Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Florida Application #2450FL-4

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	59	60	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	41	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13	13	

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

(i) The FL application offers a clear and ambitious agenda, tightly organized around the four federal reform areas. The plan identifies three ambitious but doable student outcome goals (doubling high school graduation and completion of one year of college credits, halving the achievement gap of subgroups, and increasing NAEP scores to similar levels of the highest performing states). The applicant offers a theory of reform that is grounded in the centrality of highly effective teachers and leaders promoted by collaboration and shifting the culture of the profession. The agenda articulates specific activities that teachers and principals will be expected to do. The plan clearly notes the significant progress the state has made in the past decade (e.g., moving from 31st in 2006 to 8th in 2010 in the Quality Counts index), but also acknowledges there is plenty more that needs to be done. Using key lessons from their past experiences, including a gap analysis of what they have done and where they want to go, the state proposed six focus areas with detailed objectives (Appendix A1-1). To aid in assessing it's progress it will rely on an existing and proposed expansion of the P-20 data warehouse, with the state maintaining that it has taken a national leadership role in developing both standards and assessments.

(ii) The FL RTTT proposal maintains a strong commitment from LEAs, citing nearly universal LEA support (96%) and 80% teacher buy-in. The MOU calls for LEA participation in all activities and offers language even more specific than the federal model. Indeed, an impressive level of detail is offered in Exhibit 1 of the MOU regarding what the LEAs are expected to do. To help LEAs better understand their responsibilities and gain broader support the governor instituted a Working Group between Phase I and Phase II. The plan specifically acknowledges that the personnel evaluation systems will be the most difficult to iron out. Indeed, almost all are conditional agreements in sections D2 and D3. Yet, the language of the proposal is optimistic that the two groups can resolve their differences. The plan calls for a Task Force to help the state with implementation issues, particularly these thorny evaluation systems.

(iii) To document that support will have an impact the FL plan describes in detail the three goals. It is worth noting again that these appear to be both ambitious and achievable. Increasing high school graduation rates and earning more college credits will, as noted, not be fully achievable within the four years of the grant due to lag time. Furthermore, the applicant realistically notes that any achievement gains will be slower at first but should accelerate as the innovations being undertaken actually have time to register impact. Even with the closing the gap goal, the state plans to improve achievement of all groups, but accelerate the growth of African-American and Hispanic students at an even faster pace.

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

The state presentation and the answers to the review team's questions reinforced that the will and commitment is there to move provisional approval of the MOU to full approval. In addition, details were

offered for how the Governor's Working Group has helped expand the collaborative spirit of moving that work forward.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**22**	**22**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17	17	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	5	5	

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

(i) A number of factors suggest that the state is well positioned to carry out and support LEAs in implementing the planned reforms. First, the plan makes use of an integrated project management system (with consultant help proposed to get independent support and counsel) with scope, deliverables, stakeholders, constrains, and timelines. Second, the state plans to hire at least 18 staff (9 program, 8 operations, and 1 legal) to ensure the work is accomplished. Third, the current organizational structure is already aligned with the four reform areas. Fourth, the state will work with LEAs to plan operational efficiency reviews to help districts sustain the reforms (especially the new evaluation systems) when the grant ends. And, fifth, the plan calls for a range of supports for LEAs (including regional support teams, data coaches, a teacher standards instructional tool, and implementation and process support). While the plan does call for integration and coordination with other funding streams, the text is vague on specifics. Likewise, the discussion on LEA sustainability offers generalities (using existing infrastructures, alignment with existing laws, and integration of policies and procedures) but provides little detail.

(ii) The state described letters of support from a broad ranging group of stakeholders, including 85 different organizations representing the interests of professionals (both the teachers and principals, as well as superintendents and school boards), as well as businesses, communities and higher education institutions. The appendix detailing this support offers excerpts from the letters, making it difficult to assess the overall tone and level of commitment of any particular group. This makes it especially difficult to assess the teacher and principal association buy-in.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**28**	**28**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	23	23	

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

(i) The application provides a concise and convincing table (Figure A3-1) with accompanying text that demonstrates a strong state commitment (including STEM activities) and progress in the past several years across the four reform areas.

(ii) The FL plan describes a concerted effort in the past decade (A+ Plan) to enhance student achievement, noting that 250,000 more students (out of a population of 2.6 million) are performing at or above grade level after these concerted efforts. The text and accompanying Appendix tables provide clear and convincing evidence that the state is, indeed, serious about student academic growth, especially in closing the gap with African-American and Hispanic students. This latter point is verified by a recent Education Trust report. While past growth is impressive, it is also clear that there is plenty of room for more growth. The plans clearly articulates a vision and plans for ramping up performance to even higher levels with the aid of RTTT funding.

Total	125	109	110	

B. Standards and Assessments

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

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

(i) The applicant provides evidence (MOA) of participation in the CCSSO/NGA consortium of CCSS, that includes nearly all the states. In addition, the applicant offered support for having taken a leadership role in the work -- participation in work groups, offering guidance and comments to writers, aligning the state's instructional materials with the standards, and organizing parent support for better understanding.

(ii) The FL plan offers a set of eight clear and workable steps for ensuring the adoption of the standards by August 2. These steps include a review and possible extension of the standards to include additional specific state content (up to 15%) by the involvement of a wide-ranging group of stakeholders. This latter step is promised by November 2010. The plan also details evidence of supportive statues and work already done in implementation of NGSSS, as well as a timeline of progress and future steps for adoption of standards for other subjects (Appendix B1-5).

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

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

(i and ii) FL described how the state took leadership in forming a consortium that merged to eventually establish a 26 state consortium working on assessments. While the state has taken an early lead in creating high-quality summative assessments, it describes how it will capitalize on that experience to adapt those assessments to changing standards, as well as created a balanced assessment system that incorporates formative and interim assessments. The plans are also clear and persuasive about working with higher education institutions to ensure that appropriate college readiness assessments are an integral part of the assessment portfolio.

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

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

The FL RTTT proposal notes that the state has had a longstanding focus on standards and assessments, citing that the most recent Quality Counts report assessed the state with an A rating and a ranking of 6th across the nation. But the applicant points out that state efforts are necessary but not sufficient conditions for this work to have an impact on students. For that to happen the state must also help bring along LEAs in their commitment to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. The state offers a bold but doable four initiative plan to make that happen. The strength of the plan is in the clear outcomes, timelines, activities, accountabilities and budget allocations to support this proposed work. The most significant aspects, that highlight the potential of this plan, include:

- six activities that not only will enhance a set of curriculum tools but will also provide the professional development to aid in teacher use.

- a balanced approach that recognizes the need for interim and formative assessments to complement summative ones - along with a substantial budget commitment of $81.5 million.
- an acknowledgement of past work (six past activities) to promote access to STEM courses, but also the development of model programs using regional consortia to especially strengthen prospects in the rural regions of the state.
- the adoption of "lesson study" as a particular professional development tool to help classroom teachers more effectively use the tools and information that will be available to them. Much of this commitment will be to online lesson study tool-kits.

The only reservation of this reviewer is that while the state clearly acknowledges the need for professional development, it is unclear how much of the budget for such efforts will go beyond just informing teachers of the powerful new resources, and that the efforts will actually embed the training within the daily routines of most classroom teachers and provide on-going assistance.

Total	70	68	68	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

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

The FDOE proposal describes how the state is fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system through its implementation of it's PK-20 Education Data Warehouse (EDW). The proposal makes clear that data are a cornerstone of the state's reform plan and that the state is fully committed to ensuring that EDW "has become a foundational part of Florida's educational culture." Appendix C-2 offers details for how data, laws, and accountability justify full compliance with the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act.

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

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

The key to the state's data plan is the development of a centralized, user-friendly portal for all available data. While the EDW currently exists, the plan calls for four comprehensive steps to modernize and expand access to the data to a broadened group of stakeholders (from high school students' use of FACTS.org to researchers use of EDW data). The plan further describes two initiatives (a single, sign-on access to the portal and new dashboards/reports/downloads) with appropriate timelines, activities, responsible parties and performance measures. Nearly all of the money allocated in the budget in this area is for equipment and technology. There is no clear delineation of what the state will do to support training to ensure that use will grow commensurate with the growth in access to data. This is particularly important given that most K-12 educators do not routinely use data effectively in informing their actions.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**13**	**14**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	4	5	[redacted]
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	4	4	

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

(i) Three noteworthy aspects of the FL plan offer evidence that local instructional improvement systems will become a larger part of local educators' school improvement routines. First, the state plans to create a local systems exchange to expand opportunities for LEAs to share success stories and learn from each other. Educators often learn better from listening to their peers than some outside experts. Second, the state proposes to develop a set of minimum standards to help guide LEAs in making assessments as they go shopping for local instructional improvement systems. Third, the state has made a special commitment to provide needs-based grants to small and rural LEAs -- those most likely to struggle with innovating around data systems. What is missing from this section is any detail about how, once these local instructional improvement systems are in place, that support will be offered to ensure that the knowledge gain will be used as part of the routine deliberations of local educators when making instructional improvements.

(ii) This section specifically addresses professional development for LEAs. The plan proposes to make use of a growing commitment to Master Digital Educators (expanding from 42 to 72) to help LEAs learn how to access data. It also calls for eight data coaches and a data captain to aid in the use of the data. What appears to be missing is any description of the strategy to convey their knowledge or how to provide ongoing support to ensure that lessons become engrained within the professional culture of schools and LEAs.

(iii) The FDOE plan documents, in Appendix C3-1, an already existing rigorous research request process. The LEA MOU also calls for LEAs to share data with researchers. The state plans to put in place a Research Consortium, composed of a wide-ranging set of stakeholders, to articulate a focused research agenda which will be carefully aligned with the four reform areas and which will communicate priorities to researchers. The new, one-stop portal will also make that more accessible to researchers. However, the plan does not make any provisions for researchers who have research interests in line with the four federal reform areas, but not part of the state agenda. This creates a blind-spot for unanticipated but constructive research ideas.

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

During the question and answer period the review team heard the state clarify how it is working with several other states to establish common elements for instructional improvement systems, putting LEAs on a tight timeline, building professional development around data, and encouraging rural LEAs to share insights with each other as a way to build this work into the larger professional culture of Florida schools.

Total	47	40	41	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**20**	**20**	
(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	6	6	

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

(i) The FDOE plan for RTTT offers legal/statutory/regulatory provisions for three different teacher programs and one principal program. Table D-1 highlights whether each program meets the criteria for full points. That table does not directly address whether some applicants are turned away, but the minimum criteria

(e.g., bachelor's degree and competence in a content area for teachers) suggests that they meet that criterion. Although the table also does not address whether required coursework is limited, the text makes that point clearly. These data indicate that full points are warranted.

(ii) The evidence offered that the alternative certification programs are in use was the simple fact that 37% of all teacher preparation completers in 2008-09 came through one of the three alternative certification programs. The numbers speak for themselves. The principal program is much newer so has a much smaller number of completers, but in one district 43 new leaders have already completed the program, suggesting the potential for a viable alternative.

(iii) Appendix D1-2 provides a 12 page report that details how the state identifies and evaluates teacher shortages. The text also describes two financial incentive programs, a tuition reimbursement and a student loan forgiveness program, both of which encourage teachers to migrate to these shortage areas. No data are provided for the number of teachers supported by these programs. The text notes that revisions were made to statutes regarding leader certification with an emphasis on competency-based criteria and experiences grounded in the field. While plans are in place to assess the effectiveness of this plan, it is too early to report any data.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**48**	**48**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3	3	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11	11	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	8	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	26	26	

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

(i) The FDOE plan makes clear that the efforts to enhance existing measurement systems of student growth will involve collaboration and seek advisory input from a broad range of stakeholders. Each step provides evidence of that collaboration and advising. The plan is also clear in acknowledging that while systems are in place they only address just over one-third of all teachers and that just having state statutes and regulations does not ensure even implementation across LEAs. The plan recognizes the need to clearly ramp up expectations for LEAs, primarily accomplished through strong language in the MOU and careful monitoring of progress by the state. Much of the burden thus shifts from the state to the LEAs. The plan offers specific activities for improving student learning indicators (e.g., formative and interim assessments), as well as student growth. Much of the responsibility for the state role in providing technical assistance and on-going support will rest with outside consultants (budgeted at just over $5 million). Without specifics it is difficult to assess how successful those grants will be in reducing the wide range of LEA practices with respect to documenting student learning and growth. The state also commits to professional development, data quality training, controls, communication and monitoring, but it is difficult to see that commitment in the budget, unless it is part of the contracted consultant responsibilities.

(ii) The RTTT proposal reiterates that while evaluation systems are mandated by law, LEAs continue to be spotty with implementation, so FL will use the MOU as leverage to promote more consistency. The state also has adopted specific guidelines for preferred teacher (Accomplished Practices) and principal (Principal Effectiveness) practices, but how LEAs interpret and use those vary widely. So, the state will invest approximately $4.8 million (largely front loaded in the first year) to ensure consistency. This reviewer wonders if that might be overly ambitious as a strategy to reduce implementation variation. While the text is careful to always refer to both teacher and principal evaluation systems, much of the data provided is specific only to teachers. The proposal does offer a bold goal of moving from 35% of all teachers as part of the evaluation system to nearly 80% by the end of the grant.

(iii) The proposal, as noted above, relies on the MOU to ensure annual, updated evaluations are performed for teachers and principals. Strong data is provided in Appendix D3-1 to justify the need for better

evaluations, at least for teachers, that tie teacher work to student outcomes. The data, however, leaves unanswered what the definition of student learning gains is. The plan appears to rely entirely on outside consultants to provide initial training and ongoing support. A helpful piece of the puzzle is the state's plans to do independent evaluations (a $2 million budget allocation) to study both qualitatively and quantitatively the link between the evaluations and student growth, and then hold LEAs accountable.

(iv) The text makes explicit the importance of tieing evaluation systems to professional development needs of teachers, especially new teachers and those up for promotion. The MOU will ensure this happens, but shifts the responsibility for that work onto LEAs with vague language about the specifics of what that might look like. The plan notes that the vast majority of compensation plans are based on "step and lane" provisions, but the MOU will force performance-driven compensation with consultants providing operational efficiency reviews to help LEAs to find ongoing ways to fund such a compensation plan. The MOU will also be used to ensure certification and removal decisions based on performance, noting that nearly all teachers (99.7%) receive at least a satisfactory rating despite the wide variation in student performance. For all four indicators in this section (professional development, compensation, certification, and removal) the state has very ambitious goals -- moving from none of the systems currently tieing their evaluation systems to student performance to nearly all (90 to 95%) doing so by the end of the grant period.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**18**	**18**	
(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	7	7	

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

(i and ii) The FDOE treated both these sections as a single area in the proposal so comments will be combined rather than separate. The proposal started by effectively documenting with data that the state has made significant strides in closing the gap for the distribution of effective educators between high- and low-poverty schools. At the same time, the plan acknowledges the need for more concentrated effort as gaps persist. The plan calls for a clearly delineated four-pronged approach: (a) implementing a strong MOU with broad LEA and local union support that will attract and compensate effective educators, (b) data collection, analysis and monitoring (disaggregated by poverty/minority categories, as well as hard-to-staff areas/subjects) provided by the state, (c) support for enhancing the pipeline of effective teachers and principals (e.g., incentive for dual majors in STEM areas), and (d) recruitment and placement of effective educators (e.g., males in elementary schools, rural access to the Virtual School, and effectiveness data available for inclusion in educator resumes). The plan calls for ambitious but doable goals that propose to completely close these gaps by 2013-14. It appears that most of the discussion is on what to do to attract new teachers to these challenging contexts, but no discussion of what to do to move educators currently in those situations to the more effective status. For example, no connection was made between activities in this section and those in D5.

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

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

(i) The FL RTTT plan offers detailed data on the link between teacher preparation programs and student learning (Appendix D4-1a&b) with intentions to expand this to the new student growth model. There was no detailed discussion of how that data would be presented beyond a commitment to report it. As noted

above, there is no data presented on principal preparation programs, just a generic promise to establish guidelines for assessing and reporting results.

(ii) The plan provides detailed steps for the improvement of both teachers preparation (increasing rigor of certification exams, setting performance-based standards, and rewarding programs that implement job-embedded residency programs) and principal preparation (identifying 2 or 3 entities to implement leadership programs, setting performance targets for continued approval, and establishing an academy for leadership in high-need schools). The state also recognizes the importance (with appropriate budgeting) to build a data reporting system (eIPEP) that will eventually be integrated within the EDW. While the RFP calls for expanding preparation/credentialing programs that are successful, the state's plan appears to target raising the bar for all programs.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**15**	**17**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	9	9	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	6	8	[redacted]

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

(i) The FL plan notes the longstanding tradition by the state of setting clear professional development standards and even recently tightening those standards. While the state will devolve specific professional development decisions to LEAs there is a clear focus on lesson study and use of data to inform practice through common planning time, attention to the common core standards, individual professional development plans based on teacher evaluation data, and a particular concentration of work with beginning teachers (mentoring and coaching activities). Local professional development is expected to focus on three priority areas: (a) building teacher and principal effectiveness, (b) effective implementation, and (c) continuous, system-wide improvement. These all help sharpen the direction LEAs need to take in developing highly impactful professional development.

(ii) The FDOE proposes to engage "an appropriate entity" to evaluate all the proposed professional training and development systems, with clear guidance that evaluation outcomes must pay attention to student learning, changes in classroom or leadership practices, and/or cost-effectiveness. The resultant qualitative and quantitative data, if widely disseminated, will greatly assist in improving the support. What is unclear from this discussion is whether the unit of analysis for this evaluation is the state and its actions, or the individual LEAs and their actions. Much of what the plan calls for passes along the decisions and responsibilities to LEAs, but there also needs to be clear accountability at the state level if LEAs falter.

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

The state team presented, during the question and answer period, a more elaborated discussion of how professional development will be evaluated, suggesting that multiple benchmark checkpoints will be incorporated each year to "check the pulse of implementation." The state clarified that the unit of analysis for this work will include individual LEAs.

Total	138	113	115	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

The RTTT text clearly states that the state has statutory authority to intervene in both LEAs and schools through the DA program. The state has already intervened in 39 schools last year, 50 this year, and plans to expand that number to 71 next year. The text and accompanying appendices devote most of the detailed description to interventions in schools. Regional teams have been created to support these schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**36**	**36**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	31	31	

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

(i) The FL RTTT application provides a detailed description of six categories of lowest-achieving schools based on student performance (see Appendix E1-4). A clear explanation is also offered for the decision process by which a reform model is selected for each school. The guidelines call for a school to change models if sufficient progress is not made on an annual basis.

(ii) The FL turn around plan for persistently low-achieving schools proposes 13 initiatives, which in their totality, offer a comprehensive approach to helping these schools. Ten of the 13 are primarily state driven and three are to be locally driven. These run the gamut from effective educator recruitment to LEA capacity building to STEM development to community development. Perhaps most important is the clear recognition of the need to improve the quality of instruction (e.g., adding 40 reading coordinators in the regional teams and maintaining summer academies that address quality of instruction, lesson study, and standards). Of some concern is that all this professional development and support is largely a turnkey endeavor, with direct support offered to leaders, coaches, department chairs, etc., with the assumption that they will have the skills, time, and backing of the rest of the staff to improve everyone's practices in a given building. One of these initiatives explicitly calls for research to capture successes and shortcomings, an idea from which all the initiatives would benefit. The budget indicates that $86 million will be allocated to this urgent need, 23% of the overall budget.

Total	50	46	46	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**9**	**9**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4	4	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

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

(i) The data provided in the RTTT proposal suggests that funding for education, as a proportion of total state expenditures from 2008 to 2009, has increased, but only by a small percentage -- moving from 26.38% in 2008 and 26.60% in 2009.

(ii) Ample evidence is provided that the state is attempting to equalize funding, including the following important steps:

- formula is based on state and local contributions
- weighting is given for students with special needs

- equalization is calculated for property-rich vs. property-poor and pupil-rich (i.e., high enrollment) and pupil-poor LEAs
- special funding for class size reduction

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

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

(i) No caps are placed on the number of charter schools nor the number of students attending charter schools. The applicant provides numbers that suggest the state is a leader in the number of charter schools (400 - ranked 4th) and number of students (137,000 - ranked 3rd). It is unclear whether those statistics take into account total number of schools and/or population with Florida being on the high end of both.

