



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Kentucky Application #2850KY-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	59	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	45	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	9	9	

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

Kentucky provides a clear vision for where it wants the education system to be in the future that builds upon a history of reform, including the Kentucky Education Reform Act in 1990, SB 168 in 2002, and SB 1 in 2009. These efforts have yielded admirable results in NAEP and other test scores, as well as improvement in dropout rates and postsecondary enrollment. The strategy that links the articulated vision and the past is "a focus on improving teacher practice to increase effectiveness," and the path is through the four assurances of ARRA. This focused strategy is integral to each of the four areas, and as envisioned by Kentucky, each area reinforces the others. Particularly laudable is the recognition of the rurality of Kentucky and the state's intent to create innovative tools based upon technology and alternative professional development approaches.

Kentucky has built the highest level of commitment for the state's Race to the Top plan. All 174 districts have signed on to the MOU that features strong terms and conditions and a clear, rigorous scope of work. The letters of support from the professional organizations, including the Kentucky Education Association, indicate not only firm commitment to the plan but also additional efforts each organization will embark upon to make the plan successful. This is a very impressive show of commitment to the plan.

The fact that all districts in Kentucky have committed to participate bodes well for strong impact across the state. Kentucky has set ambitious goals that may be achievable, and the application wisely notes that progress will be slower in the early years and then ramp up in the out-years. Yet the goal for the percentage of students meeting the ACT math benchmarks is to go from 20% today to 50% in 2014 and 70% in 2020 while reading goes from 46% today to 50% in 2014 to 70% in 2020. There is no differentiation among the math, reading and English goals for ACT even though they are in very different places today. This will take an enormous concentration on math. While there may be no equivalency between ACT and NAEP, it is questionable if the state reaches its goal of 38% of the 8th grade students proficient in math in 2014, if within the space of two to three years, 50% or more of the students will be able to reach the ACT benchmark in math. The gaps in reading and English are not as difficult to overcome, but still very ambitious. Kentucky notes that closing the gap, especially reducing income achievement gaps, is important for this rural state. Unfortunately this gap has grown at all levels of NAEP over the last two administrations. Given the proposed rate of overall gain in student achievement in section (A)(1)(iii)(a), closing this gap will be extremely difficult. Finally, the college enrollment goal may be overly ambitious. There does not seem to be a connection between the ACT goal and the college enrollment and college remediation goals. In summary, Kentucky's goals are truly ambitious, but there are serious reservations about the extent to which the math goals in particular are achievable.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	26	26
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	16	16
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10	10

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

Kentucky has taken significant steps to provide capacity for implementing and scaling the plans. Reorganizing the Department of Education so that specific units are responsible for specific aspects of the plan and creating cross functional teams that break down the barriers among entrenched departments should help to implement the plan from the state perspective. The state also has a plan to develop a common planning tool and to take advantage of existing regional networks to leverage existing capacity and encourage innovation. These efforts should provide strong support and communication between and among districts and the state. Maybe more important is the collaborative attitude the Department is trying to instill so that districts and the Department work together in identifying and distributing best practices. In addition, setting aside \$2.5 million for a fund and a competition to encourage innovation from the local level is an excellent idea and reinforces the collaborative attitude with real money. The budget provides some insight into how the components may work together. The budget also shows some places where funding and support from sources other than Race to the Top could sustain efforts beyond the period of the grant, but it is extremely difficult to discern the level of that effort.

Kentucky shows a broad reach of support across various educational organizations, including the teacher and principal organizations, whose letters of support show no caveats in their unbridled support of the Race to the Top application. In addition, there is a wide range of support from non-educational organizations such as the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, a major business in the state (Lexmark), a few foundations, and other organizations. Finally, the state's public universities also support the application. What is particularly commendable is that many letters not only support the application, but also outline specific ways that they intend to support it.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	14	19
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	11	16

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

As noted earlier, Kentucky has a rich history in education reform and hence has shown progress in all four areas, although the narrative describing the progress regarding turning around lowest achieving schools is much less detailed than other areas. The criteria for this section asks how the state has used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms. Aside from a mention of Title I School Improvement funds, Title II Teacher Quality Funds, and the federal grants for working on the statewide longitudinal data system, detail is lacking in this area, especially regarding state funds.

