included in the application. This is a concern since the applicant is having additional personnel responsible for RTTT rather than having existing personnel targeted to provide the support and oversight to the LEAs. It is also a concern since the top leaders/decision makers have uncertain tenures as they are either elected officials or appointed by the elected officials.

<b>(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	25	25	
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>The applicant has presented substantial evidence of progress in the past several years in each of the four education reform areas. There is also evidence that federal, state, local, and additional external funds through partnerships have been used to support the reforms.</p> <p>In addition, there is substantial evidence presented that student outcomes (overall and by sub group) and graduation rates have improved since 2003.</p> <p>The evidence is presented by the applicant in both narrative form and through graphics in the application and in the appendices. There is also reference to third parties which substantiate the progress made by the applicant in terms of reform strategies, student achievement, closing the gap, and assessment results on both state tests and NAEP. In spite of the tremendous gains and the success of the reforms to date, the applicant is not satisfied with the progress and looks to leveraging the RTTT funds with other federal, state, local, and other funding to speed up the process of reform so that the results will be seen more quickly and throughout the entire system. In addition, the applicant is looking forward to being the model that other urban districts can look to for successful, comprehensive reform strategies that meet all four education reform area guidelines and result in improved academic achievement for ALL students regardless of subgroup.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>	

**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>The applicant participated in and has a signed MOU with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) consortium, which includes 48 states, DC and 2 US territories. These standards (K-12 math, language arts and reading) are internationally benchmarked and are aligned with college and career expectations. At the time of submission of the RTTT application, 5 public hearings had been conducted, along with meetings with the State Board of Education and a review of the final draft standards by expert teacher review panels.</p> <p>On June 16, 2010, the State Board of Education was to vote to adopt the standards at their meeting. This is the final step in the legal process. The law mandates that academic standards be coherent, rigorous, include advanced skills, and be updated regularly. Steps had already been taken to expedite the</p>				

implementation of the standards upon their adoption. It is anticipated that an amendment to this application will be submitted prior to August 2, 2010 confirming the formal approval of the standards. The standards with the aligned assessments will be implemented by 2011.

The applicant was also an early member of World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), a consortium of 21 states which have adopted common standards for English Language Learners. In addition, internally, the applicant has adopted comprehensive health standards.

<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(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)**

The applicant documents the current use of high quality interim assessments that were developed by non-profit organizations and also by charters. Refinement of these is already underway.

The applicant is also moving forward in collaboration with 25 other states to develop aligned interim assessments and supporting formative materials as a continuation of the CCSS group. In addition, the applicant is a governing state in Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for college and Careers (PARCC) and has a signed MOU. This group of 27 states is working to develop a system that includes common summative, interim and formative assessments aligned to the common core standards by 2014.

<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The applicant includes a detailed plan, with goals, performance measures, timelines, activities, and responsible parties, for how these standards and the comprehensive, high quality assessments will be transitioned into the LEAs. The transition will focus on standards along with interim and summative assessments. The standards will be challenging and accessible and high needs students will be included. There will be attention paid to graduation requirements to ensure a connection with college/university requirements. Each LEA must submit, in their final scope of work, an implementation plan detailing how initial and ongoing training will be provided to all instructional staff; how the common core and its impact on students will be proactively communicated with families; how to differentiate instruction so all students will achieve, and how the new standards tie to career and college readiness.

The applicant will use local funds to hire external experts and a graphic design firm to develop supplemental materials. A website has already been created so that parents and community members have access to information about the new standards. Through partnership with other states, external experts and a web designer, this initial web site will be improved, become interactive, and be the one stop source (in multiple languages) for information and materials for students, parents, community members, policymakers, teachers and principals.

The applicant's membership with PARCC, and the prior work that has been done with the Double the Numbers group will also assist in the process of aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments.

Because of the progress to date on standards, assessments and using data, and the small size of the population, this transition should be quick (interim assessments by 2011) and smoother than most. There are a few issues that are not addressed in the application or the appendices:

----- It is unclear how the applicant will see immediate collaboration and successful discussions with the P-20 consortium that has not yet been convened. The process of team building associated with the formation

of new groups to ensure their success has not been documented. The work with institutions of higher education is just beginning. Monthly meetings are scheduled, but these two issues will make the spring 2011 timeline difficult to achieve as it will take several meetings to establish trust, develop relationships, and determine a work routine.

----It is not possible to know the level of expertise of the external provider of services and/or the ability of the group to provide high quality, timely, specified services without either a description of the work expected and/or a copy of the RFP to be used to solicit the external provider of services; or if the provider has already been chosen, a description of the qualifications of the provider.

----Although the applicant is requiring the LEAs to include a plan for professional development, there is no indication that the applicant or the LEAs is aware of what should be included in a quality, continuing, comprehensive professional development plan.

Total	70	68	68	
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### C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	

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

The applicant was awarded funds to build and implement a longitudinal data system in 2007. As a result many of the America COMPETES elements have been addressed. 7 of the elements have been completed (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) leaving 5 of the elements (8, 9, 10, 11, 12) in process.

Element 8-Matching teachers with students--Although the teacher identifier system (8) which matches teachers to students is already in process in the largest LEA, it will not be fully implemented statewide until Fall 2011.

Element 9-student level transcript information/course completion/grades--A course coding system will be developed and by Fall 2011 transcript information will be collected.

Element 10-Aggregate AP and SAT scores are currently collected; student level scores will be gathered beginning in Winter 2010.

Element 11-Successful transition to post secondary and enrollment in remedial courses; Student enrollment can be verified by institution, but tracking enrollment in remedial coursework is still in process.