(ii) Several features of the charter school laws ensure careful monitoring and accountability:

- student achievement is the primary determining factor in charter school evaluations
- an evaluation instrument is required by charter authorizers to assess charter applicants (roughly 1/4 denied)
- contracts require that charters provide significant details on the educational design of their program
- renewal driven primarily by student achievement

(iii) The funding formula for charter schools is the same as public schools. State law also affirms access to Title I funds. The charter schools will have equal access to RTTT funds and the state's plan for persistently low-achieving schools includes $20 million to be spent on charter.school activities.

(iv) The state statute provides a set aside for capital outlay for charter schools and currently that expenditure (most recent state data) is equal to traditional LEA schools, as calculated on a per-pupil basis.

(v) The FDOE notes two vehicles for promoting innovative schools, other than charters. The first is a push to promote virtual (online) schools. The Center for Digital Education rated FL as number one in the nation in this regard. Florida students have more online access than students in any other state with the FLVS offering 125 online courses, 154,000 course enrollments in 2008/09, and 13 different AP courses. A school district virtual instruction program is also described, but little detail is offered. The second vehicle is through development research schools managed by state universities. No data are presented on their enrollments.

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

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

Six initiatives are enumerated in the plan with all but one (the voluntary pre-kindergarten program) clearly involving a collaboration with other agencies or organizations (e.g., training of 400 teachers in Miami-Dade by Teach for America and state and LEA employees taking advantage of professional development offerings provided by the Southern Regional Education Board). Each of these have and will make a small but important contribution to the enhancement of reform across the state.

Total	55	54	54	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The FL STEM plan calls for four state actions that will increase rigorous course of study in STEM, identifies six critical STEM-community partners (including the work of the STEM*florida* Education Advisory Group), and details ten initiatives to prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM (especially females and under-represented groups). Taken together these offer a comprehensive and ambitious effort to enhance STEM teaching and learning.

In addition to the the plans outlined in the section on the competitive preference priority, the application also makes reference throughout the text of the plan to ways in which STEM work will be integrated with the four federal education reform areas (approximately 60 references in the text) . Figure P-1 is a succinct, one-page graphic of how all the pieces fit together. In addition to the application text, there are references throughout the budget and appendices to STEM activities. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the mission statement and action plan for the state's STEM Advisory Group (Appendix P-1 and P-2), as well as very detailed STEM Female-Minority Initiative Plan (Appendix P-3) at FSU that seeks to contribute to the scientific knowledge base about how students learn mathematics and science, as well as improve teaching and learning in STEM classrooms. The initiative also targets improving STEM achievement, narrowing STEM achievement gaps, and increasing student pursuits of STEM careers.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The FL RTTT proposal meets this priority by responding thoughtfully and comprehensively to all four federal education reform areas with detailed activities, timelines, responsible parties, and anticipated outcomes. Especially noteworthy is the strong MOU which specifies a preliminary work plan for the 96% of the state's LEAs who are participating LEAs (see Exhibit 1 of Appendix 1-4). This preliminary work plan is also organized around the four reform areas, as are the budgets, providing a focus and accountability that should help keep everyone on track. The proposed, comprehensive data system offers another important way for diverse stakeholders to keep track of the progress over the four years of this work.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	445	449	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Florida Application #2450FL-7

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**52**	**57**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	3	3	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	36	41	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13	13	

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

The overall quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range with (A)(1)(i) rated in the medium range. Florida's application draws on its extensive past experience undertaking education reforms intended to raise student achievement and eliminate gaps. Data are provided as evidence of progress made in these areas based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results. Goals are clearly stated. The reform agenda in the application aligns the four ARRA education areas with the six strategic areas endorsed by the State Board and appears to be comprehensive. The application contains an analysis that examines past initiatives and identifies new efforts to be undertaken with RTTT funds to address gaps in those efforts; this analysis provides a coherent basis for the agenda. However, the large number (26) of strategies in the plan may subvert that coherence. Another potential weakness in Florida's path to achieving its goals is a reliance on local educational agencies (LEAs) for many of the strategies even though weaknesses in local district capacity are noted frequently. The application provides strong evidence that Florida is requiring participating districts to strongly commit to this effort. Its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reflects the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-developed model and requires participating LEAs to implement all applicable portions of the state plan. The Scope of Work document is very specific as to the activities LEAs must carry out. Evidence is provided that 100% of local Superintendents and School Board Chairpersons have signed the MOUs, as well as a high percentage (79%) of Union Presidents; this is evidence of a high level of support for undertaking an ambitious set of activities. Florida's plan is intended to reach 93% of all students and 94% of students in poverty; if successful these reforms will definitely have a broad statewide impact. However, there are a number of required elements, largely dealing with teacher evaluation and the use of evaluation results, for which participating LEAs only offered conditional approval. Inasmuch as Florida has emphasized Great Teachers and Leaders as the linchpin of its comprehensive reform effort, the possibility of participating LEAs not implementing key elements in this area raises issues of whether the goals for increasing student achievement, increasing graduation rates and increasing success in college enrollment can be achieved. Finally, it is troubling that the application, in terms of goal setting and reform strategies, appears to pay little attention to the needs of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students and only minor attention to the needs of disabled students. The focus is on racial/ethnic subgroups and closing the gap between minority and white students. It is to Florida's credit that it has set its sights on leading the nation in achievement and on cutting current performance gaps in half by the end of the RTTT grant period. These goals are ambitious and, based on prior history, achievable.

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

The presentation clarified that the large number of proposed strategies (26) were rationally clustered within RTTT's four elements and were appropriately coordinated with each other. The presentation clarified that the collaboration and partnerships that have been hallmarks of the preparation of Florida's RTTT Phase 2 application have resulted in strong commitments to RTTT work on the part of LEAs and teacher unions, including commitments to work through specific provisions related to teacher evaluation systems and the use of evaluation results.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**28**	**28**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	8	8	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Generally speaking, Florida intends to implement its proposed plans with current personnel. There is evidence of strong leadership given the support of the Governor, Chief State School Officer (CSSO), State Board, and legislature for this effort. Offices within the State Educational Agency (SEA) are accountable for strategies aligned with their core functions and will bring expertise and experience with related ongoing operations to bear when implementing the RTTT action plan. The application includes descriptions of the many activities the State will undertake to support participating LEAs under each of the four component areas. One example is the identification of model lessons in the areas of reading and math that will be widely disseminated. Another is the identification of exemplary approaches to teacher evaluation (in terms of criteria and processes) that will also be disseminated for the use of other LEAs. The Scope of Work document, as well as repeated elements in the plans for each strategy, make it clear that the State will be monitoring LEAs' progress and performance, and has the authority (and intention) to intervene where necessary. The SEA is very capable of handling the administrative aspects of the RTTT grant, e.g., budgeting, procurement, grant administration, monitoring, and tracking performance. The application provides detailed budgets for each strategy in the plan; with the exception of a few of these budgets (e.g., related to strategies C3i, C3ii, and D2ii) that appear insufficient to the tasks given the statewide breadth of the activities, the others appear adequate and reasonable to the tasks. Where appropriate, the application makes reference to the coordination of other funding sources (federal, state and local) for the purpose of supporting RTTT activities. This is not surprising since the RTTT activities are so well-aligned with State Board priorities for education reform. Finally, the application does a very good job of detailing how RTTT activities will be sustained after the grant period ends. Sometimes there are references to statutes mandating certain activities (e.g., funding for charter schools) by LEAs and sometimes there are references to existing or anticipated state funding sources. Using existing personnel (for the most part) is evidence of the continuation of human capital resources to support reform.

The SEA has gathered support from a broad array of stakeholders for its RTTT application, from organizations and individuals within the education establishment (e.g., education association leaders, LEA Superintendents, Charter School groups, teachers' association, institutions of higher education) as well as from the larger community (e.g., parents, business, foundations). Evidence is provided of widespread information sharing and consultation in the development of the SEA's RTTT application.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**23**	**23**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18	18	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong category.

Strong documentation is included to support Florida's claim to have made progress through a significant investment during the past decade in the four education reform areas, with a chart on page 55 providing a convenient snapshot of these efforts. For example, Florida has been a leader in benchmarking to international standards. Its system of grading schools' performance and providing school improvement support predates the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and its longitudinal data system has been recognized by the Data Quality Campaign. The application includes evidence of improved student outcomes overall and by student subgroup. There are NAEP data comparing scores in 2003 and 2009 that show overall gains that exceeded national averages, and increases in subgroup scores in both reading and math. There is only limited data from the state testing program; it collapses across all grade levels but does provide sub-group breakouts. Data are provided documenting the reduction of achievement gaps over the past 6 years, as well as increases among all subgroups in high school graduation rates. The application does not do a particularly good job of addressing the need to postulate connections between the varied and various reform activities undertaken in this time period and the achievement increases. It may be inferred, however, that the quality of teachers and teaching is believed to be an important element, given the emphasis on this RTTT component elsewhere in the application.

Total	125	103	108	

B. Standards and Assessments

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida is part of the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards spearheaded by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA); the MOU is provided as evidence. It's noteworthy that Florida's own standards were used as a resource for the development of national standards. Guidelines in the development of the common core standards reflect interest in having standards that are internationally benchmarked and seek to represent performance that ensures college and career readiness. This consortium includes 48 states which is, by definition in the criterion, a significant number. The application describes Florida's plan for the adoption of these standards. According to the timeline, the standards will be adopted by the State Board in July 2010 to begin a prescribed process for public comment and review.

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

Evidence was presented in an amendment of Florida's adoption of Common Core State Standards on July 27, 2010.

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida's application provides evidence in the form of its Memorandum of Agreement for its participation in a multi-state effort under the leadership of ACHIEVE, Inc (i.e., Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career) to develop common, high quality assessments aligned with national content standards. Including 28 states, this joint effort meets the definition of including a significant number of states.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**17**	**17**	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

The application includes a high quality plan for supporting the implementation of new standards and related assessments. There are technology-based curricular tools for standards that will be revised to align with the new standards and made more user friendly. Resources related to curriculum and instruction will be posted on-line for teachers' use with frequent additions and deletions of materials not deemed helpful. There will be a major effort to provide professional development regarding the use of formative and interim assessments, including their relationship to the standards. It is noteworthy that Florida will include information regarding access points for students with disabilities and LEP students in the material on standards since little attention is paid to these groups in the RTTT application. Relying on LEAs and school personnel to take the initiative to access these resources designed to support the transition to new standards and assessments may result in weak implementation; only turnaround schools will be provided more direct and intensive support. Finally, it does not appear that the SEA consulted with its institutions of higher education around the issue of aligning college entrance criteria with the new standards and assessments, although there is a proposed study to analyze the content and difficulty level of college textbooks.

Total	70	67	67	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong category.

Florida's Education Data Warehouse appears to have all of the elements specified in the America COMPETES Act based on descriptions provided.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**4**	**4**	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida recognizes that additional efforts are needed to ensure that its data system is used appropriately by key stakeholders. To this end, the application includes plans to provide professional development to increase the level of expertise needed to access data. Even more helpful is the plan to provide a user friendly portal to the public and to provide a number of pre-defined and custom report formats to assist in making good use of the data. The plan does a good job of recognizing the possible audiences and thinking about the nature of access each audience ought to have based on need. The idea of developing a

research agenda in concert with LEAs and parents is an interesting one. What did not appear to be addressed was the identification of data sets to inform resources allocation.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**11**	**14**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	3	6	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	3	3	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	5	5	

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

The overall quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the high end of the medium range with (C)(3)(iii) rated in the strong range.

A strength of the application is the fact that the State Board of Education's Next Generation PreK-20 Strategic Plan (adopted in 2009) includes a comprehensive statewide instructional technology plan. It is unclear, however, whether the term "local instructional improvement system" (LIIS) as used by Florida aligns with the RTTT definition and the application lacks an explanation. All LEAs are required to acquire an LIIS; this will promote wider use. A positive feature in the application is the further expansion of a grassroots Local System Exchange for LEAs to share best practices. Another strength is Florida's plan to offer supplemental funding to small and rural LEAs to help them acquire LIIS. A weakness in the discussion of the acquisition of LIIS is that the minimum standards, to be defined by the State, are not provided in the application. The application describes how professional development will be provided on the use of these systems and the use of data to support continuous instructional improvement; however, by allowing LEAs to adopt their own systems, the State will only be able to offer very general professional development that may not be particularly helpful. Another potential weakness in the approach to professional development is the use of a "train the trainers" model; without very strong quality standards around professional development, this effort may not be effective. Finally, Florida has a well-established process for responding to the requests of researchers that includes providing data available at the State as well as coordinating the provision of data available at the local level. Whether these data will include some types of information (e.g., results of formative and interim assessments, classroom observations, student work portfolios) to researchers seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students cannot be determined from the information provided.

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

The presentation clarified how the State will go about ensuring that the local instructional improvement systems selected by LEAs are of high quality. Through work with other States, Florida will be defining the parameters of an ideal instructional improvement system and will disseminate a core of best practices for LEAs to consult in their selection process. Encouraging LEAs that may be initiating use of local instructional improvement systems to begin with a robust core makes this effort more feasible for such LEAs. Setting out a vision for an ideal system will motivate LEAs that may have systems in place to make improvements. These efforts, in addition to establishing minimum system standards, are important in ensuring the quality of local instructional improvement systems.

Total	47	39	42	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**20**	**20**	
(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	7	7	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida has provisions allowing for three alternative routes to teacher certification, only one of which pertains to institutions of higher education. There is also provision for LEAs to operate their own alternative program for administrators. Evidence is presented showing that alternative teacher certification programs are used significantly with more than one-third of certification candidates coming through alternative programs. The alternative certification program for administrators appears to be little used. While the State Board has a regular procedure for receiving information on upcoming teacher and principal shortages (including the subject areas and grade levels), the approach to filling teacher shortage areas appears to be offering incentives tied to repayment of educational expenses and little evidence regarding the success of this approach is presented as shortages in key areas persist year after year. The approach to increasing the number of highly qualified candidates for principal positions is different; Florida has revised the preparation program to be more competency-based and the State is now tracking the program's graduates to assess the program's success. Reforming the preparation program based on data about weaknesses in the performance of building leaders appears to be a sound approach.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**44**	**44**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3	3	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	7	7	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	8	8	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	26	26	

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

The overall quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the lower end of the strong range, with (D)(2)(i) and (D)(2)(ii) in the medium range.

The plan to develop an approach to measuring student growth at the individual level on statewide tests is reasonable and will be finalized next year. The suggested plan for establishing measures of growth for state and or locally-developed tests in other subjects and in other grade levels may be complicated by the degree of LEA discretion. The timeline for completion by 2014 may be overly optimistic and, yet, not having student growth measures until that time will hamper efforts to make best use of student assessment data and to use student growth in evaluation systems. It is helpful that Florida recognizes that current evaluation systems yield results conflicting with demonstrated student performance and it is commendable that new evaluation systems will make student growth the largest single factor. The state has the authority to approve evaluation systems designed by LEAs and to ensure that these systems are developed with teacher and principal involvement. However, the fact that each LEA must design its own system will ensure buy-in and local support but this approach raises the issue of LEA capacity, and the application is not sufficiently specific as to how it will provide support to LEAs. It is also unclear on the subject of the inclusion of multiple rating categories in the evaluation systems. Similar potential weaknesses exist regarding the provision of feedback from the evaluations; such feedback is a requirement and the SEA will check on this. But beyond making a guide regarding effective feedback available, the SEA does not appear

to have a plan to assist LEAs with this component of their systems. The application includes an apparently reasonable rollout for the use of evaluations in decisions regarding retention, compensation, tenure, and targeted professional development, as well as reasonably high levels of implementation among the participating LEAs.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**20**	**20**	
(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	7	7	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

The application includes a plan to address issues of equity regarding the access to highly effective teachers and principals by students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools. Current data included in the application reflect inequities that Florida believes are largely the result of insufficient numbers of effective teachers in the pipeline. The plan rightly emphasizes the reduction in the number of ineffective teachers with more attention paid to the needs of high poverty schools. It is helpful that the state intends to take an active role with regard to the recruitment and placement of highly effective teachers to serve targeted student populations. Reaching out to non-traditional candidates with financial incentives to enter teaching may also yield positive results. There is also a shortage of effective school leaders and Florida has committed RTTT resources to expanding leadership training programs in order to improve equity in that respect between high-poverty and/or high-minority schools and others. There are weaknesses in the discussion of increasing the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects. Goals are set in percentages and numbers are not provided. More seriously, though, the goal for special education teachers is only set at 60% at the end of the grant period; given the needs of this population, increased effort (including additional resources) would be warranted.

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

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

The overall quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the lower end of the strong range with (D)(4)(ii) rated in the medium range.

The application describes a comprehensive and coherent approach to building a system that will establish outcome-based performance standards for teachers and principals that can be used to develop information on the success of credentialling programs to graduate effective teachers and principals. This includes the linkage of student achievement data to teacher and principal preparation programs, the tracking of these data on Florida's electronic Institution Program Evaluation Plan, and the reporting of analyses regarding program performance for the public and policy makers. The application describes how Florida intends to provide competitive grants to expand programs found to be successful at producing effective teachers. It lacks a similar strategy regarding the preparation of principals.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**13**	**17**	

(i) Providing effective support	10	4	8	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	9	9	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the medium range.

Much of the content in this section of the application applies only to a small number of turnaround schools. For the participating LEAs, Florida has included requirements in the MOU requiring common planning time to allow for job-embedded professional development. Other than professional development from the state on data use and on how to conduct lesson study, there does not appear to be a plan to deliver professional development across the state that might, for example, address designing instructional strategies for improvement, differentiating instruction or meeting the needs of high-need students, although data on achievement gaps would indicate a need for such professional development. While teachers are required to have Individual Professional Development plans, the application is unclear on how LEAs and schools act upon such documents. The approach to evaluating the quality of the professional development offered is strong. Florida has an established Protocol for this evaluation and will ensure that this is used by its cadre of reviewers. Florida will identify best practice related to evaluating professional development and share that with LEAs. This component could be further strengthened by addressing how the results of this evaluation activity will be used to improve professional development programs.

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

The presentation clarified that the State's Differentiated Accountability process encompasses all schools in the State, not only the schools identified for turnaround. The presentation also served as a reminder that the application referred to the provision of support in the form of mentoring for teachers and principals as well as the use of coaches in the areas of Reading/Language Art and STEM subjects as well as support related to data use and lesson study.

Total	138	107	111	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

There is a 2009 statute that enables the SEA to intervene in the lowest-performing schools, as well as in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status. The SEA is authorized to require whole school or subgroup interventions under this statute.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**33**	**36**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	4	4	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	29	32	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida has developed and applied a definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools based on its system of grading schools A-F and identifying schools that have received grades of F for many years and/or have received a low grade recently coupled with specific low performance on reading and math assessments. This definition has been approved by ED. Although a list of 71 schools is provided in the Appendix, it is unclear whether this is the total number of schools included in Florida's turnaround effort or whether this effort also involves feeder pattern schools as the application notes several times. This makes it difficult to evaluate the appropriateness of the effort and the resources being applied.

The proposed turnaround approach refers to the four intervention models specified in the announcement. However, it appears that Florida's turnaround approach is largely concentrated on supporting the transformation model by expanding its Differentiated Assistance (DA) effort, a relatively new effort by the state that has shown positive results. There are two potential drawbacks to relying on DA: (1) it has had limited experience with high schools and most of the 71 schools listed are high schools, and (2) while yielding positive results, the trajectory of progress does not appear sufficient to reach the performance goals established by Florida. To its credit, Florida has added some reform elements well-suited to the high school environment; for example, it realizes that high schools need to offer some different educational paths to keep students in school so there is a plan to expand existing and/or create new Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in collaboration with business and industry, and to add CTE experts to the DA teams working with schools. The DA approach is a sound model for assessing specific school needs (through an Instructional Review) and addressing them with professional development and coaching services. Not discussing how the assistance will be focused specifically on subgroups of students is a deficiency. There are strong accountability requirements for results; DA team members whose schools do not progress are replaced and schools that do not progress in one year must choose another model. With respect to this latter condition for schools, it is unclear how such a timeline actually works (i.e., reporting of assessment results followed by an immediate choice and implementation of another intervention model such as restart or closure). The plan does address the issue of increasing the number of charter schools and extra funding is provided to support this activity. The plan also rightfully focuses on the issue of upgrading personnel (teachers and leaders) in persistently low performing schools. A leadership academy has been proposed but its graduates will not be available for several years and its potential for success is unknown. Florida plans to work with alternative teacher training programs (e.g., Teach for America) to staff up schools in Dade and Duval counties where many of the persistently lowest performing schools are located.