Kentucky has shown some achievement in student outcomes over the years. Determining the extent of achievement gain using the ESEA assessments is difficult in that several changes were made to the Kentucky assessment program in 2007 that do not allow comparisons between 2006 and 2007. After stating the problems with comparison, the application goes ahead and cites improvement across the tests (2003 - 2009) without explaining how or if the scores are comparable. There are significant improvements from 2007 to 2009 under the same testing regime, which is laudable, but including data crossing tests is confusing. Looking at NAEP for 2002 to the latest administration, there are slight gains in 4th grade reading, huge (15 point) gains in 4th grade math, slight gains in 8th grade math, and a drop of 4 points in 8th grade reading. The application states that the state is unable to attribute the increases (or decrease in the case of 8th grade reading) to any factor; they have "been pursuing a comprehensive strategy." It is unclear why the comprehensive strategy could be so effective for math and so much less so for other

subjects. This lack of analysis of the data raises questions as to the depth of the capability to use the data to make important policy decisions.

As noted earlier, Kentucky has had difficulty narrowing the gaps between low income students and non-low income students and between white and black students. In fact, all measures of NAEP this century show an increase in the gap between low income and non-low income students except 8th grade reading where overall achievement has been flat or dropped slightly and the gap has narrowed 3 points. The same pattern holds true for the black-white gap on NAEP. Kentucky states that they have been focused on reducing achievement gaps since Senate Bill 168 was passed in 2000 and they mention a few initiatives, but provide no further detail. Kentucky is not yet able to measure graduation rate according to the adjusted cohort graduation rate methodologies. Other, less accurate, measures - the Leaver Rate and the Cumulative Promotion Index - both show progress increasing the high school graduation rate. As with achievement changes and gap changes, the state attributes the increase in graduation rate to its comprehensive reform. The application cites a change in college enrollment rate - from 49% in 1992 to 61% in 2006.

The lack of success in closing gaps is a concern. Even more troubling is the lack of knowledge of what may have caused the success in math but none in reading or an increase in the graduation rate and college enrollment. This raises questions about the extent to which the state can learn either from success or failure. The use of data to make decisions at all levels, from the state level to the classroom, is critical to success of any reform.

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

During the state panel presentation and discussion, panelists were able to identify specific activities and approaches, such as coaches for reading and math, a tight focus on problems, Response to Intervention, and centers that were established to build the capacity of teachers of math and reading, that had an impact on student test scores.

Total	125	99	104	
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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)

Kentucky has shown total commitment to adopting and implementing a common set of high-quality standards. Since 1990, and most recently in 2009, the legislature has shown that commitment. Kentucky is a part of the multi-state consortium led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the consortium has 51 states and territories.

Kentucky adopted the standards as a part of Senate Bill 1 on February 10, 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)

Kentucky is committed to improving the quality of its assessments by working with three consortia of states to develop assessment tools to evaluate the Common Core standards. The Smarter Balance Consortium has 33 states, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career has 26 partners, and the Board Exam for High Schools has 8 states involved.

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

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

Kentucky has developed a robust and dense series of activities to support the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. The activities begin with a large outreach effort utilizing media of all kinds and intended to reach both educators and the general public. The second step is to work with state leaders in higher education to ensure the standards and postsecondary education are aligned. The third activity is to make the standards usable by educators and to create resources and support to use the standards. This activity relies heavily on a complex series of educator networks across the state that reach into every school building. The networks will "work to create or identify resources and online materials to facilitate learning for a variety of audiences," and the resources will be made available to everyone in the state through the web. The use of technology in this activity and throughout others is highly commendable, especially considering the rural nature of the state. Educators should have access to these resources, professional development and general communication regardless of zip code. Another activity centers on providing ongoing professional development regarding using the standards and assessments effectively. This effort relies on local professional learning teams. Like technology, collaboration is a common and potentially powerful theme. Wisely the state realizes that altering the use of teacher time as well as the school calendar may be necessary to successfully implement the very different approach to professional learning that this plan contemplates, so the Department is working with members of the legislature to create legislation which will enable schools and districts to organize teachers' schedules to support this new approach. Another activity addresses the effective use of various types of assessments from classroom assessments to benchmark assessments to annual assessments. Crucial to this effort is assessment literacy for all teachers, college faculty, and pre-service students. The final activity is ensuring that all courses are rigorous, no matter where they are taught. Key focuses here are STEM courses, the use of the Kentucky Virtual School and an Individual Learning Plan that is technology driven.