Element 12-Addressing alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary; TAG program students can be tracked by ward and cohort; which additional data fields to collect to address alignment with success and better ways to track data is still in process.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

Currently, data is available from 2003 to the present through score cards, AYP information, graduation rates and attendance figures for schools and student subgroups. Parents report that the data is plentiful, helpful and also overwhelming. Going forward, the applicant has a detailed plan including goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties. There is an assurance that information will be relevant, more timely, and easy to use. Parents and community members will be able to access data through a variety of user friendly tools and websites (public websites will be available for those without internet access, and the information will be available in multiple languages). Community meetings will also be held by fall 2011 to discuss data and determine how it can be made more useful. Data will be stripped of personal identifiers.

The data will also be available for researchers. The applicant will be proactive in engaging researchers and will work through the P-20 consortium to encourage researchers to develop research agendas around a list of statewide priorities which will be developed. There is also an opportunity for other organizations to apply for access to additional student level and cohort level data for external research priorities which will be tracked through the data system.

Accountability will be increased with the public access to relevant, user friendly data. Low achieving schools will have more of a reason to change as everyone will have access to the comparative data.

The applicant has presented a very in depth detailed data plan which will be longitudinal. The focus of the data sets is on PK-12. The P-20 council is mentioned, but there is no indication that higher education stakeholders (other than researchers) will be specifically targeted for this data initiative.

<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
(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)**

The applicant will use data to improve instruction. Teachers will be provided actionable data for real time decision making, and there will be support provided for teachers so that the data is used to inform instruction. Some of the dollars will be used to upgrade LEA data systems, and some will be used to expand the IMPACT system. The intent is to better meet their individual needs and move them forward in the use of data. Differentiated approaches will be used to more effectively meet LEAs where they are in the process of accessing, understanding, and using data.

With the expansion of IMPACT, the current tool will be improved for principals/administrators to manipulate data system wide and determine interventions immediately.

Professional development will be individualized, shared, and based on needs determined by the evaluations of teachers and principals which will include student data. Training on data driven instruction will also be included as a part of the professional development/support.

Dollars from RTT will be used to pay data analysts/leads/coaches in LEAs where they have not yet been hired. These resident experts understand how to use data to improve instruction, and because they are building based, they know the staff and the students. This approach coupled with the integrated data system itself, the sharing of best practices across the buildings/LEAs, and the job embedded professional development will ensure successful use of data resulting in improved instruction and higher achievement for students.

As stated previously (see comments under C2), the applicant will be proactive in making data available to researchers.

The applicant includes a detailed plan, addressing each criterion of Section C, with goals, activities, timeline, responsible parties and anticipated results. The majority of the work will be developed and implemented within 2 years which gives an additional 2 years to monitor implementation and build system capacity.

<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	
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**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	7	7	
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>In 2008 the applicant completely overhauled requirements for teacher and principal licensure and approved new standards for post baccalaureate, non degree educator preparation programs. Qualified non-profit organizations and LEAs are now able to develop alternative state approved educator preparation programs for both teachers and principals. There are 10 credentialing programs for teachers, and, currently, 3 alternative preparation programs meet the high bar for quality. 272 teachers are enrolled in these programs. There are 4 approved programs for administrators, and 1 is an alternative provider. 14 are currently enrolled in the alternative program.</p> <p>All of the certification programs are selective, provide supervised school based experiences and ongoing support, limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses, and upon completion, award the same level of certification as traditional preparation programs.</p> <p>Alternative certification providers will be helpful in addressing teacher shortage areas such as special education, math, science, early childhood, bilingual education and foreign language. Between 2008 and 2009 the capacity of special education staff was increased by 20% so the process of increasing capacity is working in the State.</p> <p>The principalship is a one year appointment by the Chancellor without tenure. Vacancies are known by May.</p> <p>Charter schools have individualized approaches to monitoring and responding to teacher and principal shortages. Much of the recruitment is for planned school expansion. Most charters are leveraging partnerships with non profits to fill vacancies. Many charters fill leadership positions through identifying talent from within their ranks.</p> <p>The applicant has described, in detail, how it has already begun providing high quality, alternate pathways for new teachers and principals, has a process for identifying, monitoring, evaluating and filling the areas of teacher and principal shortage, and details how it will enhance this system through RTTT funding.</p>				
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	
(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	
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

The State is using IMPACT which is a nationally recognized teacher performance evaluation system using multiple measures to assess teaching effectiveness and identify highly effective teachers using a value added student growth model. 20% of the teachers have used the Impact System.

Principal Evaluations are already based on student growth and with principals on one year contracts, this information is critical for making personnel decisions. The Public Charter School Board has been working to develop its Performance Management Framework, which will be weighted with at least 50% based on student achievement. The applicant states that staff at charter schools are at will employees, so usually only effective teachers and principals continue from year to year.

By spring of 2014, teacher and principal effectiveness will have improved an average of 15% over baseline measures in participating LEAs. All LEAs have committed to measuring student growth with a common statewide growth measure to be determined in 2010 and have signed an MOU as confirmation. In charter schools there is a comparison of student's growth relative to what is needed to reach proficiency.

The applicant includes a chart with work to date, lessons learned from the prior implementation phase, and how RTTT will accelerate reforms. Teacher and principal input were solicited as a part of the process in piloting IMPACT.

Also included is a chart with activities, timeline, and responsible parties. First there will be student growth data for all tested grades by 2011. Then, it will be expanded to all other grades. RTTT dollars will identify common growth measure to be used statewide, and with the expansion and this will be available by 2012 and 2013. 91% of students will be enrolled in schools where teachers and principals are held accountable for their impact on student achievement including 100 % of the students attending school in a traditional system.

Teacher and principal development will be determined based upon the results of the new evaluation system. Also tenure, promotion, and compensation will be determined based upon the results of the new evaluation system. Data will be collected in all areas and information will be shared across the state.