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

The presentation clarified the nature of work related to an intention to provide reform support to identified low performing schools AND to the involved feeder schools. The presentation also provided insight on how the State envisions moving to reform models other than Transformation in the event that the Transformation model does not prove to be a successful intervention. In that case Restart and/or Closure models become viable alternatives.

Total	50	43	46	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**9**	**9**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4	4	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

The application includes evidence that the percentage of available funding for education in 2009 was higher than in 2008 but only by a very small percentage (.22%). By statute, Florida's Education Finance Program ensures equity in funding at the student level notwithstanding geographical and/or local economic factors. Its equalization formula is designed to balance out education funding derived from local property taxes. The per pupil basis of equalization addresses potential inequities among LEAs and among schools within an LEA.

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

Florida's Charter School law has no caps on the number of schools that may be authorized; Florida is currently 4th in the nation in the number of charter schools and 3rd in charter school enrollment. The statute addresses how charter schools are approved (Florida developed a model application that is required) and requires charter schools to serve a population similar to the district. LEAs, who are the authorizers, are required to monitor charter schools and hold them accountable for student achievement results. The application includes evidence that LEAs are doing so and have acted to close charter schools on the basis of poor performance. By law, charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, including Federal grant funds. In addition, the state provides funds for charter school facilities and does not require charter schools to meet the more stringent facility requirements imposed on traditional public schools. Florida has provisions for LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined); these include virtual schools sponsored by LEAs as well as IHE-run laboratory schools which are considered LEAs by the State. It should be noted that Florida also runs a Statewide Virtual School and leads the nation in offering this approach to instruction.

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

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

The quality of the response to this criterion is rated in the strong range.

The application documents two efforts and one system that have contributed to positive gains for students. The two efforts operate at the ends of the K-12 continuum; the first is a voluntary pre-K program to increase children's readiness to succeed in school and the second is a College Reach Out Program serving 7,000 high school students annually that provides special support to low income, disadvantaged youth to prepare them for postsecondary education. Florida's extensive and longitudinal data system has enable the State and LEAs to have access to the types of district, school, classroom, and student data needed to make good decisions about policies and programs supporting effective reform.

Total	55	54	54	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Florida's RTTT proposal addresses the competitive preference priority emphasizing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with respect to all four component areas and merits the priority points. In addressing the areas of standards and assessments, data systems, great teachers and leaders, and turning around persistently low-performing schools, Florida has paid special attention to the STEM fields. Examples of this attention include: (1) increasing graduation requirements and adopting internationally benchmarked standards, (2) recruiting math and science majors for teaching positions and increasing elementary teacher certification requirements, (3) increasing the number of STEM technical programs. Florida has partnered with business, research centers, and universities in the design of comprehensive efforts to address STEM and to provide better educational opportunities to groups underrepresented in STEM fields, as well as gifted students.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Florida's RTTT proposal meets the threshold requirements of the Absolute Priority. The proposal consists of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to education reform that includes all four ARRA areas. Florida has won support for this endeavor by the vast majority of its LEAs that have signed off on an MOU requiring a high level of commitment. The potential for statewide impact is substantial. The plans reflect a systemic approach to reforms logically linked to increased student achievement and, in general, the budget aligns well with the planned activities. Florida's past experience with reform and its positive results to date are good indicators of the potential effects to be achieved.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	428	443	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Florida Application #2450FL-10

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	55	58	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	4	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	39	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

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

A i - Florida's strategy for reform is systemic and there is a clearly articulated plan and timeline that builds on progress to date in addressing the four assurances. Strong evidence is provided throughout the application as to the state's progress over time in these areas. The state has adopted internationally benchmarked standards and will adopt Common Core Standards and Assessments. The applicant is committed to cutting the achievement gap in half by 2015 and doubling the number of high school graduates as well as those who go on to college.

- A longitudinal data system is in place but there is a recognized need to make it more user friendly and relevant at the school and district level.
- Continuous and systemic professional development plans are delineated in the scope of work and address efforts to improve the quality of teachers and leaders.
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of LEAs have executed compliant MOUs (Appendix) with conditional commitment to many of the particulars concerning improving the quality of teachers and leaders for all students (Detailed Table A-1).

However, there is not sufficient detail as to a strategy to gain LEA agreement to this strand of Florida's education reform plan.

Investing in human capital is the core of Florida's RTTT theory of reform. Florida will **change the culture of the profession** by ensuring that all teachers and school leaders are well selected, prepared, supported, respected, and accountable for their students' achievement. Significantly, the reform plans include a strong focus on the classroom with job embedded, data informed professional development for teachers and leaders. There is a commitment supported in the Preliminary Scope of Work and Budget to investing heavily in advancing teacher and leader effectiveness for purposes of improving student achievement.

A ii - Ninety-six percent (96%) of LEAs have executed compliant MOUs signed by superintendents and school boards, representing 93% of the state's students. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the MOUs included a signature from the local teachers union. Some of the elements of Florida's plan are recognized to be dependent upon successful negotiation between LEAs and their local unions as there is only conditional agreement as to the aspects of the plan around wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment. Almost all districts, as shown on Detailed Table (A) (1), are currently "conditional" as to their participation in implementation activities delineated in relation to (D) (2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance and (D) (3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals.

Florida's reform requires implementation of all elements of Florida's plan; even the most difficult elements of the proposed reform must be implemented by the LEAs. Thus the MOU specifically requires LEAs to "implement all elements of the State Plan and not merely significant portions of the State Plan." There is acknowledgement that using student achievement or growth as the basis for at least 50% of an LEAs teacher evaluation system "will be one of the more difficult elements for LEAs to implement." Moreover, there is a provision in the MOU providing that the failure to negotiate any term or condition in a collective bargaining agreement necessary for full implementation of the plan will result in termination of the grant. But where the application acknowledges "every effort" will be made to reach agreement on these items, and recognizes that individual LEA Boards have final decision making authority the application itself contains no specific plans or activities, beyond open and honest collaboration, for successfully negotiating with the unions or influencing the Boards concerning the more contentious elements of the reform plan.

A iii - Florida's goals for student performance take into account 96% of LEAs, 94% of schools, 93% of students, and 94% of students in poverty in participating LEAs. Annual subgroup growth targets are hopeful about cutting the achievement gap in half by 2015 and aspire to slower growth through 2011 and moderate growth through 2013, as RTTT initiatives are implemented across the State. There is also a goal to double graduation and college enrollment rates by 2015 from the current 22% to 44% in 2015. Data presented in A 3-1 and A 3- 2 are impressive for the progress made to date on achievement goals, graduation and college enrollment, and the scope of work and timelines throughout the applications detail a careful and comprehensive plan for significant continued progress. Appendix A 2-1: Support for Participating LEAs details planned support provided across all four assurances inclusive of significant resources, both human and fiscal, that will contribute to progress on these goals.

"Evaluation of the effects" of the multiple initiatives (i.e. new student measures, evaluation systems, compensation methods) is planned. However, there is insufficient description as to how the results of these evaluations will be used to improve effects going forward.

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

A 1 ii - The Florida panelists were persuasive in suggesting a strong level of commitment by LEAs to participation in the RttT plan. This spirit of cooperation is quantified by the fact that 54 unions are on board in round two of the competition as compared with agreement from only five in round one. Additionally, the discussion clarified that there are extant statues requiring compliance with assurances around educator evaluation and restructured salary schedules based on effectiveness.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**25**	**25**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	18	18	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	7	7	

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

A 2 i - To ensure statewide capacity to implement the scope of work, newly formed "RTTT implementation teams" will enhance the existing FDOE infrastructure. The RTTT team will be comprised of the Commissioner of Education, Chancellor of Public Schools, Chancellor of Career and Adult Education, Chief Financial Officer, Regional Executive Directors, an RTTT overall lead project manager, and team leaders for each of the four reform assurance areas. Specifically, each assurance team will be comprised of the assurance team leader, an RTTT assurance project manager, and the program specialists needed to implement the specific initiatives. Eighteen (18) additional personnel at FDOE are budgeted for this line item (in Year One $5,045,773 is committed and over $20M for four years) in both professional (including an additional attorney) and support capacities. While this is only 3% of the overall budget, it is difficult to assess how or if this support structure will be maintained when the grant is expended. There are insufficient details concerning capacity building at the state level. A consulting firm will be hired to "provide detailed project management...and formative and summative evaluation." Additionally, maintaining a balance such that these "managers/monitors" will be primarily supportive rather than "monitors" may

present a challenge. Plans to evaluate these new structures and positions throughout the life of the grant are not detailed.

Appendix A 2-1: Support for Participating LEAs indicates that FDOE will support districts in multiple ways including, as example, assisting LEAs in restructuring compensation, employment, professional development, and leadership opportunities, providing professional development to teachers, principals and district administrators, and providing a customer friendly web-based portal to a variety of digital resources.

There is also support proposed through the development of instructional materials and professional development to actively support the implementation of the CCS. The plans for the development of these materials are ambitious but appear achievable given they build on past such activities and have been addressed both in the scope of work and the budget that includes a process for districts sharing information and learning from one another.

Additionally, in an effort to assist districts with sustainability, "funds in the state's portion of the grant will be used to contract with financial consultants to assist districts with operational efficiency reviews" and identify recurring funding sources. Fiscal resources, at all levels, will be closely examined to determine how they might be coordinated, reallocated, and/or repurposed. The application notes that the "Florida Legislature has authorized school districts to have budget flexibility in the expenditure of operating funds. It is expected that the budget flexibility policy will continue. In essence, the RTTT application is a plan for the prioritization of financial resources on the initiatives as described in the application." However, if an LEA does not meet the requirements of the MOU over time, there is no description as to how LEA internal fiscal stability will be maintained as grant funds are withdrawn.

A 2 ii - Support from a broad group of stakeholders is noted in the application and appendices. The FDOE received over 85 letters from a variety of stakeholders including legislators, higher education, parents, community leaders, etc., expressing their support to participate in the federal RTTT competitive funding process. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of local teacher's unions have signed on as has The Southern Poverty Law Center and NAACP. It does not appear that relevant Hispanic/Latino organizations are engaged. The application does not include letters of support but instead relies on a narrative overview in the appendix.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	28	28	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	23	23	

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

A 3 i- Figure A 3-1 and the narrative that follows clearly delineates the State's decade long commitment to building statewide capacity to raise achievement and close gaps in the four education reform areas including, as example, the adoption of internationally benchmarked standards, higher standards for high school graduation, the development of a longitudinal data system recognized by the DQC as including all 10 required elements, statewide performance pay and a "Differentiated Accountability" process for identifying and providing support to the lowest performing schools. Florida has comprehensively addressed the achievement gap and its response to this criterion suggests that the State meets this criterion at a very high level having tackled it through legislation, most recently in Senate Bill 4 (2010) aligning high school graduation requirements with college and career readiness standards and promoting fiscal strategies that have dedicated State and federal resources,over time, to the four assurances areas. Florida's previous reform efforts have been validated externally. The Goldwater Institute published a policy report in September 2008 titled "Demography Defeated: Florida's K-12 Reforms and Their Lessons for the Nation." This study examined the ten year impact of Florida's reforms and found remarkable improvement in Florida's test scores.

A 3 ii - There has been, since 2003, steady improvement in all achievement areas narrowing the gap among all subgroups with impressive gains for minority students in 2009. As example:

Grades 3-10 FCAT in Reading: The percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 51 percent in 2003 to 62 percent in 2009

- *o White students improved from 63 percent in 2003 to 72 percent in 2009*
- *o Black students improved from 31 percent in 2003 to 44 percent in 2009*
- *o Hispanic students improved from 41 percent in 2003 to 57 percent in 2009*
- *Grades 3-10 FCAT in Mathematics: the percent of Florida students scoring at or above basic has increased from 54 percent in 2003 to 67 percent in 2009*

o White students improved from 67 percent in 2003 to 77 percent in 2009

o Black students improved from 32 percent in 2003 to 49 percent in 2009

o Hispanic students improved from 47 percent in 2003 to 64 percent in 2009

Since 2002-03, the high school graduation rate (calculated based on the guidelines for the new federal uniform rate) has increased from 56.5 percent to 65.5 percent in 2008-09.

o The rate of white students graduating from high school has improved from 64 percent in 2003 to 71.2 percent in 2009

o The rate of black students graduating from high school has improved from 42.6 percent in 2003 to 53.7 percent in 2009

o The rate of Hispanic students graduating from high school has improved from 51.4 percent in 2003 to 63.4 percent in 2009

A January 2010 Education Trust policy brief states that Florida is near the top of all states in closing the achievement gap as measured by 4th and 8th grade NAEP Assessments. It appears that the graduation rate (Figure A 3-8) for students on Free and Reduced Lunch has declined. There is a lack of detail which speaks to how this will be addressed going forward.

Total	125	108	111	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**35**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	15	20	

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

Florida has developed and adopted rigorous standards via the adoption of internationally benchmarked "Next Generation Sunshine State Standards" (NGSSS). Florida considers its education leaders strong advocates in national and state forums for the benefits of multi-state work on high-quality, clear, and rigorous standards. The application notes that the *2010 Education Week Quality Counts* report gives Florida an "A" in Standards, with a perfect score of 100%.

The State is an active working member in the development of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and has signed an MOA demonstrating commitment to jointly develop and adopt the CCSS in which 48 states

are participating. A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of this standards consortium, is found on Appendix B1-2 and Appendix B1-3 includes documentation that the standards are internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers. An eight step legislative process is detailed in (B)1 ii b of the application which includes the following:

- The State Board will convene in July 2010 for the formal adoption of the CCSS as Florida's standards in English/language arts and mathematics.
- The Commissioner will resubmit the standards, including any additional content and written evaluations, to the Governor, the President of the Florida Senate, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, and to the public via Florida's standards review website (www.flstandards.org).
- The Commissioner will present a final draft of Florida's CCSS for State Board of Education adoption in November 2010, after which the CCSS will become Florida's NGSSS in language arts and mathematics.

Adoption and implementation of the CCSS is supported by statutes, a clearly delineated process for standards adoption, defined in Florida law (s. 1003.41, F.S.), and the successful work already done in the adoption and implementation of Florida's Next Generation Sunshine Standards (NGSSS) . A timeline for adoption of the full set of standards proceeds from June 2010 through July 2011 when it is anticipated that the State Board adoption of CCSS for Florida students with disabilities and English language learners will occur. Florida scores high on this criterion but full points were not awarded due to lack of clarity as to the actual adoption date.

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

The Florida Department of Education provided evidence, through an amendment to their Race to the Top Application, that the State Board of Education unanimously approved the adoption of the Common Core State Standards on July 27, 2010.

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

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

Florida is a governing state and the fiscal agent for the common assessment consortium. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (Partnership) is comprised of 26 (or 27) states, including eight governing states, whose leaders have signed an MOU (appendix p. 271). In September 2009, Florida took the lead to invite 12 states with existing, high-quality assessment systems to join Florida in forming a consortium. The application notes that in February 2010, the Florida-led consortium merged with the Achieve, Inc.-led partnership of states to form the Partnership. Florida is one of the three founding states, including Louisiana and Massachusetts, and one of eight governing states. Other governing states are Indiana, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and the District of Columbia. A timeline is delineated for the process of adoption and it is anticipated that by 2014-2015 grades and subjects of Common Assessment are operational with common proficiency standards. The States commitment to developing and adopting common assessments is evident. Florida scores high on this criterion.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**19**	**19**	

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

Florida's application notes a combination of State and LEA-supported initiatives which are designed from experience with previous and existing reforms; the application describes multiple approaches to supporting

the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments. Florida's plan for supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments is systemic. The plan includes providing:

- *Enhanced Technology- Based Curricular Tools*
- *Interim and formative assessment systems and the common summative assessments*
- *Increased Access to STEM Courses*
- *Classroom Support*

For each initiative and set of activities there is a timeline provided and divisions tasked with primary responsibility noted (i.e. Bureau of Curriculum and instruction, Division of Assessment, LEA).

Prominent in the plans are initiatives focused on supporting teachers and principals in their classrooms and schools as they incorporate CCSS and utilize the assessment system. Through an RFP process the State will contract with experts in lesson study and instructional design in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science to develop high-quality, effective resources. These experts will work with FDOE and the participating LEAs to complete a design and develop resources for, and implement actions to support lesson study and associated professional development.

The LEAs' MOU commitment includes ensuring that the lowest-achieving schools modify their schedules to accommodate lesson study, common planning time by grade level or subject area focused on instructional quality, and provide professional development in all schools that focus on the new Common Core standards, including assisting students with learning challenges to meet those standards. Many of these initiatives will be technology based, however there is an absence of detail related to how the State will ensure that everyone involved has the appropriate hardware to engage in these new practices.

University and College leaders are engaged in the process of developing the assessments to ensure the indicators are aligned with their expectations. Buy-in from other constituent groups is not noted.

There is a timeline delineated for the process of adoption including participation in international assessments for comparative purposes during the first two years of the grant. By 2014-2015 grades and subjects of Common Assessments will be operational and aligned to common proficiency standards. The State's commitment to developing and adopting common assessments is strong. Florida scores high on this criterion.

Total	70	64	69	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

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

(C) (1) FDOE has had a comprehensive statewide longitudinal data system, the PK-20 Education Data Warehouse (EDW) since 2003. EDW is established in Florida law and in the Florida Administrative Code. This system meets each of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements. It tracks students through the PK-20 education pipeline and into the workforce dating back 15 years to 1995. Florida was the first, and is currently one of only 11 states, to be recognized by the Data Quality Campaign for including all the elements essential to a longitudinal data system.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**4**	**4**	

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

(C) (2) - Data is a priority for Florida as evidenced in the application. FDOE established the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement (ARM) to collect and consolidate PreK-20 data; incorporate

data from external resources including workforce and social services; analyze data regarding educational policy for use by state and local decision makers; publish reports and information for internal and external stakeholders; and provide anonymous student- and staff -level data for research. FDOE's major source data systems and statewide longitudinal data system are all operated within this division.

FDOE recognizes the growing need for a) access to student-centered information in a variety of formats and b) broader access for key stakeholders. The grant will be used to expand and enhance data access and usability by:

- Improving the usability of data with actionable information presented through dashboards and customizable reports - the portal will be "user friendly" and accessible through a secure, single sign-on and will be created and housed in an existing FDOE technology environment to reduce implementation and long-term support costs, and to leverage existing resources and expertise. This portal will be implemented by 2012
- Leveraging current statewide technology efforts to promote the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instruction improvement systems (Local Systems)
- Creating a Local Systems Exchange
- Expanding professional development processes to support stakeholders use of data to inform instruction and decision making

A Data Implementation Committee will be formed. This Committee will mirror the characteristics of Florida's LEAs and include representatives from large, medium, small, urban, and rural LEAs to ensure that the State's diverse data and technological needs are considered in the implementation plans.

Section C 2 provides a detailed listing of the types of data that will be available and the audiences for whom it is intended. Schools and LEAs will, as example, have access to assessment data, student performance data, college readiness data, and also have access to information about the effectiveness of instructional materials, the ability to demonstrate effectiveness in teacher evaluation systems, and the success of principal preparation programs. There is insufficient information to determine whether adequate hardware will be made available to ensure ease of access.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**14**	**14**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	4	4	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	5	5	

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

C 3 i - To <u>increase the acquisition, adoption and use of data to inform instructional improvement, and support participating LEAs</u> FDOE will collaborate with a newly formed Data Implementation Committee, parents, union representatives, researchers, policy makers and other education community members to collect requests and design reporting templates based on these requests. These will, as appropriate, be entered into Local Systems. Necessary upgrades to the existing technology environment will be addressed in 2010-2011 with ongoing audits planned. During Year 2 of the the grant, FDOE will develop and implement Facts.org, a communication module to send messages to students and parents. In Year 3 an early intervention alert system will be implemented The Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement will be responsible for providing project management and technical services and current FDOE staff will be augmented by contractors.

Participating LEAs are required, by MOU agreement, to adhere to the state's plan to modernize and expand access to data and acquire, adopt and use Local (data) Systems that meet a set of minimum standards to be developed by the Data Implementation Committee.

- A Local Systems Exchange will be formalized to encourage and facilitate the acquisition and implementation of data systems through negotiation of exchanges and sharing of best practices.
- Small/Rural LEAs will receive help to cover initial purchase, installation and training through an FDOE administered needs-based grant.
- Professional development will be provided to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instruction improvement.