Together these activities form a very solid and powerful approach to implementing the standards and assessments. The narrative does not provide a clear plan, including timelines, but there is some detail in the budget to help explain which activities are more heavily weighted up front and which are weighted more in the out years.

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)

Kentucky's statewide longitudinal data system contains all twelve of the elements delineated in the American COMPETES Act. Some of those elements are in the process of being strengthened even further as the year progresses.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data

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

Kentucky is well down the road to having a strong and user-friendly statewide longitudinal data system. The state already has a multi-agency P-20 Data Collaborative that includes the Education and Workforce Cabinet, the Department, the Education Professional Standards Board, and the council on Postsecondary Education. The Department is beginning to instill a "culture of data use and data driven decision making" by creating data stewards and data managers in all Department offices, and they are training those people. In addition, they have begun providing access to data to the Legislative Research Commission and will be providing access to the longitudinal data system for legislators. This is a very solid and commendable foundation. A minor concern is the percentage of administrators projected to be using the system by 2013-14 - 40%. Like other stakeholders, administrators need to use the system to make data-informed decisions regarding all aspects of the school district that the Kentucky data system touches.

The plan to ensure data are accessible and used also is well-thought out and includes three activities. The first is to expand the data in the system to include not only more data from existing sources, but also to add new sources such as early childhood data and new student financial aid and workforce data. In addition, this activity will increase the quality of data governance and data quality through the work of the aforementioned P-20 Data Collaborative. More and better data will help increase usage. A second activity is to improve accessibility through an identity management system that will automate access to the data for users. The final activity is to set in motion a series of professional learning opportunities on how to access and use data. Professional development on these activities already is available through the e-learning online training platform and additional training will be rolled out through the regional networks described in Section B. These activities are well-designed and should result in an accessible and heavily used data system.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	15	16	
(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	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	6	6	

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

Kentucky's overall plan to use data to improve instruction is simple and has a high probability of success. There are three steps - build a Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS), provide professional development around the access and use of the system, and providing access to the system for researchers. The CIITS envisioned is potentially powerful, time- and cost-saving, and has great potential for improving instruction if fully utilized by teachers. Having standards, curriculum materials and resources, assessments, professional development resources and evaluation processes all available together in one place is highly advantageous. Kentucky also has a history of rolling out statewide projects, which should prove to be highly beneficial with an effort of this size. The second activity - professional development around access and use - will build upon and use the networks discussed in Section B and will rely upon approximately 400 master trainers. In addition, training on the access and use of the CIITS will be integrated into both the teacher and principal induction programs so that all new teachers and principals as well as those who transfer from other states will be ready to use the system when they arrive at schools. This connection between teacher and principal preparation and the actual world they will confront is very smart and just plain common sense, but few states have been able to do it. Kentucky is to be commended for including this in their plan. The final activity - making the system accessible to researchers - also is well thought out. Not only will researchers receive access, but also the Department, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Education Standards Board will work together to ensure institutions of higher education are included in the development and piloting of the CIITS and researchers will be relied upon to provide suggestions and feedback for the entire system.

Two questions not addressed directly in the narrative arise. One is the extent to which all teachers have access to computers and robust broadband to access and use the CIITS. Earlier sections of the application note that there is broadband to every school in the state, but success in making a resource such as CIITS available to all teachers will dramatically increase the demand for broadband access. While it is highly likely that the state has thought of this, there is no mention of it. A second question revolves around the training to use the CIITS. Training on accessing and using the system is relatively easy compared to helping educators think through how access to a vast array of resources, probably all digital, will change the way they actually conduct instruction in the classroom.