The applicant has fully addressed this criterion.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	
(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	10	10	
<b>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
The process for equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals will be improved as a result of the new evaluation system. The applicant has included a detailed plan for ensuring equitable distribution of teachers and principals across the state in hard to staff areas and in high poverty schools. This includes targeting professional development, supporting effective teacher pipelines, supporting professional learning communities for effectiveness, collecting data on where teachers are and where they need to be based on poverty, effectiveness, special needs, etc.				
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	4	4	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	4	4	
<b>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

Teacher and principal effectiveness data will be publicly shared via Prep Program Scorecards with all teacher and principal preparation programs (IHE and alternative route).

The applicant has included a chart that includes activities, timeline and responsible parties. Preparation/development/design will begin immediately and representatives from the teacher and principal prep programs will be included in the planning. The chart indicates that the annual score cards will be created beginning in the fall of 2012. They will be piloted (for 2 years?) and then made public in 2014. It is not clear why a 2 year pilot would be required. Also, in the performance measures chart, there is an indication that the public will have access to the score cards on 100% of the programs by the end of the 2012 school year. This is conflicting information.

The applicant will make available competitive grants for programs. This will be open to charters, district sponsored teacher training, and also providers of preparation programs in partnership with districts. This will create a pipeline of effective teachers in areas of need. These programs could include resident teachers who work alongside of an experienced teacher for 1-2 years. The applicant is unclear about expansion of viable preparation programs for principals.

The applicant will collect data on numbers of educators prepared, and also on numbers of educators needed. This information will be aggregated at the state level.

<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	
(i) Providing effective support	10	6	6	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	6	6	

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

The applicant has addressed providing support to teachers and principals in a customized manner and by using those who are already effective to support those who need to become more effective. Professional development for teachers and principals/administrators is addressed throughout the application. The needs assessment will be the results of the new evaluation system so that it is tied directly to student achievement and what teachers and principals/administrators need to know to continue to improve student achievement.

The applicant includes, in this section, references to other sections of the application in which initiatives that support teacher effectiveness through professional development are embedded. In addition, the applicant addresses 3 strategies: launching individualized professional development platform; supporting charter professional development solutions tied to evaluations; and launching professional learning communities for effectiveness. The attributes are individualized, robust, teacher centered, and self service oriented. There will also be support for professional development solutions that tie to needs identified through the evaluation process. LEAs/buildings will be required to submit a plan that will be reviewed by the State.

The applicant intends to develop a process by which to measure the effectiveness of its support/professional development for more effective instructional personnel. This data will ultimately assist the applicant in determining which professional development options should be expanded, improved or discontinued. This information will also be made available to researchers.

While the applicant includes important attributes of effective professional development in the application, it is not clear that there will be standards for professional development. Without using standards, it is up to chance whether schools will be able to design plans that are effective. It is also not clear if the system has a professional development specialist who can lend expertise to the teachers and principals as they are developing their individualized portfolio of professional development. The evaluation system which is proposed to be developed may address this issue, but it is not being addressed in a timely manner to be useful at the front end. Instead of being proactive, the results of the implementation will then be analyzed and changes will be made based on those results. Again, it will be difficult to measure and evaluate without a set of standards and a rubric on which to measure effectiveness and progress over time.

Total	138	124	124	
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**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	10	10	10	

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

The State can intervene directly in the persistently lowest achieving schools. The Mayor, who functions like a Governor would in another State, has the authority to make decisions related to closing, restarting, turning around, and transforming schools in all LEA's. In the past 5 years, 47 schools have been closed, 13 have been transformed, 7 have undergone turnaround and 4 have been restarted. By 2012 all persistently lowest achieving schools will have an intervention plan in place. There will be an effort to target 22 additional schools, thus 20% rather than only the bottom 5 percent will be targeted.

There is a district wide school facilities fund created by the Mayor. LEA's or individual charter schools can be chartered by an independent agency that is governed by separate boards of trustees which are independent nonprofit corporations. It is the only entity charged with the authority to close public charter schools and is responsible for monitoring charter school quality. The chartering agency has written a letter of support indicating that it will move to close or restart schools that appear on the list of persistently low achieving schools. While the agency has no direct report on the organizational chart included as an appendix, the members of this board are appointed by the Mayor who has the authority to intervene directly and make decisions related to closing, restarting, turning around, and transforming low achieving schools.

<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	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)**

Since the system was established in 2007, student achievement has risen, enrollment is stabilizing and more families see the value of DCPS education. As noted above the authority is present, and it is being used. The applicant has created a context in which important lessons have been learned from the on the ground turnaround work.

There are two types of schools for turnaround, those with graduation rates below 60% over a 2 year period (currently, there are 3 DC high schools with graduation rates below 60), and those in the lowest achieving 5% of the Title I schools identified for improvement.

The applicant provides examples of each of the turnaround models with documented success and lessons learned. These are a base for building to the 20%. RTTT funds will be used to build capacity in the office of human capital to provide logistical support, professional development, evaluation, and onsite coaching to the planning team. The applicant lists activities, timeline and responsible parties.

Differential funding is provided for turnaround schools. There is a provision of additional per student funding for the first four years of a school's turnaround, restart or transformation. These dollars are based on a per student amount and are phased out on a yearly basis. Funding was provided in the past by private donors. The State will provide support to assist in the planning of how to best support strategies and sustainable activities that meet the unique needs of turnaround school students. Funds will also be aligned with any School Improvement Grant allocations.