Clarification on whether of not "improving the technology environment" addresses issues of hardware both as to their recency and accessibility to key stakeholders would be helpful. Section C- Initiative Summary Chart (appendix) indicates that just under $21m will be allocated to data activities but there is no specific mention of expenses for hardware.

C 3 ii - Florida will expand ongoing professional development efforts to school and district based personnel to support use of the instructional improvement systems. Two models will be built upon. The current model, implemented in 2009 when the Legislature passed HB 991 which advanced a Differentiated Accountability (DA) program, enables FDOE to intervene in persistently low- achieving schools. The FDOE staffed five DA Regional Teams throughout the State. These Teams work directly with schools and LEAs to provide professional development with emphasis on the use of data and strategies for educating students whose achievement is well below or above grade level. The second model, Master Digital Educators (MDE), provides direct training to teachers, principals, and administrators on how to access and integrate technology in the classroom and school. There are currently 93 MDE in 42 of 72 LEAs. FDOE will hire a Data Captain who will create and execute an all inclusive plan to expand the DA program to all schools and leverage the MDE to train teachers, principals and administrators on how to access data and resources from a centralized user-friendly portal. The application does not provide sufficient information about the effectiveness of these models to date.

C 3 iii Making the data available and accessible to researchers falls to the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement. This Division is responsible for the coordination and sustainability of the FDOE Research Consortium, and through collaboration with stakeholders will establish a focused research agenda to evaluate strategies and approaches for educating students. By 2011 a research agenda consistent with Florida's RTTT initiatives and student achievement goals will be established and relevant data made available to the research community from State and local Systems. The MOU with LEAs reiterates the need for LEAs to share data with approved research entities.

The State's research plan as described does not indicate when the Research Request Process (Appendix C 3 1) was last reviewed and updated. The State's plan for research does not address immediate research considerations such as placing ethnographers in key sites to capture, from the outset, the processes and human implementation challenges and successes.

Total	47	42	42	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**15**	**15**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	5	5	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	5	5	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	5	5	

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

D 1 i & ii - In addition to Florida's Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programs ("traditional" programs), there are three alternative routes authorized by the Florida Legislature and State Board of Education that teacher candidates can pursue to earn a Professional Certificate. In 2008-09, a full 37% of the 9,705 teacher preparation program completers came through one of these alternative routes. Two districts have partnerships with Teach for America (TFA) to provide teachers for their high-need schools.

Approval for alternative routes for certification for principals was given to Florida school boards by the Legislature in 2004. LEAs can appoint an individual as a school principal who does not hold a traditional certificate in that area and design a special alternative training program for those school leaders. The option is not widely used. A second alternative is that a Florida LEA may offer an approved certification program in Educational Leadership to its employees who already hold a master's degree. One LEA has reported 43 completers of such a program.

Future teachers have several alternative routes and they appear to be utilized at a reasonable level. There are minimal details provided as to the elements of these alternative programs. The State currently offers few alternative routes to traditional principal preparation and it is not clear that there is a robust plan for encouraging use of the District Leadership Program or other alternatives.

D 1 iii - Each year the State Board of Education approves critical teacher shortage areas for the coming school year under State Board of Education Rule 6A-2.013, F.A.C. The determinations are based on consideration of current supply and demand information related to Florida public school instructional personnel and a set of criteria related to the annual number of teachers projected in that area. This list of shortage areas is used in implementing two statewide programs to prepare teachers in shortage areas: (a) The Critical Teacher Tuition Reimbursement Program and (b) Critical Teacher Shortage Student Forgiveness Program.

In 2007 it was determined that Florida's leadership pool was lacking specifically in the number of high-quality candidates. In 2008 a comprehensive revision of school leadership certification programs to focus on candidates' performance relative to the new leadership standards was undertaken. This is recognized as one step in providing for a highly qualified pool of candidates, however there is no information in the application as to whether other approaches were considered or undertaken to impact this shortage. While the process for determining teacher shortages is rigorous, the need for principals was determined in what appears to be a one time "state wide leadership meeting." There is no indication that an ongoing process for collecting data on principal vacancies and the pool of qualified candidates will be undertaken. Efforts, in general, around improving principal effectiveness are behind those being instituted for teachers. Baseline data for principal effectiveness is not available; however, targets will be set when principal evaluations have been revised after year one of the grant.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**44**	**49**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11	13	[redacted]
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	6	7	[redacted]
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	22	24	[redacted]

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

The approaches Florida proposes to measuring student growth are based heavily in several years of experience in this area. Currently, the state's longitudinal database links students with their teachers and courses, and teachers to teacher preparation programs and professional development. This linkage is used statewide to report individual teacher performance in the aggregate. However, after several years of implementing performance pay it became apparent that there was a lack of student learning measures for courses and grades outside the state assessment system. To assist districts in implementing a student

assessment system for content areas and grade levels not assessed on state-required assessment, the FDOE will form an implementation team to work with the Governor's RTTT Task Force and others to:

- Provide LEAs and schools with formative assessment systems in Reading K-8 and in Mathematics K -3;
- Use a competitive procurement process to provide LEAs and schools with interim assessment item banks/test platforms for K-8 Mathematics, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; Grades K-12 English Language Arts; Grades K-8 Science, Biology, Earth/Space Science, Physics, and Chemistry; Grades K-8 Social Studies, U.S. History, World History, U.S. Government, and Economics; and Spanish; and
- Establish performance measures for performance-based courses.

Additionally, the FDOE proposes to contract with an expert in value-added calculation to track student growth for state- assessed subjects and grades. This expert will assist the Governor's Task Force and the specialized implementation committee in selecting a statewide student growth measure for courses associated with the state assessment system (reading and mathematics in grades 4-10). For non state-assessed areas, a method to calculate growth assessed by selected national assessments and LEA developed end of course assessments will be developed. Details are to be provided in LEA work plans prior to grant funding. The scope of activities for implementing the new growth measure will include state-level work plans for professional development, data quality training, controls, communication, and monitoring. There is a timeline provided in the Outcomes section of D1 i beginning in July 2010 with the FDOE providing LEAs with three years of student performance data and culminating in recommendations for student growth performance measures in arts and physical education courses by 2013-2014.

D 2 ii - Participating LEAs carry the responsibility for developing evaluation systems that meet minimum components agreed to in the MOU, which include the following for teachers by the end of the grant:

- student growth as defined in (D)(2)(i), for at least 40% of the evaluation, and student growth or achievement as determined by the LEA for 10% of the evaluation. The LEA may phase in the evaluation system but will use, at a minimum, student growth as defined in (D)(2)(i) for at least 35% of the evaluation and student growth or achievement as determined by the LEA for 15% of the evaluation. Implementation of the requirements for the LEA evaluation systems beginning in the 2011-12 school year applies, at a minimum, to teachers in grades and subjects for which student growth measures have been developed by the FDOE;
- Includes the core of effective practices determined by the FDOE in collaboration with stakeholders for the observation portion of the teacher evaluation; and
- Includes at least one additional metric to combine with the student performance and principal observation components to develop a "multi-metric" evaluation system for teachers in the year prior to a milestone career event, such as being awarded a multi-year contract, a promotion, or a significant increase in salary.

The primary factor for principal evaluation remains the same as the first bullet above for teacher evaluation, however no beginning date is specified. Additionally principals will be evaluated using the Florida Principal Leadership Standards and held accountable for recruiting and retaining effective teachers. Clarification would be helpful as to whether these standards were reviewed for their robustness as relates to the RTTT assurances.

The FDOE will support LEAs by providing a framework for the system which includes (1) comparable student growth measures, (2) a core of well-defined instructional practices (the *Florida Educator Accomplished Practices*), (3) professional development and support for evaluation system design, and (4) a timeline for the process, which is outlined in the MOU and by providing timely feedback to teachers and principals that clearly differentiates performance. Additionally, Florida's document *Accomplished Practices* forms the state's core of effective instructional practice. These practices will be revised by the fall of 2010 through input from participating LEAs, teacher educators, and other stakeholders to be used as the core practices for both teacher evaluations and teacher preparation. Principal Leadership Standards are noted as the core for principal evaluation.

While the application notes frequently that the evaluation will be designed with teacher and principal involvement there is no indication of what this involves, or how much final decision making authority practitioners will have. Finally, the following are noted:

- By the end of the 2011-12 school year, each participating LEA will have designed evaluation systems for teachers and principals that weight student growth as the largest combined factor, assess performance of the state's *Accomplished Practices*, and include a rating system that differentiates performance; and
- By the 2011-12 school year, LEA evaluation systems will incorporate student performance data as 50% of the evaluation, with at least 35% using a value-added calculation based on state assessments.

There is no indication that the *Accomplished Practices* referenced encompass principal "practices." Clarification as to whether there is evidence of value-added calculation being used successfully to evaluate principal performance would help clarify Florida's plan.

D 2 iii - LEA evaluation systems in Florida are said to "meet the letter of the law regarding annual evaluations" but have not always succeeded in using the results of these evaluation to inform "teaching" practice." The Timeline presented in Florida's response to section D 2 iii states that participating LEAs will revise teacher evaluations based on core practices and develop a beginning teacher support program by 2010-11, and each year thereafter, through 2014. Thus the process and practices will become more robust. There is no mention of principals on the Timeline. Beginning teacher support programs are proposed. Nothing similar is noted for principals. It is difficult to discern if the concept of principal evaluation has enjoyed deep discussion or if consideration has been given to distributing responsibility for evaluation.

National experts will assist by providing professional development for principals and other evaluators who will use the newly developed systems.

D 2 iv - The highlights of Florida's plan to use evaluations to inform decisions regarding professional development, compensation, promotion and retention build on current laws and depend upon MOU agreements. FDOE will evaluate each participating LEA's work plan based on whether it reflects a direct connection to student growth; and feedback to teachers and principals through formal and informal evaluation results, lesson study and instructional coaching, and includes a beginning teacher support program.

LEAs will provide the following professional development opportunities:

- Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP, s. 1012.98, F.S.) for each teacher will be based in part on an analysis of student performance data and results of prior evaluations. IPDP's will also be required of principals; and
- Individualized support for first and second year teachers by "effective" teachers who will provide coaching/mentoring.

It is unclear whether FDOE will provide further guidance during the development of these LEA plans whether FDOE will provide teacher coaches with a training program to hone their mentoring skills.

Compensation in Florida schools is required to be differentiated based on factors such as teaching in crucial shortage and high-need subject areas. In addition, there are optional bonus programs for teachers rewarding a variety of accomplishments. These are not fully aligned to improving student performance.

While the application outlines ambitious plans and participating LEAs are expected to "institute ground-breaking performance-driven compensation systems," only two LEAs have agreed fully to this by indicating YES. All other LEAs are conditional (C) (see Detailed table A-1) concerning the applications proposal to tie significant gains in salary to effectiveness, differentiate pay based on job difficulties and performance, or base promotions on effectiveness. While participating LEAs must agree to submit work plans that outline the process for using evaluation data to make PSC awards and principal contracts, that privilege the teacher's or principal's level of effectiveness, this has yet to be agreed to by the LEAs.

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

D 2 ii,iii &iv - Scores for these criteria were modified as the panel clarified plans to redefine principal standards and align these with training planned for principals and the development of a new evaluation system. It was clearly stated that all principals will be evaluated annually. There is a spirit of commitment to an increasing focus on supporting leaders.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**19**	**19**	
(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	7	7	

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

To ensure equitable distribution of quality teachers, Florida has, since 2001, increased its overall percentage of core courses taught by highly qualified teachers from 89.6% in 2005-06 to 93.04% in 2008-09. This includes increases for the most vulnerable populations: highly qualified teachers in high-poverty schools increased from 87.1% to 92.8%, highly qualified teachers in high-minority schools increased from 88.3% to 92.55%, and highly qualified teachers in exceptional student education courses in high-minority schools dramatically increased from 73% to 88.8%. In addition, in 2007 the Florida Legislature passed and Governor Bush signed legislation requiring that LEAs certify each year that they have not employed a higher percentage in high-minority, high-poverty, or low-performing schools a higher percentage of teachers holding a Temporary Certificate, out-of-field teachers, first-year teachers, or teachers in need of improvement than are employed in low-minority, low-poverty, high-performing schools (s.1012.2315, F.S.). Despite supportive laws and gains there are challenges remaining (see appendices D2-1, D3-1).

Distribution of quality principals is not discussed in any depth.

As specified in Florida's MOU, participating LEAs will:

- Develop a plan, with timetables and goals, that uses effectiveness data from annual evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii) to attract and retain highly effective teachers and principals to schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, and persistently lowest-achieving;
- Implement a compensation system as described in (D)(2)(iv)(b) to provide incentives for effective teachers and principals;
- Present a plan that includes strategies in addition to compensation to staff these schools with a team of highly effective teachers led by a highly effective principal,including how the success of these individuals will be supported by the LEA;
- Report the effectiveness data of all teachers and principals annually;
- Implement a compensation system as described in (D)(2)(iv)(b) to provide incentives for the recruitment of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and areas; and
- Implement recruitment and professional development strategies to increase the pool of teachers available in the LEA in these subject areas.

This plan is ambitious given the "conditional" LEA support for these undertakings. The ideas set forth mirror those of a majority of plans which are similarly attempting to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. Florida's definition of effective teachers is "codified" in *Accomplished Practices.* There is not enough information in the application to know how the many challenges regarding this assurance, will be overcome.

To support efforts to place effective teachers in hard to staff subjects, FDOE anticipates:

- Instituting a grant program for Florida teacher preparation programs that implement dual major programs in STEM areas. These programs will included extensive field experiences with expert mentor teachers and have in the past garnered success in recruitment and retention; and
- Supporting streamlined, intensive job embedded school leadership preparation programs that result in school leadership certification for completers. This is potentially a positive way to attract individuals to leadership roles while providing opportunities for interested LEAs to work with outside entities to meet leadership needs.

Efforts at improving principal effectiveness are behind those being instituted for teachers as baseline data for principal effectiveness is not available; however, targets will be set when principal evaluations have been revised after year one of the grant.

Other efforts focus on increasing the number of teachers with a broad, diverse background, particularly male teachers, among the State's high-poverty/high-minority elementary schools. The FDOE will seek to:

- Develop a partnership for a scholarship program with interested community colleges and/or state universities and one or more private organizations to recruit non-traditional students into the state's public education system;
- Leverage the Florida Virtual School to provide effective teachers in specific courses currently not available to students in small and rural LEAs. Using its detailed longitudinal data system, the state will analyze student course access and will work with participating small and rural LEAs and the Florida Virtual School to provide students with access to needed courses and effective teachers; and
- Enhance the state's online, interactive recruitment site, www.teachinflorida.com.

Other means of attracting strong talent, particularly individuals or organizations that appeal to young, minority professionals who could be utilized in this effort do not appear to have been considered. Nationally it is known that there are more "certified" principals than are needed in schools but far fewer quality candidates for positions. The application is silent on what might be done to make the job of principals more appealing to quality candidates.

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

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

D 4 i - Based on student learning gains data provided to teacher preparation programs this summer, none of Florida's four approved teacher preparation program routes show consistent results in the student performance of first-year teachers placed in reading and mathematics. The application notes that the State is in the early stages of collecting and reporting results on school leadership preparation. There is a need acknowledged in the application for expanding alternative principal preparation delivery systems for high performing individuals, providing training specifically for individuals to work in high-need schools, and ensuring that all leadership training focuses on the principal's role in successfully managing human capital in the school.

Florida will improve teacher and principal preparation content, delivery, and performance measures in collaboration with teacher educators and school leaders to prepare high-performing individuals for Florida schools and support them in early career success. Activities include:

- Improve the rigor of certification examinations;
- Make requirements to enter the profession rigorous;
- Set outcome-based performance standards for continued approval of teacher and principal preparation programs that relate directly to the needs of schools;

- Institute a competitive grant for residency programs for job-embedded teacher preparation and induction; and
- Use the results from the competitive grant program for principal preparation programs [see Section (D)(3)] to provide models and improve school leadership programs, especially in human capital management and fully implement an electronic data collection, analysis, and the electronic Institution Program Evaluation Plan application.

Florida will set expectations for new outcome-based continued approval requirements using the new student growth model described in (D)(2)(i), so the improvement process will take place in collaboration with colleges of education, LEAs, and schools and will link student data to continued program approval. It is unclear whether university/college faculty are supportive of this initiative.

Program Approval data currently collected and for which performance targets will be established includes:

1. Placement and retention rates of completers in school-based administrative positions (including the number of years between certification and placement),

2. The performance of completers on the certification exam,

3. The performance of the students in the school (including by subgroup) under their leadership, and

4. The satisfaction of employers with completers' performance based on their demonstration of the leadership standards in annual evaluations.

It is important to know the impact of the program completers on K-12 schools , but Florida would be wise to consider the research that suggests a lack of correlation between candidates passing of rigorous certification exams and improvement of K-12 student achievement when rolling out this plan.

To expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals, FDOE will institute a competitive grant program for eligible Florida teacher preparation programs that implement a residency program for job-embedded teacher preparation. Through the grant program, the state will seek to improve the teacher preparation processes so that they begin later in the bachelor's degree and extend into the first two years of teaching. This model has been implemented by Florida's LEA alternative certification programs. The application suggests this model has been successful. There is not sufficient data in the application to verify the level of success for this program.

They will also leverage the Florida Virtual School, where a partnership currently exists with the University of Central Florida to provide a student teaching experience in its virtual environment to candidates in teacher preparation programs. The budget reflects support for two new programs in each of these two competitive areas.

The emphasis in this section seems to be on replicating extant Florida models and the FDOE does not suggest in this section that nationally innovative, potentially successful models of teacher and principal preparation have been considered.

Finally the new performance measures for teacher and principal preparation programs will be integrated with the State's Education Data warehouse (EDW). To this end, funding is included in the State's plan for an electronic Institution Program Evaluation Plan (eIPEP) application. This application will be interactive with institutions and State data in real time and will be the central access point in the State's portal for teacher preparation performance data collection and reporting. The application notes this data has been included previously but there is scant information suggesting why it will be better utilized in this next iteration.

Anticipated outcomes include:

- By the end of 2012-13, teacher certification examinations in STEM and reading content areas with more rigorous content and required passing scores will be administered. The state will report performance for teacher preparation programs based on new standards for continued program approval measuring student growth of completers, production of completers in STEM areas,

employment of completers in high-poverty/minority schools, and participation of institutions in teacher induction programs;
- By the end of 2013-14, LEAs will employ completers from the first cohort of job-embedded teacher preparation programs; and
- By the end of 2013-14, partner LEAs will employ the first cohort of fast-track principal preparation program completers. The state will report performance of principal preparation programs based on new measures for continued program approval that include student growth in schools where completers are assigned and employment of completers in high-poverty/minority schools.

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

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

According to Section 1012.98, F.S., responsibility for providing a high-quality professional development system rests with each LEA and Florida's MOU builds on that foundation. Florida has been recognized by the National Staff Development Council as a leader in implementing consistent standards and Statewide monitoring for high-quality LEA professional development systems through Florida's Protocol Standards for High-Quality Professional Development (adopted in 2001). Moreover, an analysis of LEA implementation of those standards and student achievement results reveals that LEAs that receive high ratings on the Protocol Standards show a statistically moderate correlation to increased student achievement. Florida plans to provide effective support to teachers and principals by building on their nationally recognized experience in implementing reading coaches through Read First and the State's Just Read, Florida! Office. Importantly, experience and lessons learned in implementing beginning teacher programs through federal grants also informs the work going forward.

Specifically, the MOU requires participating LEAs to implement a professional development system that uses the State's protocol standards for effective professional development as follows:

- Modify school schedules to allow for common planning time by grade level (elementary) or subject area (secondary) for lesson study focused on instructional quality, student work, and outcomes, without reducing time devoted to student instruction. This is required by LEAs with persistently lowest-achieving schools and is optional in their other schools;
- Ensure that professional development programs in all schools focus on the new Common Core Standards;
- Implement Individual Professional Development Plans for teachers based on analysis of student performance data and results of prior evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii);
- Implement a beginning teacher support program for teachers in the first and second year that integrates data from multiple evaluations. This support appears thorough as it includes coaching/mentoring, and assistance on using student data to improve instruction; builds in time for observation of effective teachers; includes collaboration with colleges of education, as appropriate; and defines a clear process for selecting and training coaches/mentors. FDOE will provide supports to LEAs in implementing beginning teacher programs, as well as in selecting and assigning instructional coaches. They will also recommend standards for selecting and setting the performance expectations for both beginning teachers programs and instructional coaches;
- Implement Individual Leadership Development Plans for principals based on analysis of student performance data and results of prior evaluations as described in (D)(2)(ii); and
- Evaluate professional development based on student results and changes in classroom/leadership practice (as appropriate for the teacher/principal).