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

During the presentation and question session, members of the Kentucky panel explained the strong centralized approach the state has taken to technology infrastructure and the culture of using technology in the school system that is growing. The centralized approach to infrastructure enables the state to address bandwidth and other network concerns much more easily than a decentralized system. While the culture of using technology is evolving, there still are many educators who are not fully comfortable with technology and detail on training and using the system for those educators was lacking.

Total	47	43	44	
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	16	17	
(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	6	6	
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	4	5	

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

Kentucky has statutory provisions allowing alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals. There are 8 options including routes that allow for providers outside of institutions of higher education. The most used routes meet at least 4 of the criteria listed in the definition of alternative certification in the Notice.

Kentucky's alternative routes are in use, but heavily weighted toward the university-based option. For active teachers in 2009-10, approximately 10% of teachers and 6% of principals had been certified through alternative routes and 17% of new teachers in this year were certified through alternative routes and only one new principal. Of the 7 options in use (Option 8, Teach for America is just being launched), more than 90% came through the university-based option and all the principals have come through that option. While a large number of options are available and being used, the university-based route is far and away the favored option by users.

Kentucky has a process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage. The calculation is provided, but confusing, especially the comment, "There is a total 5% designation limit that assists with the elimination process." No information is provided about what areas have shortages. There are programs listed that could fill some areas of shortage, and some of them have active recruitment components to help fill shortages.

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

During the panel presentation and discussion, members from the Kentucky team were able to clarify the calculation for identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and how that information was used.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	54	56	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	11	13	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28	28	

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

Kentucky has a plan to measure student growth. It will be based on new assessments and include value-added analysis in reading and math, growth on pre- and post-course assessments in subjects and grades not covered by statewide accountability assessments, and evidence of student growth using a variety of measures includes tests and portfolios. This wide range of measurement of student growth is to be commended as it will help to counter a tendency to teach to the test. In addition, the fact that subjects and grades outside of the statewide assessment system are included will ensure a much more balanced curriculum for Kentucky students as well as more equal treatment of all teachers and principals. This is an ambitious and commendable approach.

Kentucky's plan describes a fair and rigorous evaluation system for teachers and principals. It differentiates effectiveness using multiple rating categories, and student growth data will be a significant factor, although "significant" is not defined. The roll out for the system will include a field test in 16 districts that tests growth models and value-added methodology that uses existing assessments because the new assessment program will not be ready yet. The following year an additional 20 districts will be added to the field test. This carefully studied approach should yield opportunities for refinement, foster credibility, and make significant progress toward fairness. In addition, the state will contract with a research firm to ensure the system is valid and reliable, and educators will be able to comment on the system and its implementation through a survey. Two concerns arise: if a school district chooses to use an evaluation system other than that adopted by the state, who or what body determines that the system "meets the standards established by administrative regulation?" It may be that question will be answered when the administrative regulation is put into place, but it isn't clear that a district will not have a way around the state designed system. The second concern relates to the extent to which teachers and principals will be involved in the design and development of the system. As noted above, there will be field tests and opportunities to respond through surveys, providing feedback. There is mention that the Effective Teachers Steering Committee and the Effective Principals Steering Committee are leading the development of the new systems, but nowhere is it explained who sits on those committees and how they function.

Kentucky's plan calls for annual evaluations of both teachers and principals. All teachers are evaluated in the same way with the exception of tenured teachers who will have multiple observations of instructional practice every third year rather than every year as required for non-tenured teachers. Teachers and principals will receive information on student growth through the CIITS. In addition, the state will use the networks and 400 master trainers described earlier to assist teachers and principals in becoming more effective in understanding and using student data. Kentucky's evaluation system goes farther by providing this training, improving the possibility that teachers and principals actually will use the student growth data to make a variety of instructional decisions.