Total	50	50	50	
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**F. General**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b></p> <p>Education is the highest priority, and this is reflected in the budget. Funding has increased even in difficult economic times. The Mayor has asked city agencies to absorb deeper budget cuts in an effort to hold school funding stable. The education spending increased between FY 2008 and FY 2009 by total dollars amounts and by percentage. The applicant clearly states this and provides a chart to support the claim.</p> <p>Equitable education funding is possible via the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula which is part of the School Code. Every student generates foundational funding for its LEA in the same way and in the same amount. Additional individual student weightings are applied based on grade level, special education level, limited/non English proficiency, etc. Additional Title I funds flow through the State to district LEAs serving children living at the greatest poverty levels. The applicant includes a reference to a 2006 Ed Week article which ranked this applicant 13<sup>th</sup> in the nation for per pupil expenditures. RTTT funds will be a strategic investment in the development of systems and processes to enable funding dollars to be leveraged for results.</p>				
<b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	
(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	
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b></p> <p>The applicant states that their charter laws are the strongest in the nation. Autonomous schools are encouraged through the charter sector and also within the traditional LEA. The State has a vibrant network of charter schools 57 charter LEAs, and 96 charter campuses (42.5%) serving 28,066 students (38%) which, the applicant states is higher than other urban districts, except for New Orleans. Charters will be eligible to access 40.1 million dollars or 36% of the RTTT dollars. The applicant documents enrollment by type of charter and number of students served.</p> <p>As noted above, with the equitable funding per student, there is no difference in the amount of money that goes to a traditional school student or a charter school student as the formula is uniform. There are no caps on charter schools. There has been an average of 5 charter schools approved each year. Successful charters can easily increase capacity or replicate their models with approval from the charter authorizer without counting against any type of quota. The ratio of charters to traditional schools is 1:34. There is no practical limit to growth of charters and there is no legal or practical limit to the number of students who can</p>				

be served by the charter schools. To extend charters as models of innovation and autonomy, the Chancellor is considering requesting chartering authority for the traditional LEA to allow the LEA to engage more readily in school restarts and to use charters for turnaround efforts.

Charters are open enrollment institutions and the statute expressly prohibits public charters from limiting enrollment on the basis of student's race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs. They can limit enrollment to specific grade levels. When applications exceed capacity, a random selection process or lottery must be used for admittance. Accountability is very strong with annual monitoring by the chartering agency and a comprehensive review every 5 years to ensure compliance.

A five year table documents the history of applications, withdrawals, approvals, denials, and measures taken to close non performing charter schools. The Center for Education Reform's 2009 Accountability Report cites the chartering agency as having "created the gold standard in charter school accountability."

Funding for facilities is provided on a per student basis. This funding has increased every year from FY03-FY08. Additional facility funds are also possible through 5 other sources of federal funds and various programs through the Deputy Mayor's office.

The Official Code gives the right of first offer for any current or former public school property to an eligible applicant whose petition to establish a public charter school has been conditionally approved. The permission is then granted to occupy for not less than 25 years, renewable for an additional 25 years. The applicant has not only addressed all of the criteria for successful charter schools, it has exceeded the criteria in every way so that charters and other autonomous schools are ensured successful conditions to be high performing and innovative without barriers traditionally seen.

There is a specific office of school innovation whose mission is to increase the level of diversity and innovation of the schools. This department is led by an experienced administrator from another urban district where successful turnaround strategies were implemented. The goal is to ensure that all children regardless of test scores or where they live will have access to innovative schools that meet their unique needs. Currently there are 4 autonomous schools, 10 collaborative for change schools, and 3 partnership

schools. The district is committed to removing barriers to change and supporting schools in their change efforts.

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>Universal prekindergarten was passed in 2008. Through a blended model, Head Start, charters, community based organizations and school districts are working together to provide quality programming meeting high standards for all.</p> <p>Alternative education will be addressed for those who are disengaged and off track for graduation.</p> <p>Leadership, at the top, and a new administrative structure for the district has been recently put into place and the applicant documents early successes.</p> <p>These reforms together will meet the needs of students from preschool through high school and beyond.</p> <p>The State has failed to appropriately serve students with special needs. This has been a financial and a political drain on the system which will now be addressed. The State has described a variety of efforts which it will support to ensure that students are served appropriately in the least restrictive environment through a continuum of appropriate services which meet the IEP of each individual child.</p> <p>The two groups which are not specifically identified for additional assistance and/or special programming to focus on ensuring their successes are gifted and talented and English Language Learners.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>	

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>STEM initiatives are underway and more are being planned. The applicant includes information about the Battelle Foundation which has approved an investment of \$50,000 to accelerate the efforts regarding planning and design phases of two STEM education projects. It is the intent of Battelle to leverage this short term effort into a long term partnership. They see the applicant being ready to move forward, and they see the geographic location as being great for expansion of the STEM initiative. It is their intention to support this effort for as long as possible so that it is sustainable, and so that it can become a national STEM model for others in the US to model.</p> <p>While STEM is not as fully developed in the district as the other reform initiatives, there are pockets of excellence now, and there is a strong plan for implementing this priority more comprehensively during the course of the RTTT funding and sustaining it beyond the 4 years.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The applicant has presented an application which clearly demonstrates how successful it has been in implementing comprehensive reform which is aligned with the four RTTT education reform areas. It is clear that there is leadership in place, a political will to move forward, and an understanding that this work will not be easy, but it is necessary and will be accomplished.

In addition, there is a plan to continue to move forward using the RTTT dollars to supplement the efforts that are already underway in the district. There is a clear understanding of the importance of increasing achievement for all students while closing the gaps among sub groups of students. There will also be a stronger focus on high school, early childhood education and the education of special education student within the LEAs. While the applicant mentions ELL students and those that are gifted and talented, these sub groups are not addressed in depth as the other sub groups are.

The data initiative is very comprehensive as it connects data and accountability across all sections of the application. Data Managers will be available at all schools to assist teachers and principals in their understanding of what the data means and how that information can be used to best change practices to improve instruction and ultimately result in improved learning/achievement for all students (in all sub groups). There are components of professional development based on individual needs listed in the plan. Standards for professional development are not included in the application.