There does not appear to be a plan to provide principals with equivalent support to those anticipated for teachers. In general there is mention of principals but few details.

LEAs must also:

Coordinate the use of Title II, Part A funds, as well as appropriate IDEA and Title I funds, to support:

- Evaluation of teacher professional development based on change in classroom practice and student learning outcomes;
- Training for teachers and principals in lesson study, coaching, and classroom observations, and use of student data to drive instruction; and
- Training for teachers, principals, and evaluators on the use of data from evaluations to guide professional development.

In addition to PD for teachers and principals FDOE will provide sustained implementation of high-quality professional development at the school and LEA levels with three specific initiatives:

1. Data coaches and Master Digital Educators in small and rural LEAs

2. Training for school boards in successful practices in school improvement and education human capital

3. The Commissioner's Leadership Academy to build capacity for leadership at the LEA, region, and State levels

100% of LEAs who have committed to the MOU have said YES to this criteria. More information about how FDOE will continuously improve would be helpful.

Total	138	104	109	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

E 1 - After several years of only modest improvement in assisting low-performing schools the Florida Legislature passed House Bill 991 in 2009 (Appendix), which codified the Differentiated Accountability (DA) pilot program into State law and gave Florida's State Board of Education specific statutory and administrative rule authority to require specific, whole-school, or subgroup interventions designed to address systemic issues in Florida's persistently lowest achieving schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**35**	**38**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	33	

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

E2 i - Florida has a process to identify and support its lowest-achieving schools, as evidenced by the passage of House Bill 991 in 2009, They also created six categories of schools: Not in DA, Prevent I, Prevent II, Correct I, Correct II, and Intervene. Schools are categorized based on their school grade, overall AYP criteria met, and historic AYP performance. For the 2010-11 school year, FDOE has identified its persistently lowest achieving Title I Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI) and Title I-eligible secondary schools as a requirement of the Race to the Top (RTTT) and School Improvement Grants (SIG). Fifty-two schools under additional criteria standards for a total of 71 schools were identified as the state's

persistently lowest-achieving schools. These schools have the lowest proficiency rates in reading and mathematics,respectively, and the lowest proficiency rates when reading and mathematics scores are combined. The high schools identified also have the lowest graduation rates in the state and a consistent record of low achievement in both reading and mathematics over the past decade.

Florida receives full points for this criterion.

E 2 ii - The first year of the Differentiated Accountability Pilot showed 79%, or 31 of the 39 schools, increasing academic achievement. In 2009 it was determined that the DA program would be the support model used by the state to assist LEAs in turning around schools in intervention status. There is a well articulated plan beginning with the criteria by which a school is identified as at the Intervene level, the LEA then submits a plan, subject to approval by the State Board of Education, for implementing one of the four reconstitution options. After implementing the selected reconstitution option for one school year, FDOE expects each Intervene school to achieve a "C" letter grade and meet the state AYP proficiency targets with one subgroup that did not make AYP the previous year in reading and one subgroup that did not make AYP the previous year in mathematics in order to exit Intervene status. If a school does not reach this goal after the first year, the LEA implement a different option at the beginning of the next school year. Each time the "exit Intervene" criteria are not met, the school must implement the remaining option(s) until it eventually closes and students are reassigned. Appendix table E 1-7 (p. 366) details the intervention steps mandated in each intervention model.

The one year time table for step one turnaround is demanding but the support model is concomitantly strong.

The focus of state support is on building the LEAs capacity to lead, support, and monitor the school improvement process. Florida has been split into five regions for the purposes of school improvement. Each region is led by a turnaround agent called a Regional Executive Director (RED) who has a proven record of increasing student achievement in low-performing schools. The RED guides the work of a team of instructional specialists who also have demonstrated success in low-performing schools. The Regional Team is responsible for supporting the LEA and schools by offering expertise to superintendents, LEA teams, principals, and instructional coaches; monitoring compliance in accordance with DA requirements; and monitoring the academic progress of schools and LEAs through consistent follow-up visits to schools and through the analysis of assessment results. (See Appendix E1-8 "Annual DA Regional Team Support Timeline"p. 375).

The REDs have legal, statutory, and regulatory authority to recommend that principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, and faculty be replaced, and that instructional programs be replaced or revamped. This gives strong authority to the DA team but it may be challenging to balance providing support and having firing authority.

The expertise and success record of the team members will also give them the necessary credibility for the kinds of supports they will provide(See Appendix E1-10, p. 389, "Regional Executive Director Job Description" for the position's job qualifications). The RED, specialists and coordinators are required to significantly raise student achievement at their assigned lowest-performing schools or they are replaced. This is a good example of walking the talk.

The application provides a detailed, thoughtful and often bold and ambitious plan for turning around schools. There is no line item in the budget for the DA effort as it is noted that Regional Teams are already in place and "no additional funds are required" but the breadth of the DA Program and the high level of expertise required of team members, as well as the probability that individuals will need to be replaced (possibly at higher cost). It is not clear that this funding will be sufficient going forward.

In addition to the support given through the DA program the application includes several other specifics to potentially impact student learning in turnaround schools. Several of these will occur through an RFP process and potentially require an outside contractor. In addition to the budget and budget narrative, Table E2-9 Initiative Summary Chart (Appendix p. 412- 418) shows how the grant funds will support these efforts.

- Teacher recruitment in the State's two districts with the greatest number of persistently low achieving schools;
- Creating a leadership pipeline for turnaround principals and assistant principals;
- Build district level capacity for turnaround in rural districts by partnering with an outside provider to provide leadership support and training;
- Offer a DA summer Academy to enhance instructional leadership and teacher effectiveness;
- Expand the number of charter schools;
- Expand STEM and Career Academies;
- Create a community compact; and
- Expanded kindergarten and extended learning time.

There is no detail provided as to how these initiatives will be sustained after the grant is expended.

The scope of the State's turnaround effort, both in terms of plans and the overall expenditure ($86M) is significant and holds real promise but it is not clear that a focused evaluation component for this area is in the planning. Therefore it is unclear how lessons will be learned and shared. Nor is there sufficient description of how progress will be assessed and adjustments made throughout the four year grant period.

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

The information shared in the presentation concerning the turnaround strategies clarified the levels of supervision and support for turning around districts and schools and the mechanisms that are in place to evaluate progress toward improvement, specifically through the Differentiated Accountability which is a state system of accountability for school improvement.

Total	50	45	48	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**9**	**9**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4	4	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5	5	

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

F-1-i The FY 2009 education expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures increased. The application states that Florida was 0.22 percent higher than the FY 2008 education expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures. Expenditures for public education were 26.38 percent of the State total expenditures for FY 2008. For FY 2009, the total actual expenditures to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education were $12,033,304,404, a lower actual dollar amount that the previous year. Expenditures for public education were 26.60 percent of the state total expenditures for FY 2009.

F 1- ii In 1973, the Florida Legislature enacted the policy that established the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funding formula to provide equitable distribution of state and local funds to Florida's 67 school districts. The FEFP guarantees to each student in the Florida public school system the availability of programs and services appropriate to his or her educational needs that are substantially equal to those available to any similar student notwithstanding geographic differences and varying local economic factors. The FEFP is a student-enrollment-based education funding formula that provides for the equitable distribution of resources to school districts and schools based on the education needs of students.

The formula does accommodate local property tax bases through equalization.

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

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

F 2 i– In May 1996 Florida law authorized the creation of charter schools as apart of the public education system. Currently 400 charter school educate approximately 137,000 (5.24% of the student population) students. The application notes that the Center for American Progress determined that Florida has above average charter school laws. Florida law does not impose caps or restrictions on the number of charter schools or students eligible to attend these schools. Florida is committed to using RTTT to increase the number of quality charters.

F2 –ii The application notes that Florida Statutes and State Board of Education rules provide explicit instructions for approving, monitoring, renewing, and closing charter schools. Each of these processes is required to include an assessment of student achievement as the primary determining factor. Charter schools are held accountable for high standards of student achievement, enhanced academic success, financial efficiency, and the alignment of responsibility with accountability. The law also requires that charter schools demonstrate how they will serve student populations similar to other schools in the LEA, as well as increase learning opportunities for all students, and specifically encourages charter schools to enroll high-need students by allowing them to limit their enrollment to target students at risk of dropping out or academic failure [s.1002.33(10)(e), F.S.]. Charter schools must be one of the options available to school districts to turn around schools categorized as "Intervene" under the state's Differentiated Accountability program. [s. 1008.33(5), F.S.].

LEAs, with the exception of university run charter schools, are the only entities authorized to approve charter schools though application denials and charter school terminations are appealable to the State Board of Education. By law, charter school students are assessed in the same way as traditional school students. Since 2004 134 applications were denied and 114 charter schools were closed. The vast majority of theses closures were due to poor academic or financial performance.

F2 iii - Florida law requires that "students enrolled in a charter school, regardless of the sponsorship, shall be funded as if they are in a basic program or a special program, the same as students enrolled in other public schools in the school district" [s. 1002.33(17), F.S.]. State taxes, appropriate federal funds (including ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Funds), local property taxes, and lottery proceeds fund charter schools in the same manner as traditional public schools for current operating costs. Charter schools receive a per student share of these operating funds through the authorizing LEA. Florida law affirms the right of charter schools to receive federal funds for which they are eligible, including Title I funds Section 1002.33(17)(c).

F2 iv - Florida initiated a charter school facility funding program in 1998 by establishing a separate capital outlay program in statute [ss. 1002.33(9) and 1013.62, F.S.]. The per-student amount of this facilities funding for eligible charter schools is comparable to the average per-student amount available to LEA schools The state provides charter school capital outlay funds only to those schools that demonstrate satisfactory student achievement, financial stability, and sound governance.

Florida's charter schools are supported and held accountable in much the same way as traditional schools,however there is no information to assess whether the capital outlay funds requirement for charter schools (it is dependent upon satisfactory student achievement) is also applied to traditional schools.

F 2 v. - Florida enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools via the Florida Virtual School (FLVS), the School District Virtual Instruction Program, and developmental research (laboratory) schools. Virtual education options are funded through the State's public education funding formula so that the funding follows the students to the program of choice and there are no legislative caps for enrollment. In 2008-09, FLVS had 154,125 successful half-credit completions .Florida also established in law public developmental research schools (lab schools) (see s. 1002.32, F.S.). Florida has four Title I-eligible lab schools three of which are participating LEAs in RTTT.

Florida's FLVS has been recognized by the Center for Digital Education and #1 in the nation for it on-line learning. The applicant meets this criterion at a high level.

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

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

F 3 – The Florida application notes the following systemic reforms to increase student achievement:

- A+ Plan instituted in 1999 and the A++Plan in 2006
- Voluntary Pre-K
- Teach for America – in 2 districts
- Knowledge is Power Program
- Southern Regional Education Board
- College Reach-Out Program
- Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program

These efforts are commendable, absent however is attention to learning beyond the traditional school day.

Total	55	53	53	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Figure P-1 graphically illustrates how the STEM initiative is woven throughout the application. Florida's plan includes a clear focus on improving the quality of instruction and student achievement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics for diverse students. There is also support of a broad base of stakeholders.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Florida's application addresses clearly and specifically all four of the reform areas for the RttT competition. The state has taken a systemic approach to education reform and has secured a high level of commitment from the LEAs with a particularly strong MOU. Potential for successful implementation and statewide impact of the reforms is strong given the level of attention to adopting quality standards and assessments, refining the state's longitudinal data system, recognizing the contextual differences among LEAs, and the multiple levels of support delineated in the plan and the framework provided by a decade of reform efforts in the State.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	431	447	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Florida Application #2450FL-8

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**58**	**63**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	13	13	

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

(i) Florida has crafted a clear and sophisticated educational reform agenda. This work has taken place over many years and with extensive feedback.

(ii) The state's standard MOU lends confidence that the state's expressed reforms might be lived out at the local level. Specifically, it assures US taxpayers that "The parties understand that the failure to negotiate any term or condition in a collective bargaining agreement necessary for full implementation of the State Plan will result in termination of the grant." The state's version of Exhibit 1 is more detailed and binding than the standard agreement.

Less than full points are awarded because the commitment to some of the key reforms (as evidenced by signatures) is less than clear at the local level, where it must be lived out. For example, the text suggests that only the six schools in the Calhoun district have, at this point, committed unambiguously to the reforms that relate to teachers' careers and compensation. It appears that all other LEAs have responded to the pointed questions in D2 conditionally. The recommendation to create a Governor's Task Force to support the Race to the Top effort seems likely to help the state sustain the spirit of these commitments, if it is created and sustained through implementation.

(iii) Florida's statewide goals for increasing student outcomes, decreasing achievement gaps, increase graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment are clear, measurable, and ambitious. If achieved, they will represent a breakthrough in educational leadership -- and will affect the lives of millions. The application makes it clear that the goals cannot be achieved without substantial gains throughout the state, including in places that have not signed on to the RTT MOU. However, the application's comparison with Massachusetts is persuasive evidence that the goals are not beyond reality. Florida's highly decentralized structure makes universal participation in the state's RTT program a difficult goal. Despite these difficulties, the state developed a plan that appears capable of garnering widespread participation.

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

The state's presentation reinforced the credibility of its evidence of widespread support for the Race to the Top plan. In particular, FEA president Andy Ford emphasized that the number of local association signatures of support increased from five in round one to 54 in round two.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**23**	**23**	

(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17	17	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	6	6	

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

i) Florida's application calls for sharing implementation and oversight of its RTT effort through existing departments and leadership, rather than using a dedicated team as required in the guidelines. This lack of institutionally centralized focus on Race to the Top is mitigated by the Governor's proposed oversight body, which this scoring assumes will be created. The state's credibility in this area is also enhanced by the high quality of its overall plan, and its careful attention to sustainability planning beyond the period of the grant.

The support plan for LEAs is robust and reasonably detailed. Although it will require identifying significant numbers of external experts on issues in which such expertise is scarce, the state has commendable momentum in building contacts and credibility with such experts.

The staffing plan for operation of the grant is credible, and consistent with the proposed budget. The budget for oversight and management (at 3%) appears lean considering the scale of the IT infrastructure investment in the plan.

(ii) The application presents credible evidence of a strong base of support, but with conspicuous exceptions among teacher associations, particularly at the local level. Letters of support were summarized in the application but not included in the application; without seeing the text associated with these signatures, the application leaves room for doubt about the depth of this support.

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

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

(i) Florida has been a national leader in college-ready standards, use of data, and support for teacher development. The new decision to place turnaround teams geographically represents evidence of seriousness of purpose.

(ii) The application presents strong evidence of Florida's record of improvement in tested subjects, and bolsters that record with evidence of longer-arc achievement growth such as graduation rates. The state's strong focus on English Language reading proficiency has delivered particularly notable results. The state demonstrates that it has been responsive to Department of Education guidance regarding testing of ELL students.

Total	125	111	116	

B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	**40**	**35**	**40**	
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20	
(ii) Adopting standards	20	15	20	[redacted]

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

(i) Florida has been an essential leader in the work of creating the Common Core standards.

(ii) Although a small amount of unfinished business remains for the Florida Board of Education to adopt the common core standards, there seems no reason to doubt the outcome given the strong role that Florida has played in the creation of those standards. Because the state intends to extend the core standards with Florida-specific enhancements and provide a public review process, the application states that the implementation timeline will stretch into November, though adoption of the standards is promised in time for the deadline in August.

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

The state's amendment to its application provides the necessary documentation that the proposed standards have, indeed, been adopted.

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

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

Florida has participated actively in founding a consortium with a clear plan to deliver results, including high -quality assessments. It appears that this consortium includes at least 26 states. The timeline for implementation of assessments is reasonable, and will permit fine-tuning.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**17**	**20**	

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

Florida presents strong evidence (including its rating in the EducationWeek "Quality Counts" survey) that it is a leader in use of assessments, including support for LEAs. The creation of a toolset with a single login seems particularly likely to further speed the use of these assessments because it will remove an important, practical barrier. The state has been making use of assessments for long enough to have stumbled and learned from difficulties: "...while the reading interim assessment system is providing valued information and instructional guidance to Florida's teachers, the computer-based components have not functioned well. Florida and its LEAs are working through the difficulties of the system and infrastructure requirements at schools."

The state presents evidence that its standards and assessments will be internationally benchmarked, and that they will build toward college and career readiness. This evidence includes extension of rigor in core academic subjects (such as the new requirement in SB4, passed in 2010, that all high schools offer programs equivalent to the International Baccalaureate) and beyond. For example, through its pilot program in music education, the state has demonstrated experience in developing standards and assessments that extend beyond reading and math, involving LEAs in partnership with the state.

The state describes wide-ranging plans to support its enhanced standards and assessments. It is less clear about the relative priorities of these programs, which leaves room for doubt about which elements of the plan will receive top-tier support from the state's leadership when difficulties arise.

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

The state's presentation clarified that the priority placed on programs in support of enhanced standards and assessments will be adjusted according to measures of success.

Total	70	62	70	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

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

The application establishes that Florida's data system satisfies all twelve elements of the COMPETES Act.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	**5**	**4**	**4**	

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

Florida's plan calls for systematic, methodical, predictable advancement of work that has been underway for a considerable time to make use of the data assets that the state has built. Though there will be many difficulties along the way, there seems little serious doubt that many of the goals laid out will be accomplished.

The application provides evidence that Florida is a noted leader in the use of data to evaluate and support schools. Given the state's dramatic lead in this area, its plan is not particularly ambitious. For example, the investment in FACTS.org seems small in the face of the major changes it promises to enable. The forecast of portal visits on page 111 implies that even by the end of 2014 the portal will not become a resource under constant use by educators, students and parents.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**9**	**9**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	2	2	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	3	3	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	4	4	

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

The state describes a plan to increase the development, dissemination and usage of local instructional improvement systems through the use of a state-facilitated application exchange, coordinated by a statewide Data Captain with the support of five Data Coaches. In order to make such systems more discoverable and mitigate the risks that local systems will be incompatible with one another, the state proposes a set of activities for a state-level Data Implementation Committee. FDOE will monitor effectiveness of the exchange through an annual technology survey. The basis for the vision of an application exchange is a single known success, based on an example of LEAs swapping technical components that met identified needs. This is relatively light evidence of success for a central plank of the state's plan.

The impact of this strategy depends strongly on the extent to which LEAs invest in local solutions, make them work well, and then take extra time to participate in the exchange. This implies extensive local investment in application development, but it is not clear from the application how the state will support these systems in a way that will cause them to interoperate or foster usage. The strategy for professional development to support the usage of the system seems completely dependent on centralized online assets that will be developed under the direction of the Data Captain. The state does not present a strategy for how to roll out these materials in a powerful way.

The application describes a strong process for making data available to researchers. The state defines roles and responsibilities of participants (most notably the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement) with significant experience working with the research community and making data available in a high-quality form. However, the prospects seem limited for these local systems to be usefully standardized in a way that will make them suitable subjects for study.

Total	47	37	37	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**21**	**17**	**17**	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	5	5	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	6	6	

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

Florida permits full teacher credentials to be earned independently of institutions of higher education, for example using district-based programs, the Passport to Teaching program, or the Educator Preparation Institute. These alternatives are selective, provide feedback to candidates, limit the coursework load for

candidates, and lead to a full credential. The application provides evidence of a similar credential option for principals that has been so far used only in Duval County.

Florida has excellent capacity to address shortages through teacher and leader preparation through alternative programs such as District Alternative Certification and Educator Preparation Institutes. The state has effective systems for keeping track of the success of education-related programs in the short and long term. However, the state's methodology for identifying shortages seems to have tagged a long list of shortage areas, without creating an apparent rubric for identifying the most critical shortages.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**48**	**48**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	15	15	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21	21	

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

(i) Florida's approach to measuring student growth shows the benefits of experience. There is a long way to go for the state to equip teachers with the tools that they will need to address non-tested subjects, but the trajectory is clear.

(ii) Florida's planned work on its evaluation systems is strongly aligned with the goals of Race to the Top, including the use of local measures. The terms of the MOU ensure that the review process for both teachers and principals in participating LEAs will reinforce school-level focus on individual student achievement.