Kentucky's plan demonstrates that the evaluations will become an integral part of informing all levels of decisions regarding teachers' and principals' career paths. As in other sections of the plan, the evaluation process is envisioned to be a key part of the induction process through the required Internship programs. Teachers and principals will have access to the CIITS for resources and information related to the results of their evaluation all of which will be a part of an individual professional learning plan created by each teacher

and principal. The state will have aggregated in one place a rich array of learning opportunities for teachers to match against the results of their evaluation. These sources, if easily matched to possible outcomes of evaluations, should prove to be a huge bonus for educators of all levels. To address the issue of compensation, promotion and retention based upon the evaluation system, the state will fund a few districts to create new systems for compensation that break from the traditional step systems. The results will be evaluated and then considered as a part of recommendations for the overall evaluation system. Part of the requirement is that in order to receive the opportunity for career advancement, one must be evaluated as highly effective. Full certification status and tenure will be dependent upon the evaluation system and tenure granting rates must be reported contingent upon the use of evaluation data. The same holds true with termination decisions. The entire plan is thorough and complete with student growth data at the core of an evaluation that is integral to all decisions about teachers' and principals' careers. If the plan holds up to the reality of creation and implementation, it will set a high but achievable bar.

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

The Kentucky panel members clarified the membership of the Effective Teachers Steering Committee and the Effective Principals Steering Committee and how they were functioning. They are representative of "the best and strongest" in the state and they have been intimately involved in the design and development of the evaluation systems.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	11	11
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	7	7
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	4	4

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

Kentucky's approach to ensuring equitable distribution of highly effective teachers is relatively passive compared to other components of its application and not as detailed. The state will first require that all districts report data on the effectiveness of the educators serving the highest need students. This will ensure that districts are indeed tracking and reporting the metrics, and public disclosure of that information can stir both the public and districts to action. A second activity is to fund equitable distribution strategies that will be evaluated. Districts will propose plans against a research-based set of criteria that will include commitment, coupling incentives with other strategies, and high quality plan and research design. They have a similar strategy for hard-to-staff areas. Based upon the evaluations, these programs are to be expanded statewide. The application does not explain how the successful programs will be chosen or how they will be scaled statewide, or if there is any funding or other incentives for districts to adopt models. A third activity is to increase the supply of teachers and leaders through a variety of strategies that "are being worked on." Included are having Teach for America provide 120 teachers for Eastern Kentucky and selecting postsecondary institutions in rural areas to develop programs, probably based on a teacher residency model. The application does not provide data to explain what might be done for schools in high poverty and/or high minority urban settings or describe the distribution of high poverty and high minority schools to justify concentration in rural areas for this activity. The fourth activity is to build capacity at the district and school level to improve equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and principals. The state will work with various professional organizations to provide training on better hiring processes and timelines. They also will encourage better working conditions, primarily through a survey and making principals accountable for better working conditions. Finally they will support data driven decision making. The performance measures are not very ambitious and the rationale in the explanation of the performance measures seems flawed. The application states that the percentage of highly effective teachers and principals in low-poverty, low-minority schools "will likely remain unchanged, as none of the strategies outlined here specifically target those schools." Yet when addressing the percentage of teachers and principals in low-poverty, low-minority schools who are ineffective, the application states that while the plans for not focus on these schools, all LEAs are participating "and therefore the expectation is that the

number of ineffective teachers in [these schools] will decrease as well." It is unclear why this logic pertains only to ineffective teachers and not highly effective teachers.

The staffing of hard to staff subjects is blended in the plans to ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals, and there is little differentiation between plans for equitable distribution and plans for hard to staff subject areas. More specifically, hard to staff data will be reported as part of activity 1, and districts can apply for the field test sites as part of activity 2. Activity 3 seems directed primarily at high need subject areas, although the Teach for America component is directed at high need subjects. The components of Activity 4 could have an impact on teachers in hard-to-staff areas, but the topic is not specifically addressed. While there are potentially effective activities proposed for increasing the number and percentage of teachers in hard-to-staff areas, this area does not have the level of detail or priority of equitable distribution of teachers, even though it is a particularly vexing problem in a state as rural as Kentucky. Technology is mentioned, but there is no detail of expanding distance learning programs for students or educators.

All these measures are positive, but given the gap in student achievement in the state and the rural nature of the state, the proposed strategies lack urgency and the detail and thoroughness of other strategies in the Kentucky application.