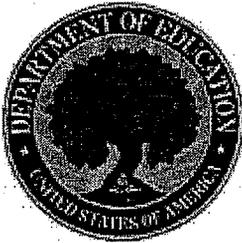
This urban district has many pieces to the puzzle in place, including documented success with all 4 models of turnaround. The goal is to have all elements working with even better results in all areas. Then, it can become the model to which other urban school districts can look to and learn from.

**Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)**

The applicant team provided clarification and confirmation of information from their proposal to the review team during their presentation and during the question and answer section. The applicant team members were well prepared, had a deep understanding of their plan for RTTT, and modeled their ongoing intent to work as collaborative partners across their respective agencies to become a national model.

Total			0	0	
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Grand Total	500	458	458		
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# Race to the Top

## Technical Review Form - Tier 2



District Of Columbia Application #2400DC-4

**A. State Success Factors**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it</b>	65	55	60	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	35	40	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15	15	
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) District of Columbia (DC) has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas: standards and assessments, data systems to support instruction, great teachers and leaders, and turning around the lowest achieving schools. DC summarizes in chart form the current practices and the Race ToTheTop (RTTT) Plans. There is compelling narrative to explain each area. The response was awarded 5 points.</p> <p>(ii) The Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) Terms and Conditions reflect a strong commitment by participating LEAs. The preliminary scope of work clearly indicates which portions of the State proposed plans the participating LEA is agreeing to implement. Signatures were secured from Mayor Fenty of the District of Columbia, District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) Chancellor Rhee, superintendents and Presidents of Boards of Trustees for 30 charter LEAs. The Washington Teachers Union would not sign. The response was awarded 35 points.</p> <p>(iii) The State performance target is to increase student proficiency rates over the next four years in math and reading by 5% points annually, 20% points overall on the state assessment. Goals are in place for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on which DC aims for an increase in scores by an average of 10 points in both math and reading. DC has focused efforts on two relevant achievement gaps, the minority achievement gap and the poverty achievement gap. High School graduation rates will be accelerated by moving to turn around struggling secondary schools, which account for a large proportion of the District's lowest-achieving schools. The linkage between secondary schools and university consortium will improve linkage between high school exit requirements and college entrance criteria. In addition, there are three programs in place to increase college enrollment. The DC and its participating LEAs along with the Charter schools have planned sufficiently to bring about a broad statewide impact on education in the State. The response was compelling, therefore 15 points were awarded.</p>				
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b>				
<p>(ii) Based on the information from the interview, DC has developed a strong working relationship with the Washington Teachers Union even though the Union did not sign the MOU.</p>				
<b>(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans</b>	30	27	30	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20	

(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	10	
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**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

(i) Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) plans a two-pronged approach to implement, scale up and sustain the proposed plan. A team responsible for the overall grant and a team responsible for the execution of the initiatives will ensure that RTTT grant funds are deployed effectively and are aligned with LEA work. Effective Managers will serve as main points of contact with all LEAs and will provide guidance on RTTT initiatives. A separate office will be created to meet the operations capacity for implementation and overall management of the grant. The overall budget and budget narrative appears in the appendix of the grant. The majority of the proposed funding will either be sub-granted directly to LEAs or will flow through to LEAs. Sustainability is planned by using 54% of the grant funds to build infrastructure that supports state-level and LEA reform, 14% will be invested in aligning curriculum with Common Core Standards, and 7% will be used to support the strengthening of alternative teacher and principal preparation programs. In effect, 75% of requested funds are slated for projects that are projected to be sustainable beyond the grant's end. The capacity to implement is compelling and therefore earns a score of 20 points.

(ii) The charter LEAs, which serve one-third of the District's children offer strong support for the RTTT application and reform effort. The charter LEAs are not unionized. DCPS is the only unionized LEA in the District. The Washington Teachers Union opted not to sign. Other stakeholders have submitted letters of support for the RTTT application. These include, State legislative leadership, charter school authorizer, state and local leaders, community organizations, and institutions of higher education. The Parent Teachers Association and the Washington Teachers Union did not send letters of support. As a result the response was scored 7 points.

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

(ii) Based on the interview, many community groups and various focus groups were involved in sharing information and data for the RTTT plan. I am now confident that there is broad stakeholder support.

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

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

(i) DC has already made progress in each of the four education reform areas. DC's learning standards were adopted in 2007. Data is being used to improve instruction. DC is in need of developing longitudinal data systems. In March 2008, the DC State Board of Education adopted a resolution that removed barriers that have kept many credentialed educators out of classrooms. Since placing the school system under Mayoral control in 2007, 30 DCPS schools have been closed due to under-performance, 11 additional schools have been either turned around or restarted. The PCSB has closed 12 charter schools over the last five years for reasons of under performance. There are numerous other examples of progress in each of the four education reform areas, therefore a score of 5 points have been awarded.

(ii) DC has experienced gains on the NAEP assessments, gaining 14 scale points since 2003 in 4th grade math and 11 scale points in 8th grade math. Over six years, DCPS 4th graders have improved their reading scores by 14 scale points and 8th graders by 3 scale points. Since the introduction of the DC-CAS in 2006, DC students performance has increased by at least 10 percentage points in elementary reading and math, and secondary reading.

There are other credible examples of significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps, however, they are segmented, therefore a score of 20 points is awarded.