The MOU, as quoted on page 150 of the application, provides compelling evidence that LEAs will follow through in the work of providing useful evaluation and feedback to teachers and principals on at least an annual basis. The plan for "multi-metric" evaluations focused on years when significant changes in compensation occur is an innovative way to add professional meaning to existing milestones in the pay system. It will also create extra capacity for nuanced evaluation without sacrificing the steady drumbeat of less thorough evaluations that occur on a more frequent schedule.

(iii) Florida is making progress in driving usage of its increasingly impressive data system. Teacher and principal reviews are an important aspect of this usage: these reviews will include "annual evaluations" which the state's application describes as limited in scope mostly to single-observation, single-observer feedback. Based on Florida's application, the principal will bear primarily responsibility for the review. This strong reliance on the principal will create challenges to ensure that the feedback to teachers is timely and constructive, as required by the RTT guidelines.

(iv)

(a) Florida has many approaches to professional evaluation and professional development for teachers and principals, and these approaches seem to compete for attention and energy. The central moment of action is clearly the annual evaluation, but responsibility for making the evaluation effective is spread among many actors, such as those listed on page 154 of the application. The application does not appear to present a coordinated plan for what these evaluations will look like. This implies great flexibility in approach; if so, it would be persuasive to see a plan for evaluation of different methods applied in different LEAs in the pursuit of identifying best practices.

(b) The full implementation plan for changing teacher compensation related to effectiveness is significantly and prudently tipped toward the later years of the grant.

(c) The state's MOU spells out a change in the "tenure" process for participating LEAs. This change seems likely to increase evaluative focus on student learning during a teacher's first three years of work. It is not clear, however, that this change in focus will necessarily produce a higher "bar" for determining whether a

new teacher is awarded a PSC, as there appears to be no specific change in the benchmarks for success. The work of changing the bar is left to the future, as part of the overall evaluation of the Great Teachers and Leaders outcomes.

(d) Florida faces a major challenge to shift from a systemic culture that rates 99.97% of teachers "satisfactory or better" to one that fairly applies standards to usefully identify and address serious underperformance. The application provides evidence that participating LEAs will inject a measure of data-based evaluative judgment into layoffs driven by reductions in force. This is important, but also defers tough decisions to the whim of the economy. The application makes it clear that even in a loose labor market the state is experiencing widespread teacher shortages (as documented in appendix page 326). It does not appear in the MOU that there are specific, measurable goals for LEAs to demonstrate that they are acting on their commitment to remove ineffective teachers and leaders, or a metric to differentiate serious efforts from token ones. Absent such specific goals, the forecast performance benchmarks seem unlikely to be meaningful if met.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**15**	**21**	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8	12	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	7	9	

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

The application forecasts that the state will very dramatically decrease the ratio of ineffective teachers in targeted schools. The application does not present a top-down mechanism to *force* changes in teacher distribution, so changes will only occur to the extent that individual teachers and hiring managers make different decisions. The application presents some ideas that are persuasive, if unproven or of small size. The Florida Virtual School is a promising offering that might scale up quickly. The inclusion of effectiveness data in a teacher's online resume is interesting for teachers that move; the application does not appear to forecast the portion of teacher hiring that will be influenced by this change, particularly in an environment of widespread shortages. (It could be argued that this could make disparities in distribution of talent worse depending on how data are used -- the application provides no data either way.)

The state's proposed effort to recruit new teachers to high-need schools seems promising in its goals, but lacks detail that would give confidence the plan will be implemented. The budget associated with this area appears to be almost entirely invested in downstream development of teachers with STEM expertise. The program described to help increase teacher supply does not appear to include incentives or requirements to direct program graduates to employment in high-need schools.

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

The state's presentation reinforced its determination to make student learning outcomes central to teacher evaluation. It also clarified the extent of Miami-Dade's progress toward using differentiated pay to change the incentives associated with working in schools that struggle to attract talented teachers and leaders.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**13**	**13**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	7	7	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	6	6	

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

Florida's plan strongly meets the criteria. The proposed shift to outcome-based evaluation of program quality is of particular note; if successful it could significantly increase the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs. Even partial success seems likely to make the process of becoming a teacher or principal less onerous and costly for applicants. eIPEP (page 177) seems promising as a way to institutionalize and report publicly the connection between teacher and principal preparation programs and student outcomes. The plan does not make clear to what extent ongoing funding for this work will be required beyond the period of the grant, so sustainability is of some concern.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	**20**	**18**	**18**	
(i) Providing effective support	10	9	9	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	9	9	

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

The state's proposal for professional measurement, evaluation, and development has been carefully crafted. At the state level, for example, Florida invested in evaluation and measurement of its "Protocol Standards" for professional development in 2007 to study the correlation with student achievement data, and found a positive effect.

At the LEA level, the MOU requires participants to adopt practices, such as collaboration time, that are specified in the RTT requirements. The state's plan calls for evaluation of professional development throughout the four years of the grant, and includes cost-effectiveness as one of the three areas of program evaluation. This will drive focus and help the state sustain effective programs beyond the grant period.

With further regard to sustainability, the state's use of equal portions internal resources and contracted resources seems to support the goal of developing effective internal capacity through the RTT grant. The application states that these supports will transition to self-supporting status, but there is no explicit plan for how to accomplish this. For example, there is no description of a fee-based structure to sustain state-delivered coaching services.

Total	138	111	117	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

The application establishes that the state has the authority to intervene in its persistently lowest-performing schools and LEAs.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**32**	**37**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	27	32	[redacted]

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

(i) Florida is well-positioned to identify school performance due to its long-term investment in data systems that track performance. Appendix E2-2 shows clearly how schools are identified for action through

Differentiated Accountability (DA) plans. (appendix page 395) In all, 71 schools are identified as persistently lowest-performing, and the rubric by which they are identified is clearly described in a way that lends confidence that this is not an unfamiliar exercise for the state of Florida.

(ii) The state has pursued a variety of intervention and turnaround strategies, and the MOU suggests that Florida's future intervention strategy will align with the program requirements.

Separately from specific mandated interventions, the application presents statistically persuasive evidence (page 400) that its interventions in reading and math have produced meaningful results in grades 3-5 and modest results in grades 6-8. This offers some hope that the state will continue to decrease the number of LEAs where specific action will be mandated under the terms of the MOU.

Interventions beyond grade 8, unfortunately, appear to have produced disappointingly minor results. The application focuses on the successes and calls for expanding the programs that have worked, which is sensible but incomplete. The application is unclear regarding what to do on a near-term basis about the failure to improve high schools, where achievement has not jumped. The state provides a timeline to lay out what will be done when an intervention model succeeds, but it does not appear to set the stage for decisive and effective action when an intervention fails.

The application describes a capacity-building intervention to be funded and directed directly by FDOE through a regional structure that would create regional teams of contract trainers, coaches and subject specialists. The plan suggests a strong accountability model for these specialists: "specialists and coordinators are required to significantly raise student achievement at their assigned lowest-performing schools or they are replaced" (page 203) The budget for this capacity-building is considerable. It appears that all of this investment is designated to be directed to contracts (budget detail from pages 318-346); for sustainability and institutional learning purposes one wonders whether some portion of the capacity building might have appropriately been directed to LEAs, or to FDOE itself for such a major operation.

The proposed effort to develop a pipeline of strong, well-prepared school leaders through a mentorship program seems a promising medium-term approach to building future capacity for leading turnarounds (Page 207). The application acknowledges that this strategy will take years to bear fruit, with the first program graduates released to schools in 2014. The estimated outcome of the program is at least 80 new school leaders, systematically trained to lead in high-poverty school settings.

The application relies almost exclusively on developing leadership capacity through contract solutions. The vision described is for leaders recruited through contract engagements to become LEA employees at the conclusion of the contract, if their work is successful. This seems a promising approach that can give hiring LEAs strong information about the strengths and weaknesses of leadership candidates.

The non-contract internal position of Regional Executive Director is defined clearly but also optimistically; success seems likely to depend on finding people who can meet the exacting requirements of the position description (Appendix E1-10).

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

The state's presentation reinforced the importance and promise of its planned investment in "feeder schools" through grade 8. The comments of Commissioner Smith clarified that the state is prepared to apply strong measures when failing high schools fail to turn around. The presentation also clarified the state's strategy for drawing learnings from contract work in a way that will support sustainability of the state's plan.

Total	50	42	47	

F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	**10**	**7**	**7**	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	3	3	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	4	4	

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

(i) Public education expenditures in Florida dropped significantly from 2008 to 2009, but remained unchanged as a percent of the overall budget for all state functions.

(ii) Equity is an explicit driver in the calculation of Florida's allocation of state funds for education. The state evaluates local funding capacity and pupil density and adjusts state allocations to equalize resources for students. Additional adjustments related to considerations of program (e.g. grade level, career education) seem unlikely to have a significant effect on equity of distribution. The use of geographical cost of living adjustments is not clearly of benefit to students living in low-wealth areas, as high-cost areas tend also to be higher-wealth areas. Support for English learning for speakers of other languages would tend to support equity, as with funding for SAI.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**38**	**38**	
(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	7	7	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	

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

(i) As recognized by the Center for American Progress report, Florida's legal setting has not impeded establishment of charter schools.

(ii) The application presents strong evidence that state charter laws are aligned with these criteria, including approval of charter schools and revocation of charters. Appendix F2-4 demonstrates that charters in Florida are enforced, including the closure of 111 schools for cause. The application does not appear to respond to the question of whether Florida has been successful at fostering charter schools in underserved communities.

(iii) The application documents that students in Florida's charter schools benefit from essentially the same basic state and local support from taxpayers as do students in other public noncharter schools. The application also presents evidence that Race to the Top funds will be handled in an equivalent manner.

(iv) The application provides evidence that from the state perspective charter schools are not faced with untoward obstacles to providing students with appropriate facilities for learning. The state does not appear to provide startup capital assistance for charter schools unless the charter operator has a track record of success. This may represent an obstacle to the creation of new charter schools in areas without surplus facilities.

v) The Florida Virtual School is an innovative program that exemplifies the spirit of the Race to the Top competition. It is providing students from a broad range of backgrounds with access to learning 24/7, and in the process is providing both Florida and America with crucial experience in how virtual schooling

works. The application provides evidence of other innovative solutions, but the Florida Virtual School seems destined to be the torch-bearer for innovative alternatives.

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

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

The Florida Voluntary Preschool program (VPK) sets four-year-olds on a path to school readiness. (Appendix page 510). By including children from this program in its longitudinal data system, Florida has set the conditions for continued program improvement.

Beyond any specific program or initiative, Florida's steady efforts have changed the dialogue about public education in a fundamental way. Through steady progress and public engagement, this state has created an expectation of innovation in education. It also appears to have crafted a rough consensus that schools and school systems can and should evolve, and that the central concern of education is student learning.

Total	55	50	50	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Florida documents a strong case that it will effectively increase emphasis on STEM. This is greatly needed; the application is frank about the status quo. Appendix A (page 556 in the Appendix) lays out the stark reality, particularly in terms of achievement gaps in STEM achievement: "In 2007, Blacks (44% to 52%) and Hispanics (32% to 39%) had the highest percentage of students scoring at the lowest level; Whites had the smallest percentage (14% to 18%)."

The severity of the problem means that Florida needs a good plan. It almost has one – at any rate, it has plenty of good ingredients, summarized on page 254 of the application. Critically, it also has a plan for a plan, in the form of a coordinating body (STEMflorida, described in appendix P-2) that seems credible. Perhaps most important of all, the combination of accountability measures, standards and assessments delivered in this plan overall present a persuasive case that Florida will make progress on the things it measures – and it has a plan to measure STEM results.

Persuasive odds and ends:

Florida is playing a leading role in defining Common Core standards that help to define success in STEM education. This includes GATE program work (page 274); a $10 million investment specifically in improving distribution of effective instruction (page 306); $10 million to Improve and Expand STEM Career and Professional Academies (page 336); and $7m for 20 roving STEM coordinators. The UTeach partnership (page 304) represents a major investment in effective STEM teaching ($10 million)

Add to all of these the MOU assurances that LEAs will add focus to this area, and the whole seems likely to be greater than the sum of these parts.

Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Beyond its specific programs and initiatives, Florida's steady efforts have changed the dialogue about public education in a fundamental way. Through steady progress and public engagement, this state has created an expectation of innovation in education. It has also crafted a rough consensus that schools and school systems can and should evolve, and that the central concern of education is student learning.

Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	428	452	

Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Florida Application #2450FL-5

A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	**65**	**59**	**61**	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	40	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	14	14	

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

i)The state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals demonstrate alignment with each of the four educational areas described in ARRA. Appendix A1-2 provides the path supporting the state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals. The state's history of reform coupled with the RTTT-specific gap analysis further targets the state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals.

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) language indicating that "in order to participate, the Local Education Agency (LEA) must agree to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan" demonstrates broad stakeholder commitment towards the state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals and plans supporting those goals. It is noted within the MOU that parties that fail to negotiate a term or condition in the collective bargaining agreement necessary for full implementation of the state plan will result in termination of the grant. It is also noted that based on [s.447.203 (17), F.S.], the state's MOU limited the use of impasse to matters that are required by existing law. The preliminary Scope of Work correlates the elements of the state's reform plan to the Selection Criteria, which includes the option of the LEA to phase in the evaluation system with a major focus on student growth, and flexibility to use student growth or achievement for a portion of the evaluation. The use of annual evaluations for district-level staff with supervisory responsibilities will support further alignment of the RTTT implementation. Strategies such as lesson study, STEM, and formative assessment that are articulated in the state's reform agenda are woven throughout the preliminary scope of work. Although 96% of the state's LEAs have executed compliant MOUs, 98.6% of those LEAs have indicated a Conditional status for Section Criteria D: Great Leaders and Teachers. Executive Order 10-94 serves as an example of collaboration between the state Governor's office and LEAs in terms of current MOU input and, pending a RTTT award, the creation of a future advisory body with wide stakeholder representation. The passing of Senate Bill 4 represents legislature support for the state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals.

(iii) The state's plan can translate into broad statewide impact with 94% of students in with 94% of LEAs defined as participating LEAs. The state has set ambitious National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) student achievement goals down to the subgroup level. It will be important that the LEAs (98.6%) that are currently at a Conditional status for Section Criteria D: Great Leaders and Teachers to move forward with moving to a participation status. Based on the state's Key Goals, the state has logistically determined (A1-3, A1-4, A1-5, and A1-6) a rate of student achievement increase based on NAEP to the subgroup level. The logic reflects a decrease in achievement gaps between subgroups and students of poverty. The state has aggressive goals for increasing high school graduation and college enrollment with supporting data and related explanation to the subgroup levels (A1-7). The state may consider reviewing other state examples and/or research that further benchmarks the graduation and post graduation goals.

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

Within Selection Criteria D: Great Leaders and Teachers, the state clarified that it provides opportunities for LEAs to actively participate in negotiations to participate in all or significant portions of the state's Race To The Top plan. Therefore the score is in the high range.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	**30**	**26**	**26**	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	17	17	
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	9	9	

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

(i) The state's RTTT team has broad stakeholder involvement and will use an existing project management system in order to ensure sustainability beyond the grant period. An assurance team will exist to implement the state's reform initiatives while program specialists provide technical assistance to participating LEAs. The state's application includes multiple promising practices for LEAs that are correlated to each of the four RTTT selection criteria (A2-1). LEA support includes, but is not limited to, support for formative and interim assessments; use of exemplars; focus on lesson study; use of data for improving classroom instruction and student performance; a transparent process for the use of student growth measure; model lessons; national experts in teacher evaluation to assist in the redevelopment of the state's evaluation systems; and STEM coordinators for persistently lowest-achieving schools. The state's lowest-achieving schools will receive additional support from Differentiated Accountability (DA) Regional Teams. The state's application indicates RTTT formative and summative performance evaluations will be used within the state's continuous improvement efforts. Within the six areas of LEA support, noted within the application and A2-1, project monitoring staff will use the project management plan to determine where more technical assistance, detailed reporting, and adjustment of schedules to release funding may be needed. But targeted assistance will be needed in order to determine the effectiveness of identified best practices within A2-1 in support of the state's three Key Goals for Student Achievement. It is noted in the state's application and A2-2 that the current and proposed organizational structure can support the processes for the RTTT grant, which includes the leadership and teams denoted in (A)(2)(i)(a). The proposed program manager staff in support of successful implementation report to the previously noted assurance team leads. It is unclear whether the nine program project manager staff and program specialists are necessary for effective and efficient operations and processes for the implementation of the proposed RTTT grant. It is noted that the state intends for the proposed staff to work with current state staff for RTTT reforms. The consulting firm(s) will serve to provide accountability, formative/summative evaluations and timely feedback over the grant period. The eight operations staff responsibilities correlate to oversight/monitoring, grant administration, performance measurement, accounting and fund disbursement. The state's narrative and budget continues to reference the programmatic and budget support for lesson study, formative and interim assessments and support for increasing STEM initiatives. The plan(s) for the state's application is reflected within the state's budget and project narrative. The state communicates that it intends to coordinate and repurpose existing funds, e.g., current Federal aside flow through funding from other federal programs for STEM initiatives. The use of state funds, e.g., determination of use of Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funds towards the state's RTTT reform initiatives, could further increase capacity to implement the identified reform. The ability to have a state statute supporting FEFP would further ensure the state's capacity beyond the grant period to continue to implement the designated reforms. Although limited in examples, the response infers that between existing laws and initiatives, along with the RTTT plan, fiscal, political, and human capital resources are to a degree committed to sustaining the initiatives after the grant period.

(ii)The Florida Association of School Administrators (FASA) has a strong commitment to the state's RTTT reform initiatives and understands the historical success in preparing "policy and legislation required implementing [RTTT] effectively." Florida Education Association (FEA) President offers encouraging language urging each local union to sign the MOU. In light of 98.6% of LEAs indicating a Conditional status (Detailed Table for (A)(1)) for Section Criteria D: Great Leaders and Teachers), it would be of value to have

support language from local union leaders indicating strong statements showing support for the state's reform agenda. The state has garnered broad support from a wide variety of stakeholders from local community colleges, charters, Congress, and state and local leaders, with approximately 44 letters from institutions of higher education. From the excerpts within letters of support, many stakeholders indicate the strength in their support as demonstrated by statements that they provide their "whole hearted support" and they "stand ready to do their part." Several local leaders also indicated their support for the state's STEM initiatives within the RTTT application. Although the response provides comments from a broad group of stakeholders, the actual letters are not available to fully understand the extent of the support from all statements and strength of those statements.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	**30**	**29**	**29**	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	24	24	

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

(i) The state has historically made progress in the RTTT selection criteria reform areas, to include STEM and charter legislation, and applied ARRA, federal and state funding to do so. Receiving a federal waiver to implement Differentiated Accountability speaks to the state's aggressive approach to Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools.

(ii) New state laws demonstrate the state's commitment to reform efforts. Examples include 1999 A+ and the 2006 FLA A++ Reform Plans that have put in place a school grading system and increased promotion requirements with a demand for more rigorous courses. 2010 legislation added additional college-and career-ready high school graduation requirements and serves as another example of legislative actions that support opportunities to increase student achievement. Between 2003 and 2009, the state's results on NAEP assessments show an increase in student achievement (% at or above the Basic) above the national level in each of the four measured areas; this includes a double percentage change in Grade 4 Math and Grade 8 Math (Table A3-1). Actions supporting this data include the provisions within the legislation creating the A+ Plan that further held that schools would be held accountable for *all* students and the development of a formative assessment system for K-3 mathematics. High school SAT and ACT scores do not demonstrate similar progress in achievement levels. This information is reflective of, and supports, the state's proposed RTTT Key Goals for Student Achievement goal 1: "Double the percentage of incoming high school freshmen who ultimately graduate from high school, go to college, and achieve at least a year's worth of college credit." Based on the results in Table A3-1, it appears that Goal 3 of the RTTT Key Goals, indicating an "increase [in] the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on NAEP by 2015, to or beyond the performance levels of highest-performing states" could be increased. Over a six year period, based on the consistent Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) improvements from 2003 – 2009 FLA in reading and mathematics, the state could be on course towards Goal 2 of its RTTT Key Goals of "cutting the achievement gap in half by 2015" in grade 3-10. Over a six year period the state currently has consistent double digit scores in decreasing the achievement gap between subgroups as defined by NAEP (A3-3) with a similar trend towards reducing the achievement gap based on FCAT (A3-4). With a 6.2% increase high school graduation rate over six years (defined by the federal uniform rate), that includes double digit increases for Black and Hispanic students, the state had demonstrated a consistent commitment to student success that includes the sub-group level. The state has demonstrated its ability to significantly raise student achievement and close the achievement gap, which provides credibility to the state's RTTT Key Goals for student success.

Total	125	114	116	

B. Standards and Assessments

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

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

The state's strength in its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards is evidenced by:

- Current adoption of internationally-benchmarked NGSSS;
- Invitation to provide input to writers during standards development; and
- Selection by the National Parent Teacher Association to organize support for adoption of the CCSS.

(i) The state's Governor and Chief State School Officer have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to develop a common core of state standards that are internationally benchmarked. The state's involvement includes a consortium of a majority of the states in the country (48).

(ii) The plan reflects that the State Board of Education (SBOE) will formally adopt the CCSS in July 2010. The state's progress to implementing the standards in a well-planned way includes the following:

- The presentation to the SBOE that development of CCSS that fulfills Florida law.
- Submission of the new FLA standards for review and comments to educators.
- Submission of standards to national experts on K-12 curricular standards and content.

Specific milestones in this plan include:

- The process for standards adoption as defined in FLA law (s.1003.41, F.S.);
- Standards will be submitted to legislative leaders, the Governor's Office, and the SBOE;
- In July, the Commission of Education will present new standards for educators to review/comment; and,
- A draft of the FLA's CCSS will be presented to the SBOE in November 2010 for adoption purposes.

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

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

The extent of the state's plan for developing and implementing high – quality assessments, as referenced in the Timeline for Common Assessment exhibits its commitment that is also evidenced by:

(i) The Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers MOU (Appendix B2-2)

(ii) Participation in The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, Participating States (Appendix B2-3) of which there is a majority of states in the country.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	**20**	**17**	**17**	

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

The state's plan contains each of the elements of a high quality plan within the four initiatives that support the transition and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that are built towards college and career readiness, and tied to standards that are seated within formative assessment, interim assessment and lesson study. The plan is evidenced by:

- Current state statutes which support the state's support for standards and high quality assessment. Senate Bill 4 includes college-and career ready requirements that requires during the 2011-2012 school year that each high school will offer specific college and career ready programs. The legislature established s.1004.86, F.S. supporting the Florida Center for Mathematics and Science Education Research. Section 1002, 375, F.S. provides for the opportunity for high school core credit and career course credit for students that successfully complete an industry certification program. These statues speak to the commitment the state has towards a foundation for moving forward the state's RTTT activities.
- There is inclusion in the state's MOU that professional development on the new common core standards will employ lesson study and that school schedules will be modified in support of lesson study in persistently low-achieving schools. Additional supporting MOU actions are referenced within the state's application.

- Updating the Florida's Teacher Standards Instructional Tool will provide the tools that include CCSS standards; lesson study support; formative assessment rubrics; interim assessment items, with the LEA able to rate resources and related professional development to the LEAs; and pre-service institutions through a single web-based system.

The plan does not clearly identify that Initiative 2 will support the transition to high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice), as related to the inclusion of student with disabilities and English language learners and high need students (as defined in this notice) within the assessment.

The state application consistently references STEM in its application. In reference to the state's RTTT Key Achievement goals 1, 2, and 3, it is unclear if the students targeted for the Increase Access to STEM Courses initiative are not only gifted and talented, but also include high-need students and high-need LEAs. It is also noted within the proposed RTTT activities to increase resources for teachers to inform effective instruction through high-quality assessment. Those activities include providing formative assessments systems in reading K-8 and mathematics K-3. In support of the state's RTTT Key Achievement Goals and the ability of formative assessment to support differentiated instruction, it is unclear if the focus on K-3 mathematics is in place of K-8 for the CCSS.

Total	70	67	67	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

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

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

The state's application reflects a historically robust longitudinal data system that currently includes each of the 12 America COMPETES Act elements.

1. A unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system (except as allowed by federal and state law).
2. Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information.
3. Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs.
4. The capacity to communicate with higher education data
5. A State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.
6. Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
7. Information on students not tested, by grade and subject.
8. A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students.
9. Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.
10. Student-level college readiness test scores.
11. Data that provide information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully
12. Data that provide other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in post secondary education.

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

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

The state's plan for accessing and using State data is evidenced by:

- Historically, through the state's PK-20 Educational Data Warehouse (EDW), the state has developed the foundation and demonstrated commitment to the collection and use of data to inform a broad group of stakeholders.
- Based on LEA feedback and correlation to RTTT initiatives, the six activities proposed for the single sign-on access reflect the initiatives of the state's application. Examples include the Interim Assessment Item Banks and Test Platform, eIPEP, Florida School Leaders.org, and the Teacher Standards Instructional Tool.
- Through a web browser with Internet access, actionable data will be accessible via a secure single-sign portal that complies with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations.
- The outcome of the state's fourth step is to provide actionable information to be used to inform and engage a broad base of stakeholders with proposed RTTT funds. Table C2-1 provides the type of data and applications for stakeholders broken out by confidential, restricted confidential, and aggregate (for the public).
- The inclusion of the LEA Data Implementation Committee provides support for fidelity of use of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).
- The SLDS reports and/or dash boards demonstrate that the information to be reported to the public is reflective of the state's RTTT reform agenda. Examples of information supporting overall effectiveness include student performance, and teacher and principal evaluation analyzed against student performance. Reports recommended by the LEA Data Implementation Committee are more likely to have an impact on the use of the SLDS to inform instruction.
- The responsibility of the Division of Public Schools for the design, content and policy decisions with input from the LEA local systems and the Data Implementation Committee speaks to the potential success of the appropriate parts of the data supporting the LEAs instructional improvement system (s).
- The use of existing staff to complete and/or materially participate in the proposed RTTT initiatives supports long term sustainability.

Therefore the evaluation of the criterion is in the high range which reflects each of the elements of a high quality plan for both of the initiatives and the extent to which key stakeholders will have extensive access and use of state data. The summary of Data and Applications Accessible via the Portal (Table C2-1) specifically reflects the breadth of data each key stakeholder will have access to and can use in support of continuous improvement efforts. The use of the Data Implementation Committee will ensure that diverse technology needs across the state are being considered.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	**18**	**16**	**16**	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	5	5	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	6	6	

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

(i) The state's proposal to acquire, adopt and use local instructional improvement systems is evidenced by:

- Within section (C)(3)(i) of the MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work, all participating LEAs responded with Y in that they will use stakeholder friendly data systems that show growth of students, teachers, schools disaggregated by subject and demographics. They also responded with Y in that their instructional continuous improvement system will be available and fully utilized.
- As exhibited in the state's Project-Level Narrative (C)(3)(i), the proposed plan includes provision of funding ($5,000,000.00) in needs-based grants for small and rural LEAs to acquire, implement and monitor progress through a yearly technology survey. The deployment of the funds in Year 2 of the

grant can accelerate at least two years use of actionable data and management of continuous instructional improvement.
- Formalizing the LEA driven Local Systems Exchange will encourage the acquisition and use of local instructional improvement systems.
- It is unclear from the state's proposal if the term Local Systems reflects the definition of instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice).

Therefore the evaluation of the criterion is in the high range and supported by a high quality plan towards the goal of equipping all participating LEAs with instructional improvement systems by 2014. Since the Local Systems Exchange will be driven by LEAs, the acquisition, adoption and use of the local instructional improvement system will increase.

(ii) The state's plan to support LEAS and schools in providing effective professional development resulting in data to support continuous instructional improvement is evidenced by:

- Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has already staffed Differentiated Accountability (DA) regional teams (through the 2009 House Bill 991) to work with LEA and school staff on the use of data to improve instruction and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies with different types of students. During the 2008-2009 school year, DA regional teams will use a Data Driven Instructional Process to increase student achievement in lowest-performing schools. The state does not provide information on how much student achievement has increased and in the number or percentage of the lowest-performing schools.
- Project-Level Budget Narrative (C)(3)(ii) reflect that professional development human capital support for LEAs will be provided by a Data Captain, Data Coaches (to work in each of DA regions) and Master Digital Educators in all LEAs with the LEAs serving as the fiscal agents. The use of ARRA Educational Technology funds demonstrates the state's commitment to provide human capital support for each LEA.
- Within section (C)(3)(ii) of the MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work, all participating LEAs responded with Y in that they will provide effective professional development to staff on the use of instructional improvement systems along with the use of state level data systems during the term of the grant.
- Performance Measures reflect the hiring of Data Captain and Data Coaches. It is understood that ARRA Educational Technology funds will provide final financial support for a Digital Master Digital Educator in each LEA to provide effective professional development on how to use data systems that includes the use of the data in support of continuous instructional improvement.
- Although (C)(3)(ii) in the MOU Preliminary Scope of Work indicates each LEA will provide effective professional development, the Performance Measures indicate that schools will not receive effective professional development Year 1 (to include the DA region level) and numbers of LEAs that will receive effective professional development in Years 2-4 of the proposed plan is a to be determined status.

Therefore the evaluation of the criterion is in the high range supported by an established support system to LEAs to support the effective use of data systems. The response includes a high quality plan with activities and a timeline that support a student-centered environment where teachers will use data to improve teaching and learning. There is a lack of cohesiveness between the MOU and Performance Measures about when professional development will begin.

(iii) The state's plan to provide instructional improvement systems data together with data from the SLDS available and accessible to the research community is evidenced by:

- Currently the state has a successful history of the provision of data to researchers so they can evaluate effectiveness of programs. The response provides the state's current rigorous research request (C3-1) and a FDOE Research Consortium that currently meets weekly.
- Within section (C)(3)(iii) of the MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work, all participating LEAs responded with Y that they will provide requested data from local instructional improvement and longitudinal data systems to the Department to support the Department's efforts to make data

available to researchers for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students and to help drive educational decisions and policies.

- The timeline indicates that year 1 will serve to refine the research agenda and to make the information publicly available during year 2 of the proposed grant.

With reference to making data from the instructional improvement systems of LEAs available, *together* with data from the SLDS/EDW, the state's plan indicates that it will provide FDOE data that it already collects from the LEAs to the researchers to alleviate the burden from the LEA, requiring LEAs to provide supplemental information as necessary.

Therefore the evaluation of the criterion is in the high range based on the response supporting the initiative of providing data from the state and local systems for educational research. The plan reflects each element of a high quality plan.

Total	47	45	45	

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	**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)

(i) The plan provides alternative routes that includes providers who operate independently of IHEs. Each of the alternative routes is supported by the state's laws and/or regulations. The state has made progress in providing high-quality pathways demonstrated by 37% of teacher completers doing so through one of the state's alternative routes to certification during the 2008-09 school year. The state's four alternative pathways fully meet a minimum 4 of the 5 elements listed in the definition of alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) which include elements a, b, c, d, and e. It is unclear in the response and Table D-1 if there is "ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching" for the Educator Preparation Institutes as is defined in the alternative routes to certification part (c).

(ii) Four alternative routes to certification exist that provided 37% of teacher completers during the 2008-09 school year through one of the alternative routes to certification. Only one, EPI, does not fully meet all elements of the alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) as noted in selection criteria (i).

(iii) The state's application reflects on the 2007 SBOE rule (6A.2.103, F.A.C.) that identifies and monitors critical teacher shortage areas based on five criteria yearly. Appendix D-1-2 provides the state's methodology and extensive information for identification of teacher shortage areas for 2010-2011. Two statewide programs provide financial assistance to prepare teachers to fill the identified shortage areas. The state has referenced a review research to examine current problems with leadership preparation. After monitoring current state statistics on it's leadership pool, the state has followed up by providing SBOE Rule 6A-5.081 requiring competency-based Level I Educational Leadership programs with Level II programs that use a job-embedded delivery method that is coordinated with universities, and is evaluated based on the Florida Principal Leadership Standards and the LEA's leadership evaluation system.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	**58**	**51**	**51**	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	4	4	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13	13	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	27	27	

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

(i) The MOU indicates collaboration through an advisory body to develop a student growth model. Effective collaboration will be important since over 95% of LEAs indicated Conditional status for Section Criteria D. Although the advisory body will determine approaches to measuring student growth, RTTT activities also include:

- Supporting LEAs and schools by providing formative assessment systems, K-8 reading and K-3 mathematics, provision of interim assessments item banks/test platforms (Differentiated Accountability leaders to use the common interim assessments in struggling schools).
- Establishing performance measures for performance-based courses.
- Based on the state's RTTT Key Achievement goals, the rationale to not provide formative assessment for K-8 in mathematics is unclear.

As recently as the 2009-2010 school year, the state has worked towards becoming knowledgeable about growth models when it worked with a national expert (through a NGA grant) to familiarize leadership and stakeholders about student growth models. The state's plan includes Key Highlights that indicate what FLA "will" do, activities and the rationale supporting them (Introduction, Successes, and Gaps), a timeline from 2010 – 2014, performance measures that include FCAT performance data using the new growth measure (2011-12), and the piloting of performance measures (2012-2013) to determine if adjustments in growth measures are necessary. The state's timeline for implementing RTTT activities indicates, via an advisory body that involves broad stakeholder input, that the statewide measure for student growth will be determined in 2010-2011 with the option to adjust the growth measure during the 2012-2013 school year. Student growth will be applied to FCAT courses in 2010-2011. From the state's plan, the status of ELL and Students with Disabilities related courses is unclear unless it is assumed they are absorbed within the FCAT courses and timeline. In subsequent years, LEAs will receive growth models for use with standardized assessment and pilot performance measures. Outcomes indicate that by 2013-2014, 95% LEAs will measure student growth for students taught by 80% of their teachers. This outcome is unclear as to whether student growth (as defined in this notice) will be measured for each individual student by 2014.

(ii) The state plan indicates that the state has required evaluations based primarily on student performance since 1999. The MOU notes that student growth will be a significant factor (40%) in determining teacher evaluation with student achievement accounting for 10%.

The state is supporting a fair initial approach by providing a phased in approach in which the LEA may use 35% and 15% student growth or achievement. The plan includes multiple data resources from observations and input from stakeholders for teacher and principal evaluations. The state has added a measure of rigor in adding the multi-metric evaluation system for teachers in the year of a milestone career event. Based on the definition of an effective teacher (as defined in this notice), the state's plan is unclear on whether it will require a teacher's students to have achieved high rates in at least one grade level.

Similarly, student growth will be a significant factor in principal evaluations. Based on the definition of an effective principal, it is unclear whether the LEA will include data at the sub-group level in principal evaluations, or whether students will achieve at least one grade level in student growth. An additional measure of rigor is reflected in the language in the state's MOU indicating that the use of student performance data will be used as a significant factor in LEA leadership personnel with supervisory responsibilities. The state plan reflects support for LEA input into a transparent evaluation system in the

provision of a national expert to work in a face-to-face mode with participating LEAs to re-develop their evaluation systems.

(iii) The state is providing timely and constructive feedback as is evidenced by:

- During grant years 2-4 national evaluation system experts will work with LEAs in providing feedback with results provided to the state.
- The experts will assist LEA representatives in provision of professional development in using the evaluation system.
- Feedback will be required on multiple measures that include student learning outcomes, peer review and student feedback.

Other than information on the state plan to provide LEAs data on student growth (referenced from (D)(2)(i) Time Line that includes 2010 – 2011 - Provision of base line data for FCAT associated courses and 2011-2012 – Provision of FACT performance data for new growth measure), the state does not fully articulate how the plan will provide data on student growth for high school students, classes and schools, as part of their evaluations. It is noted that LEA work plans and evaluation systems that are to be submitted for review must describe how the feedback on student outcomes will be provided to the teachers and principals throughout the evaluation system. Within the state's Key Highlights, the plan does not articulate how the LEAs will have student growth data as part of the evaluation.

While it is of merit that teachers from their first through third years of teaching will have multiple observations and reviews of student performance data, it is recommended that all other teachers and principals have feedback more than at least once a year.

The state's Preliminary MOU reflects performance-driven compensation in the areas of effectiveness and differentiated pay, that includes STEM areas (state statute s.1012.22(1)(c)4. F.S.) The state's application does not reference effectiveness related to "highly effective teachers and principals" as defined in the RTTT notice. It is encouraging that the state has indicated that the LEA may scale up the compensation system for persistently low-performing (the lowest 5% of schools in the state), as long as by the end of the grant, the compensation system applies district-wide. As has been noted previously in this review, adjustment from C to Y in the future MOU will be important since over 95% of LEAs indicated Conditional status for all and/or most of Section Criteria D. In an effort to be fair and transparent, the state will publish salary schedules to the public along with the status of districts in implementing this requirement.

Based on the state's Preliminary MOU, the LEA will make decisions to award contracts based on effectiveness related to annual evaluations. The degree in which the LEA work plans do communicate the process for using evaluation data for teacher and principal contracts related to teacher and principal level of effectiveness will be critical towards success of the state's plan. The state has been consistent with annual evaluation language throughout Selection Criteria D. As has been noted previously in this review, adjustment from C to Y in the future MOU will be important since over 95% of LEAs indicated Conditional status for all and/or most of Section Criteria D.

(iv) The state's analysis of data (Appendix D2-2) is evidence that the evaluation system, results of student performance, and teachers leaving the profession are not currently aligned. The Preliminary MOU provides support for use of the annual evaluation referenced within (D)(2)(ii) that is based on the level of effectiveness. The state has plans to report yearly teacher effectiveness data based on the evaluation with significant results on student growth and/or student achievement; LEAs will report teachers and principals dismissed for ineffective performance based, again, on the LEA evaluation system. The state's plan includes further holding leadership staff, to include LEA staff, accountable for using the statute (ss.1012.33 and 1012.34, F.S.) to remove ineffective teachers from the classroom. As the state has indicated, teachers in their first – third years of employment will have multiple opportunities for feedback impacting their evaluation. The investment the state plans to make in the use of a national expert with expertise in human capital will assist LEAs with face-to-face support in their evaluation systems with follow up years providing monitoring and feedback on the implementation process.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	**25**	**22**	**22**	
(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)

(i) The response effectively reflects three key highlights, respective RTTT activities, responsible parties, timelines, outcomes and performance measures towards ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. The state's plan is evidenced by:

- Through a review of prior data since 2001 the state has increased the number of high qualified teachers in high-poverty schools (87.1% to 92.8%) and highly qualified teachers in high-minority schools (88.3% to 92.55%), along with highly qualified teachers in exceptional student education courses in high-minority schools (73% to 88.8%).
- In support of high-poverty and/or high-minority students not being served by ineffective teachers or principals:
  - The state has legislation (s. 1012.2315, F.S.) requiring LEAs to certify that yearly the distribution of teachers with a Temporary Certificate are not employed in a high percentage in high-minority, high-poverty, or low-performing schools and are not out-of-field teachers, first-year teachers, or teachers in need of improvement that are employed in low-minority, low-poverty, high-performing schools.
  - Within the state's MOU Exhibit 1 - Preliminary Scope Of Work, the LEAs must develop plans to ensure equitable distribution that includes use of annual evaluations to attract/retain highly effective teachers and principals in high poverty, high-minority, and persistently lowest-achieving ((D)(3)(i). It is unclear in (D)(2)(ii) if the state is using the highly effective teacher and highly effective principal definitions (as defined in this notice).
  - The ability for teachers seeking employment to enter their effectiveness data while applying will provide LEAs access to the information prior to employing and informs potential employees of the state's commitment of the use of student growth/achievement data to inform employment.
  - Within Performance Measures (D)(3)(i) the state indicates that the percentage of teachers that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice) in 2013 -2014 will equal the percentage of teachers that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice). The rate of change between the percentage of teachers that are high-poverty and those that are low-poverty is a difference of 15% in reading and 23% in mathematics.
  - Plan outcomes reflect by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year all participating LEA will employ an effective principal.
- Plan outcomes reflect that by the end of the grant period, preparation programs will matriculate in new programs in STEM critical shortage areas and school leaders in fact-track programs for high-performing individuals.
- LEAs will be required within the RTTT work plans to demonstrate use of Title II, Part A funds supporting equitable distribution.
- The state's virtual school is considered an LEA and can assist where there are problems around capacity.
- The performance measures reflect that baseline data for principal effectiveness is not available but targets will be after revision of principal evaluations year one of the grant.
- The response is unclear about its definitions of a high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the state for purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.