Total	125	107	115	
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**B. Standards and Assessments**

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards</b>	40	40	40	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20	
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) The State has signed on to the Common Core Standards Initiative, launched by the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council for Chief State School Officers. There is a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement in the document with the signature of the DC's Chief State School Officer, Kerri Briggs. The Process and Structure section of the agreement addresses: Common Core State -Based Leadership, use of a National Validation Committee, plans to Develop End-of-High-School Expectations and K-12 Standards in English Language Arts and Math.</p> <p>The Common Core Initiative includes a significant number of states. The Consortium list 48 states, the District of Columbia and two U. S. territories.</p> <p>The Common Core Consortium has produced College and Career Readiness standards and drafts of grade -level K-12 standards in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. Copies of both documents were included in the proposal. The response to this criteria was compelling, as a score of 20 was awarded.</p> <p>(ii) The target date for the State to adopt the K-12 standards is June 16, 2010. This date might seem ambitious, however, the draft of the standards appear to be quite detailed and well written and the adoption date is appropriate, therefore 20 points were awarded.</p>				
<b>(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments</b>	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>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) &amp;(ii) With the adoption of Common Core Standards, DC -in collaboration with 25 other states -shows commitment to develop common assessments. Additional commitment is apparent because the State has become a member of a consortium of 27 states, the Partnership for the Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. The PARCC intends to apply for grants through the RTTT Assessment Program. The evidence meets the criteria, as a result 5 points were awarded for each.</p>				
<b>(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</b>	20	18	18	
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				

DC in collaboration with its participating LEAs has developed a plan that supports the transition to enhance standards and high-quality assessments. The plan has two reform goals and four performance measures. The goals are (1) successful transition to and implementation of common internationally bench-marked K-12 standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and high-quality professional development for teachers and school staff, and (2) successful transition to high-quality assessments, both interim and summative, aligned to standards. The four performance measures are appropriate for assessing the goals.

In order to achieve the goals the plan includes four broad strategies. Strategy (A) Implement a Fast, Aggressive Rollout Plan for Common Core Standards and Assessments: standards' materials are listed, summative and interim assessments are planned. The design and implementation of the interim assessment are also included. Strategy (B) Create, Organize and Fund, a Common Core Standards Working Group: participants in the working group-LEA Leadership Teams- convening time and task to be completed, are included. Strategy (C) Create Standards Entry Points for Differentiated Learning: the plan calls for the development of a Standards Entry Point for Differentiated Learning Manual. Strategy (D) Align High School Curricula and Graduation Requirements with College Entrance Requirements: DC will develop a P-20 Consortium consisting of representatives from LEAs and multiple universities to align high school curricula requirements with local college entrance requirements. Activities, timelines and responsible parties are outlined for each strategy. The State plan has all of the components clearly stated and describes in detail how it will be implemented. The plan is credible, a score of 18 is earned.

<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	
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**C. Data Systems to Support Instruction**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	

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

The State is not fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system as defined in the notice per America Competes. America Competes Elements 1-7 are implemented.

However, America Competes Element 8 will begin work to implement Fall 2011, Element 9 will develop a course coding system Fall 2011, Element 10 will begin gathering scores Winter 2010, Element 11 is still identifying ways to better track whether students enroll in remedial coursework, and Element 12 is still identifying additional fields to address alignment. Therefore, all twelve America Competes Elements are included in the statewide plan but five are in various stages of development. Seven America Competes Elements equals 14 points.

<b>(C)(2) Accessing and using State data</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

DC has a plan to ensure that data are accessible and understandable to all appropriate stakeholders. The plan has two goals. Goal (1) is to inform and engage key stakeholders through an improved, interactive, user-friendly online resource. Goal (2) is to provide data to decision-makers for the continuous improvement of reform efforts related to policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocations, and effectiveness. The two performance measures are appropriate and credible for assessing the goals.

In order to achieve the goals, the plan includes two strategies. Strategy (A) Expand Capacity and Systems for Data Access; include a plan for data to be relevant and easy to use, and developing a user-friendly website. Strategy (B) Enhance Availability of Statewide Data to Key Stakeholders: an explanation is given as to how users will be able to download aggregate-level data spreadsheets with statistics about students, teachers, and schools that are needed for decision-making.

Each strategy has an outline that includes activities, timelines, and responsible parties. The plan expands or enhances the activities that are presently in place, however, the plan does not include a process for assessing the current activities to determine what works and what doesn't work,. The plan focus only on P-12 and doses not include IHEs, therefore four points were awarded.

<b>(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	
(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	
<b>(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) The State has developed a high-quality plan to use data to improve instruction. The State already has an instructional improvement system in place made up of various data system components, including DC STARS, an Internet-based Student Information System, which tracks students in ways that allow teachers to make informed instructional changes based on students and classroom trends. Additionally, there is a Blackman/Jones Database which is tailored to special education. Many participating charter LEAs lack systems that meet baseline criteria. DC plans to use the RTTT funding to support the reform agenda in all participating charter LEAs and expand the further development of the online portal associated with IMPACT, the new evaluation system used to measure teacher performance.</p> <p>Goal 1 Strategy 1-Develop instructional improvement systems aligned to data systems, is outlined in a manner to be accomplished using the appropriate design process and design elements. Activities, timelines, and responsible parties are included. The response was compelling , all six points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) Goal 2 Strategy 2-Provide professional development to foster data-driven culture in all DCPS and participating charter LEAs. A clearly articulated plan that will use a Data Coach in every school is included . Activities, timelines, and responsible parties are stated. The response was compelling, all six points were awarded.</p> <p>(iii) Goal 3 Strategy 3- Make data from instructional improvement systems and the statewide longitudinal data systems available/accessible to researchers in key strategies outlined. An online data request tool will also allow researchers to request additional data and pursue other lines of research outside of the priority area. Activities, timelines and responsible parties are clearly listed. The response is clear, all six points awarded.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	