(ii) The state's plan to increase the number and percentage effective teachers teaching hard to staff subject is evidenced by:

- Within the MOU Exhibit 1-Preliminary Scope Of Work, the LEAs will implement a compensation system to provide incentives for recruitment of effective teachers in hard to staff subjects, e.g., STEM, as noted in differentiated pay in (D)(2)(iv)(b).
- Appendix D5-1 describes the LEA responsibilities to review and change policies for assignment of teachers and programs to support high performers in hard to staff placements that includes STEM teacher preparation program grants issued.
- The state's support to the LEAs is demonstrated by the competitive grant for teacher preparation programs that implement dual majors programs in STEM areas.
- The FLA Virtual School can provide effective teachers in hard to staff subjects.

The state's plan does not indicate the plan for the increase in the numbers of effective teachers in special education and language instruction.

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs	**14**	**13**	**13**	
(i) Linking student data to credentialing programs and reporting publicly	7	6	6	
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	7	7	

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

The state's plan reflects that the state will improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs. The plan provides related activities, responsible parties, a timeline, outcomes and performance measures that reflect an ambitious and appropriate approach.

(i) The state's plan to link student achievement and student growth data to teachers, principals, in-state programs and publicly report it is evidenced by:

- The implementation of Institution Program Evaluation Plan (eIPEP) to link institutions' candidates and their completer performance data for teachers and principals.
- The 2006 revision of Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C., communicates that LEAs and institutions must focus on whether a candidate can demonstrate teaching ability and must address both candidates' and completers' "impact on student learning" in their continuous improvement process. The adjustment communicates to LEAs and credentialing programs that the focus is not on completion but on results of student success.
- The SBOE has the authority to set program approval standards (Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.). SBOE will set outcome-based approval requirements that require the use of the new student growth model that integrates the work of colleges of education, LEAs and schools. The state's plan defines three characteristics of a "high-performing" plan. This activity supports the use of the new student growth model for approval/denial of teacher and principal preparation programs.
- State Board Rule 6A-5.081, F.A.C. provides the Commissioner the authority for initial and continued approval of school leadership certification programs. The state's plan includes that by 2013-14, the performance of student in the school (by sub-group) will be reported and the employment of completers in high-poverty/minority schools.
- The Academy for Leadership in High-needs Schools serves as an example of the state's commitment to directly support teachers, principals, and students of persistently lowest-achieving schools.
- Examples of increased rigor include the addition of mathematics to the K-6 Elementary Education exam and in STEM areas.
- The plan provides an ambitious performance measure that reflects by 2011-2012 school year the percentage of teachers and principals for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth of the graduates' students is 100%.

The state's response is unclear on how the data for each credentialing program in the state will be publicly reported.

(ii) The state's plan to expand preparation and credentialing options and programs are evidenced by:

- The competitive grant program for the implementation of the residency program for job-embedded preparation for eligible teachers will serve to expand preparation and credentialing programs for teachers. The program currently has success in alternative certification programs.
- Use of FLA Virtual School to assist in expanding preparation of teachers as they participate in a student teaching experience in a virtual environment.
- Implementation of school leadership preparation programs resulting in dual Level I and Level II school leadership certification completers supports expansion of preparation programs for principals.
- Provision of the Academic for Leadership in High-need Schools specifically targeted to LEAs with persistently lowest-achieving schools supports expansion of preparation programs for teachers and principals.
- Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C. will provide impact on these program completers on student achievement specifically using the state's new student growth measure.
- The setting of performance standards for continued program approval and increasing the rigor of certification exams support that the preparation programs are producing effective teachers.
- The Intensive Preparation Programs for High-Performing School Leaders and Performance Targets for Continued Approval plan activities support the producing of effective principals.
- The plan outcome of reporting performance of teacher preparation programs based on new standards for continued program approval measuring student growth of completers supports the preparation of effective teachers.

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

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

The state's plan reflects four key highlights supporting the provision of effective support to teachers and principals. The plan provides related activities, responsible parties, a timeline, outcomes that reflect an ambitious and appropriate approach.

(i) The state's plan to provide effective professional development is evidenced by:

- The state has credibility with its current professional development model from the NSDC that has demonstrated moderate results in increased student achievement in participating LEAs.
- MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work supports effective and individualized professional development practices with examples that include:
  - Professional development for lesson study and formative assessment to support data informed decisions will be available for teachers and principals.
  - Schools in the lowest 5% can modify schedules for common planning time with planning time options for focus on lesson study, student work and student outcomes.
  - Beginning teacher support that integrates data from multiple evaluations, coaching, help with use of student data to improve instruction, and observations of effective teachers.
  - The implementation of Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) for teachers will be based on student performance and evaluation results.
  - The Individual Development Leadership (IDLP) for principals will be based on analysis of student performance data and prior evaluations.
- Plan activities for providing support for effective job-embedded professional development include selection and assigning of coaches; tool kits for both teachers and leaders on data analysis and lesson study on the formative and interim assessments that includes data from the new student

growth model; summer leadership academies on lesson study and the instructional use of data for both teachers and leaders in DA schools; use of federal funds for small and rural LEAs in use of student data and integrate technology to improve instruction; and the Commissioner's Leadership Academy for broader leadership level training at the LEA, regional or state level.

- Quality control and support activities that support the alignment of systems and removal of barriers include the use of the portal to improve accuracy and usefulness of professional development results; provision of guidelines for LEA beginning teacher support programs; and the publishing of guidelines for instructional coaches.
- The timeline reflects that by 2013-2014 school year instructional coaching standards will be adopted and used statewide.
- The plan's outcomes reflect that by the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, participating LEAs will have policies to make decisions about professional development based on evaluation data.

(ii) The state's plan to measure, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of supports is evidenced by:

- The MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work indicates that the LEA will evaluate professional development based on student results and changes in classroom/leadership practice.
- The state's Project – Level Budget Narrative indicates a commitment to the evaluation of professional development over each of the four years of the grant using an external evaluator to work with LEAs supporting continuous improvement of the supports being put in place.
- Data collection on student learning outcomes using the state and LEA student growth measure and changes in leadership practices in the revised evaluation systems provide opportunities for LEAs to see the results of professional development data (where appropriate tied to student growth) to determine whether to continue, modify or cease.
- The use of communities of practice provide LEAs reoccurring opportunities to share best practices for evaluating professional development.
- The Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement is a responsible party to ensure fidelity of professional development data reporting.
- The state's online portal provides one place to report and view results of professional development.
- The statewide adoption of coaching standards provides support toward the fidelity of implementation and a common language around the effective coaching skills. It is scheduled to be implemented "Statewide" by the beginning of 2012-2013.
- The plan to evaluate the effectiveness of supports to improve student achievement involves establishing criteria that include student learning outcomes using the state and LEA student growth measure and, where appropriate, changes in classroom or leadership practices based on the teacher and principal evaluation system.

Total	138	126	126	

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

he state's response provides a description reflecting that the state has legal and statutory authority to intervene in the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status. This is evidenced by:

- Appendix E1-2 Section 1008.33, F.S., Authority to Enforce School

- Appendix E1-3 "Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., Differentiated Accountability State System of School Improvement"

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	**40**	**36**	**38**	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	31	33	[redacted]

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

The state's plan reflects the identification of persistently lowest-achieving schools and ten state led initiatives with related activities, responsible parties, timeline, outcomes, evidence of the historic performance on school turnaround, and a plan for sustainability. The plan is ambitious and appropriate.

1. Using Differentiated Accountability (DA)the state has identified seventy one (71) persistently lowest achieving Title 1 schools and Title 1 eligible secondary schools (Appendix E1-5 and E1-6). Seventy-one schools have been identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice).

(ii) The state's plan to support LEAs in turning around schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (Appendix E2-2) is evidenced by:

- Of the 24 participating LEAs with a persistently lowest-achieving school, 23 returned an MOU with union support.
- Each participating LEA responded Y to E2 elements within Exhibit 1 of the Preliminary Scope of Work of the state reform plan.

- The state's current reforms demonstrate student progress as exemplified in its pilot year of DA, in which students in persistently lowest achieving schools demonstrated more improvement than students in the state as a whole (Appendix E2-5).
- Regional teams work will be expanded to support all schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving. Schools will choose an intervention model Year 1. Teams will collaborate with the LEA and school providing support that includes development and monitoring of an action plan for improvement with the school performance to be analyzed yearly.
- Based on the state's success with the pilot year of DA, the State-Led Initiative 1 outcome of the persistently lowest-achieving schools will achieve a grade of at least a "B", make 80% AYP criteria school wide, and increase the graduation rate to 80%. Although these outcomes are ambitious, with the state's previous school improvement history and current plan, the state is on target to achieve them.
- The use of feeder patterns, as noted in a minimum of seven of the initiative outcomes within Appendix E2-9, supports fidelity of implementation initiatives.
- The state's plan indicates it will partner with organizations to assist with both hiring and developing effective teachers and leaders and building LEA level capacity for turnaround in rural LEAs. These plans are strengthened by the FDOE's Bureau of School Improvement and Regional Teams that will provide assistance and monitoring the results of outside organizational initiatives.
- The state's reflection on lessons learned supports an inward review of what has not worked and how it has influenced the proposed plan in turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools.
- Support for State-Led Initiative 5 reflects that Regional Teams will ensure the training components are implemented with fidelity during the school year.
- Although the state has communicated its history of closing 129 persistently low-performing charters, the State-Led Initiative 6 Activities, Responsible Parties and Timelines do not indicate how performance will be monitored and linked to the school's data.
- Examples of lessons learned in the state turnaround process are evidenced in the current proposed plan. They include, but are not limited to, the need for the provision of turnaround experts, establishment of a turnaround standard, and the state lacking the authority to require chronically low performing schools to improve immediately or face closure.

The state's reform plan reflects a historical review of what has worked for the state and relevant supporting research for the nine State - Led and three LEA - led initiatives. The initiatives reflect the following activities:

- A research-based approach that includes, but is not limited to, working specifically with targeted LEAs (Miami Dade/Duval)
- Provision of communities choice through high performing charters
- High level training for principals and teachers who will work in feeder school patterns
- Supporting parents through work at the community level
- Provision of full day Pre-K
- Support for increasing STEM opportunities statewide
- The continued strategy, throughout the state's application, to use lesson study and student formative and interim assessments with persistently low-achieving schools.

The response reflects an ambitious yet achievable plan that indicates that outside the currently identified 71 persistently lowest-achieving schools, there will be zero more schools beyond those 71 during the grant period. And although the plan references monitoring and evaluation within appropriate initiative timelines, the plan lacks specificity how the state will monitor and evaluate the aggressive plan for the 71 persistently lowest-achieving schools.

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

The 2009 Equal Opportunity in Education Act, referenced in the state's application, supports the use of Differentiated Accountability as its official system for school improvement and accountability for each LEA. Therefore, the statute provides strength to the state's Race To The Top high quality plan for the success of students in each LEA. Therefore, the evaluation is in the high range.

Total	50	46	48	

F. General

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

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

(i) The state's narrative indicates FY2009 expenditures were 0.22% higher than in FY2008. Appendix F1-1 provides total state and local funding and total local funding for 2008-2009.

(ii) In comparison with low poverty schools, examples of policies that lead to equitable funding for high poverty schools include the following:

- Equalization of local property tax revenue provides for more equity due to the fact that the high – poverty school district does not have wealth that is measured by local property tax to provide financial support for their schools as is demonstrated in Appendix F1-1, and examples provided in the state's narrative.
- The program cost factors and number of FTE students in each of the ten categories of cost factors yields base funding to the LEA. Based on the state's narrative, the state does *"periodic"* audits to determine if LEAs have complied with Section 1010.20(3), F.S. and are subject to financial penalty.
- The statewide cost accounting system provides transparency and serves as a tool to reallocate funds within schools of an LEA.
- FEFP includes funding programs in which students, often in poverty or in high-poverty schools receive additional funds. These include program cost factors for Exceptional and LEP students, SAI DJJ, ESE and Safe Schools.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	**40**	**39**	**39**	
(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	7	7	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	

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

(i) The state's response and information within the Appendices reflects there is no cap on charter schools, or number of students eligible to attend, with 10.77% of current schools in charter status. Referenced in Appendix F2-1, student funding for charter schools follows the same formula used for other public schools minus administrative fees [Fla.Stat.A1002.33(17)(b)].

The response reflects the great extent to which the state has an environment that is set up to ensure successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools.

(ii) The state's application reflects a substantial extent to which there is support of charter state laws, statues, regulations, or guidelines and is evidenced by:

- Statute [s.1002.33(2),F.S.] requires assessment of student achievement is a significant factor. Statue [s.1002.33(7)(a)12, F.S.] requires and termination of charter if insufficient progress is made towards attaining student achievement objectives.
- Statute [s.1002.33(7),F.S.] requires that charter contracts must include the current incoming baseline of student achievement and outcomes to be achieved.
- Statue [s.1008.33(5),F.S.] encourages charters to serve student populations that are similar to local district populations, especially high-need students.
- 2009 Legislature required that all charter school applicants use the model charter school application - [s.1002.33(6), F.S.] and requires the use of the FDOE evaluation instrument - [s.1002.33(6)(b), F.S.].
- Revised law in 2003 provided SBE has the authority to overturn school district LEA charter applications. Since then, less than 3% of charters have been granted by appealing to the SBE.
- FLA law requires that charters to be accessed the same as public schools.

FLA has closed 111 charter schools over the past five years with reasoning including a lack of student achievement and financial performance. 80% of the states graded charter schools received an A or B under the state's grading system and a higher percentage of charter schools made AYP than traditional public schools.

(iii) The state's response to charters receiving equitable funding is evidenced by:

- Statute [s.1002.33(17), F. S.] – Students enrolled in a charter shall be funded the same as students enrolled in other publics schools in the district.
- Operating costs, state taxes, ARRA funds, local property taxes and lottery funds are the same for charters as they are for traditional public schools.
- Statue [s 1002.33(17)(c), F.S.] – The right of charter schools to receive eligible federal funds to include IDEA and NCLB.
- Statute [s 1002.33(17)(d), F.S.] – LEAs include charter school in requests for federal stimulus funds.
- MOU Exhibit 1 Preliminary Scope of Work (F)(2) includes that the LEA will offer charter opportunities to participate in application for grants as other district schools.

(iv) Based on statute [ss.1022.33(9) and 1013.62, F.S] charter schools facilities funding that has increased from $7.8 million in 2000 to approximately $57 million. Charter per student fees are comparable to traditional public schools after LEAs debt of service is removed. In support of satisfactory student achievement, charters receive capital outlay funds to those that demonstrate student achievement, along with financial stability and governance. The state allows charters assistance with facilities acquisition by providing the option to use a variety of facilities. Charter facilities are exempt from assessment of building permits, building and license fees, service availability fees and assessment for special benefits. The response is unclear if traditional public schools are also exempt from fees and if charters have the ability to share in supports such as sharing in bonds and mill levies.

(v) The state offers three ways to enable LEAs to operate innovative and autonomous public schools is evidenced by:

- Virtual education options are supported by state laws [s.1000.04, F.S.] and [s.1002.20, F.S.] in which the funding follows the student, there are no legislative caps for enrollment and success is based on performance or completion rather than seat time.
- Florida Virtual Schools (FLVS) serves rural, low performing and high minority schools. As an outcome of the existence of the FLVS, there are currently 17 LEAs that have established their own franchises. While the LEA provides administration and instruction, the use of the FLVS curriculum within the Learning Management System supports fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum.
- Based on the School District Virtual Instruction Program law [s.1002.45, F.S.] LEAs have the option to operate autonomous virtual public schools. The program has been designated by law [s.1002.20,

F.S] as a public school choice option within the LEA. At the beginning of 2010-2010, all LEAs offered full-time, LEA – level virtual instruction programs in grades K-12.

- State law [s.1002.32, F.S.] provides for schools known as developmental research schools of which the goal is to be a vehicle for conducting research, demonstration, and evaluation with emphasis on mathematics, science, computer science and foreign languages.
- Based on the student and parent educational choice law, LEAs school choices include single-gender schools, charter technical career centers, magnet schools and the New World of the Arts [s.1003.491, F.S.].

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

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

The response successfully reflects an extensive demonstration of other significant reform conditions that is evidenced by the passing of two key education laws, the A++ Plan and Florida's Equal Opportunity in Education Act. Other conditions favorable to reform and innovation that reflect in increased the student achievement include:

- Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program (Appendix F3-2) where the percent of participating children ready for kindergarten demonstrates that VPK completers as compared to VPK non-completers ranges from a minimum of 5% to ~14%, to ~ 8.6%.
- The response reflects the academic success of FLVS students demonstrated by successful half-credit completions and Advanced Placement scores.
- The College Reach Out Program (CROP) provides support to low-income, educationally disadvantaged students to prepare for postsecondary education [s. 1007.34, F.S.]. CROP participants outperform non CROP participants by 23% in graduation rate.
- TFA will expand into Miami-Dade and Duval counties with plans to double the size of TFA corps in Miami-Dade for the 2010 school year.
- Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) will expand into Jacksonville in 2010.

Total	55	54	54	

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The state's plan to place emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics has been addressed in multiple areas throughout the application and Appendices. The plan is evidenced by:

- Within Selection Criteria (B) Standards and Assessments, one of the four initiatives is to 3. Increase Access to STEM courses. The MOU requires the adoption of at least one additional STEM course and increase the number of STEM-related courses. Appendix B3-1 provides the Florida Center for Research (FCR)-STEM overview with Appendix B3-2 FCR-STEM and Appendix P-3 providing the STEM projects.
- The RTTT activities include the STEM programs for gifted and talented students supporting high-quality, rigorous course work.
- Within Selection (A) State Success Factors, there is a provision of STEM and reading coordinators to persistently lowest-achieving schools and their feeder schools, and Figure 3-1 provides STEM support that includes increasing STEM subjects statewide.
- FSU Teach and UF Teach assist teachers in the provision of programs to prepare their students with in-depth knowledge in mathematics and science to become teachers of rigorous STEM courses.

Florida's RTTT application includes funding to increase the number of similar teacher preparation programs (D)(4).

- Figure P-1 provides support for STEM throughout each of the four RTTT reform areas demonstrating a focus on rigorous courses of study, current and future creation of STEM partners, and STEM human capital support via STEM Coordinators.
- Examples of multi-stakeholder support is supported in Selection Criteria (A) Figure A-3 and STEMflorida Education Advisory Group that will produce a Florida STEM plan by December 2010 with multi-stakeholder planning and supporting documentation within Appendix P-1 and P-2.
- State statute [s 331.302, F.S.] provides for Space Florida that promotes aerospace business and provides a supporting letter of support in Appendix 6.
- Appendix C provides possible outcome measures for intended impacts and outputs that include addressing the needs of women and girls in STEM. Appendix C includes what entity will report on each Impact and output.

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Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The state has clearly articulated a comprehensive and coherent plan for addressing the four education reform areas as evidenced by:

- The state's RTTT Student Achievement Goals are ambitious and consistent with the four areas of reform and are poised to positively impact 93% of the state's students within the grant period.
- The state has involved a broad group of stakeholders in developing the educational reform agenda and, pending approval, will continue to engage stakeholders through the RTTT Working Group Task Group to monitor the implementation.
- The state has a strong MOU of which 96% of LEAs have agreed to act as "participating" LEAs. It communicates to participating LEAs they must agree to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan.
- The Preliminary Scope of Work weaves rigorous standards and assessments within a SLDS that provides a data system infrastructure supporting the effective use of teacher and principal evaluations that are significantly tied to student success in persistently low-performing schools. The elements of the reform plan within the Scope of Work demonstrate that LEAs are committed to successfully implementing the plan that results in significant student growth, as directed by the three RTTT Student Achievement Goals.
- The state's recent progress with Differentiated Accountability supports their aggressive efforts to turn around persistently-low achieving schools along with the provision of human capital to support the LEAs work.
- The use of lesson study and formative and interim assessments, and focused professional development, is woven throughout the state's success factors and the four reform areas.
- The plan reflects the increase human capital to support the LEAs in ambitiously increasing student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, and increasing graduation rate is represented within Project Level Budget Tables and supporting Project Level Narratives.
- Student achievement goals are aligned within each of the four educational areas described in ARRA. The state has set ambitious NAEP student achievement goals to the subgroup level. The state has

aggressive goals for increasing high school graduation and college enrollment to the subgroup levels (Appendix 1-7).

The state's proposed plan is in the spirit of the four areas of reform and, yet ambitious, proposes a comprehensive approach to reform.

Total			0	0

Grand Total	500	467	471	