**D. Great Teachers and Leaders**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
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<b>(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	7	7	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	7	7	
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) District requirements for approved alternative preparation programs demonstrate the State's insistence that all incoming educators, including school leaders be strong and capable. Thus, the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) Title 5 Chapter 16, Professional Education Requirements Section 1601.11 explicitly stipulates that graduates of recognized alternative certification programs may be licensed. Section 1667 outlines licensure requirements for school administrators. The Alternative Certification Programs include all five criteria; various types of qualified providers, selectivity; supervised school-based experiences; significantly limited amount of coursework and upon completion awarded the same level of certification. As a result, the response was awarded 7 points.</p> <p>(ii) OSSE approved three programs as alternate certification providers for teachers in 2009: New Teachers Project (NTP), Center for Inspired Teaching (CIT), and Teacher for America (TFA); and one alternate certification program for principals, New Leaders for New Schools (New Leaders). This credible response earns 7 points.</p> <p>(iii) DC Public Schools (DCPS) boasts a less than 1% vacancy for teachers. However, a system is in place if a high number of vacancies in a certain subject area occur, to trigger communication with alternative certification providers. DCPS recruitment team work year-round to monitor, evaluate, and identify qualified candidates for the leadership pipeline. This compelling response earns all 7 points.</p>				
<b>(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	
(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	28	28	
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>DC has a plan to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. The plan has one goal. The goal is to develop a student growth measure for all LEAs with teacher and principal evaluations tied to this measure to use in informing human capital decisions. The two performance measures are appropriate for assessing the goal. There are five strategies that are addressed in the plan under i,ii,iii, and iv.</p> <p>(i) Strategy A : Ensure that all LEAs have Student Growth Data for Tested Grades and Strategy B: Expand Pilot Growth Measures to Additional Grades/Subjects for Teacher and Principal Evaluations implementation plan explained in detail. The highlight of which, is that DC has developed a nationally-recognized teacher performance evaluation system, IMPACT, that uses multiple measures to assess teaching effectiveness. IMPACT generates an overall score for teacher effectiveness (from 1.0-4.0) by using a value-added student growth measure. Student growth is measured for each individual student in that the value-added formula in IMPACT compensates for the demographics of the students in the class. The performance Management Framework (PMF) of the Public Charter Schools is the tool used for</p>				

measuring school effectiveness at the school level and compares a student's growth relative to what is needed to reach proficiency. The response is compelling and merits a score of 5 points.

(ii) &(iii) Strategy C: Develop Robust Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems; include plans for teacher evaluation requirements, principal evaluation requirements and the procedure for submission of plans for evaluation of Charter LEAs. Steps to expand and refine IMPACT are also included. The plan was credible, thus a score of 12 points. (iii) Conducting evaluations annually was addressed, which merits a score of 10 points.

(iv) Per the signed MOU in Section A all participating LEAs have committed to creating evaluations based on student growth and to using them for human capital decisions. Strategy D: Use Evaluations to Make Human Capital Decisions is submitted in chart form with the following headings; Use of evaluations, DCPS, and Charters. The information is very clear and very easy to follow. It is also very thorough and detailed.

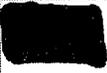
Strategy E: Collaborate Across Sectors to Support Best Practices in Human Capital addresses the sharing of ideas from the charter school sector and DCPS represented by a reform-oriented administration.

Activities, timelines and responsible parties are addressed in each strategy. The response is compelling, as a result the 28 points were awarded.

<b>(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals</b>	25	16	16	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	10	10	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6	6	
<p><b>(D)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b></p> <p>With minority students making up nearly 94% of DC's public school enrollments, DC is a majority -minority state. This definition set the stage for the one goal that DC has written for this plan. The goal is to improve the proportion of effective and highly effective teachers in schools in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level and in the hardest-to-staff subject areas. The two performance measures appear appropriate to assess the achievement of this goal. In addition, there are 5 strategies, A-E.</p> <p>(i) To ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, DC plans two strategies. Strategy A: Improve process for analyzing Distribution of Effectiveness and Strategy B; Engaging in Smart Targeting. Some of the activities under strategy A are building capacity, submitting percentages, and submitting plans, because evaluations that will determine effectiveness is yet to be determined.</p> <p>Smart targeting is a process used to allow principals with the greatest recruiting needs to meet the most promising candidates first. In addition, DCPS have taken steps to transfer effective principals to high needs schools undergoing turnaround. These actions are not new in the public school setting. Smart Targeting may also be limited according to the Washington Teacher Union Contract. The plan is weakened by the above statements, as a result only 10 points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) DC's plan to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principal in hard-to staff areas will be confronted with the same issue of insufficient data on teacher effectiveness. Included are 3 strategies; to improve the process for analyzing effectiveness of teachers in hard-to-staff areas, support effective teacher pipelines for hard-to staff areas, and targeted professional development for teachers in hard-to-staff areas. However, the strategies are the same routine and are weak, as a result a score of 6 was awarded.</p>				
<b>(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</b>	14	12	12	

(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	7	7	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	5	5	
<b>(D)(4) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) OSSE will work with higher education and alternative route providers to develop a Prep Program Scorecard. Scorecards will be available for each preparation program in the State. The Scorecards will be piloted for two years before formal rollout and release to the public. The plan is to be piloted two years before it is implemented. This will allow for revisions based on input from stakeholders. Goals, performance measures, activities, timelines and responsible parties are included to determine how this will take place. The plan is compelling. Seven points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) OSSE will support a competitive grant process targeted toward effective program development and implementation to expand preparation and credentialing options. Activities, timeline and responsible parties are included. The focus is on Charter LEAs only, 5 points were awarded.</p>				
<b>(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	
(i) Providing effective support	10	7	7	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	10	10	
<b>(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) DC has a goal to create customized professional development experiences based on individual needs. The Individualized PD Platform will be interactive, online, and will link student and teacher data to specific professional growth supports. Feedback and support will be provided by principals, Instructional Coaches, Master Teachers and colleagues. Differentiated professional development for school leaders/principals will be based on principals' evaluations. The individualization of this online professional development may lend itself to greater autonomy and participation. A lack of standards for the evaluation of the professional development weakens the response, thus seven points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) Evaluation will be accomplished through automatic tracking of any resources a teacher/administrator uses while logged into the system. Continuous improvement will be based on information submitted by researchers. Principals/administrators are included in this compelling response thus ten points were awarded.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>121</b>	

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

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
<b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>	10	5	10	
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>The State Public Education Reform Amendment Act DC Law 17.9 states "the Mayor shall govern the public schools of the District of Columbia. This would appear to give the mayor the ability to intervene directly in both schools and LEAs. However, the public charter participating schools/LEAs are govern by the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB). There is a signed MOU, but the mayor cannot intervene legally. As a result, the response was scored in the "medium" range with 5 points.</p>				
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)</b>				

Information shared during the interview made it very clear that the mayor can intervene in the lowest achieving participating charter schools.

<b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	25	25	
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) DC identified two types of schools for turnaround: Schools with graduation rates below 60% over a two year period(3) and the lowest achieving 5% of Title I schools identified for improvement (7), for a total of ten schools. The response is strong and clear, 5 points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) Of the 10 schools identified for improvement, five have already been targeted for turnaround using one for the four models. Two are "restarts, two are transformations and one is a turnaround model.</p> <p>DC has a comprehensive plan for using the "Turnaround Model for the other five schools. The Public School Charter Board will implement a plan for the only charter school on the current list of persistently low achieving schools, through the approach outlined in the PCSB's Performance Management Framework.</p> <p>In the last five years, the State has attempted to turnaround 7 schools using the turnaround model, 4 using the restart model, 47 using the closure model and 13 using the transformation model. Emerging results are reported only for the 2008 and 2009 years. Lessons learned include statements and explanations that range from turnaround is; not inherently attractive, expensive, strategically challenging, and has a ripple effect throughout the District.</p> <p>The State has plans in place, but the lessons learned seem to highlight the difficulty of implementing turnaround models. The response is credible so it was scored at the high end of the medium range with 25 points.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	

**F. General**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4	4	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) The State increased its budget to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education from FY2008 to FY2009 by .4% which represent \$196,250,000. There was a \$500,000 decrease in the support for public higher education, therefore only four points were awarded.</p> <p>(ii) Equitable DC education funding is achieved via Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF), as outlined in DC Official Code 38-2901-2902. Every student generates funding for its LEA in the same manner and in the same amount.</p>				

Funding is mandated by state code, the response was compelling and awarded five points.

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

(i) DC official code 38-1802.03 allow eligible chartering authorities to approve up to twenty annual petitions to establish a public charter school. The adopted "cap" is well above demand. The number of petitions has never exceeded twenty. Presently, 38.8% of public school children attend public charter schools and 42.5% of DC schools are charters. As a result, the response was scored in the "high" range according to reviewer guidance.

(ii) The District's charter law provisions explicitly outlines how charter authorizers approve, monitor and oversee, hold accountable, reauthorize, and revoke charters; DC Official Code 38-1802.1(approval), 38-1802.13,38-1802.11 (oversight), 38-1802.12(renewal), 38-1802.01-13-13a (revocation). A chartering authority may revoke a charter if it is determined that the charter has failed to meet goals and student academic achievement. The response is compelling and earns all eight points.

(iii) Both charter LEAs and DCPSs are funded according to the same student-based formula. All District charter schools qualify and therefore receive equitable access to major federal education formula grant funds. "High" points were awarded, because the funding formula is mandated by code.

(iv) Public charter schools receive a per-student facilities allowance, established by DC Official Code 38-2908. Additional DC Official Codes address the other areas of this criteria. The response was compelling, thus eight points were awarded.

(v) The DC Office of School Intervention (OSI) is currently developing and implementing three autonomous school models; Autonomous Schools (4 schools), DC Collaborative for Change(10 schools) and Partnership Schools (3 schools). The response was compelling, thus eight points were awarded.

<b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
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**(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)**

The DC Council passed the "Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Act" (DC Official Code 38-273.01 to address DC school readiness. Special Education Intervention and Alternative Education models are described. The areas of gifted and talented, and English for Speakers of Other Languages were omitted. The response is credible, but the omission of two areas weakens the response. A score of 3 was awarded.

<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
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<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>(i) The District has strong college-career-ready standards for math. Over the next year, DC will begin the process of revising DC science standards. A resolution is included to attest to this forthcoming action. In order to promote the use of relevant and enhancing technology, DC will seek to adapt standards from International Society for Technology in Education. The P-20 Consortium described in Section B 3 intends to bring colleges, universities, DCPS and charter schools together to work on alignment of curriculum and high school exit requirements.</p> <p>(ii) The list of industry experts, universities, research centers partners include the American Association of Applied Sciences, American University, University of Maryland, University of the District of Columbia, Carnegie Institute, CISCO, NASA, and the US Department of Energy, entities that are committed to assisting with the STEM initiatives. The universities are committed to assisting in the preparation of STEM teachers. The Carnegie Institute of Washington will provide job-embedded professional development for teachers. CISCO will offer CISCO certification. NASA and the US Department of Energy will provide internships and summer programs for students and teachers.</p> <p>(iii) Five LEAs that account for 68% of DC students and among them 21 schools with specialized programs making STEM education widely accessible in DC. P-20 Consortium will strive to establish a college-going culture to involve strategies for enhancing girl's interest in STEM-related careers.</p>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)</b>				
<p>The State's application comprehensively and coherently addresses all four education areas, as well as State success factors criteria. The State has clearly demonstrated that it, along with the LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The State has commitment from LEAs to implement and achieve the goals in the RTTT plan. The plan clearly describes how the State, in collaboration with its LEAs will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p>				
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>447</b>	
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