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

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

As noted in Sections B and C, Kentucky has a robust statewide longitudinal data system and there are plans to make it even better. Kentucky has a history of providing reporting on the quality of teacher education programs. but some data and methods have come into question in the old system. The Standards Board "stands ready" to redesign the system based upon the effectiveness of its graduates. Contemplated is a single score for a program and an aggregate score for an institution, and those scores would be based upon student achievement and growth data, the evaluation system projected for the state, and other measures such as an evaluation of pre-service teacher competence. The report card will be able to include which preparation programs produce the highest percentages of effective and highly effective teachers and principals. This approach seems solid and manageable in tha all the data needed will be available in the system. Because the state has had some history with public reporting of data in higher education, the level of resistance to such an approach should be mitigated by this experience.

The plan to expand preparation and credentialing options is a mix of appealing to the market (by publishing reports of effectiveness of programs), strengthening the regulatory approach, supporting program improvement, and using public resources to expand successful programs. The marketing component is potentially powerful, assuming that incoming college students have their minds made up as to their vocation and are using quality program indicators to select schools. Strengthening regulatory approaches also could have positive impact, especially because the state is sunsetting the accreditation of all education programs at the end of 2010 and requiring all programs to reapply. The new accreditation process will be based upon data about program effectiveness, although all the data for that will not be ready as 2011 begins. How that process will work is not clear. The state will conduct annual site visits instead of every seven years as was done in the past. There is no money in the Race to the Top budget for this increased effort, so it is assumed that the state will pick up the cost. The supporting program improvement component is lacking in detail. A committee will identify best practices, especially around admissions and clinical experiences for candidates, and then make recommendations for changes in program guidelines. The final activity - using resources to expand the most successful programs - is simple but sketchy. The state will only establish partnerships with the highly effective programs. The discontinuation of unsuccessful programs apparently will happen organically as the successful programs supposedly will attract more and better students and the

state will only partner with more successful programs, leaving the others to wither and die or improve themselves through learning from the accreditation efforts and best practices.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	17	17	
(i) Providing effective support	10	10	10	
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	7	7	

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

Kentucky describes a far-reaching and robust support structure for teachers and principals based upon state, regional, district and school-based networks and a powerful technology system, the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System. Both have been described in detail in prior sections. The state will have personnel whose jobs it will be to drive the system and make sure it is working. This is backed up by a proposed change in teacher professional development requirements characterized by moving away from a seat-time paradigm toward a job-embedded approach which will rely on the networks and the CIITS. An additional program based upon a teacher residency model will prepare teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas and for high poverty/ high minority schools. The only question is "If you build it will they come?" The Department will provide resources to districts through a variety of funds to enable the implementation and those funds plus the push for job-embedded professional development and the high quality and growing quantity of resources in the CIITS should make this a very successful effort.

Kentucky plans to measure success by looking at teacher and principal effectiveness which is based in a significant degree on growth in student learning. The application cites three ways this will occur - the growth and continuous improvement in the CIITS, hiring an outside evaluator, and the use and monitoring of the Teacher Working conditions Survey. Detail is lacking in this section, especially how the outside evaluator will work and the criteria for success.

Total	138	110	113	
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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 state has the statutory authority to intervene directly in lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs in correction status.

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

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

Kentucky has a plan to identify the lowest achieving schools that is approved by the USDE. They also have gone beyond the specific requirement and will create and use a special leadership assessment to determine the capacity available within the schools. It is through this assessment that the state makes the determination of which model will be used for the schools.

Kentucky has tried various approaches to turning around low-achieving schools and districts. The plan under Race to the Top is very extensive and includes a variety of levels of support for the schools. The Department has reorganized to support this effort, but central to the support is creating Centers of Learning Excellence to serve as intermediaries between the Department's special section and the schools in need of improvement. The Centers will coordinate efforts from a variety of sources, provide professional learning services, work with the community, and generally drive the effort to turn around the schools. They also will foster networks and other peer support capabilities. Special attention is being paid to leaders by, for example, inserting an administrative manager so the principal can concentrate on instructional matters. Another component is for the state to create endorsements specifically for people who will work in turning around the low-achieving schools. Separate certifications will be created for Educational Recovery Leaders, and Educational Recovery Specialists and Intervention Specialists. The state has developed a Leadership Assessment and the results have already been used to determine who makes the decision about which of the four turnaround options to employ and who will lead the turnaround process. The state will employ this Leadership Assessment as a key component in its efforts to turning around the identified schools. The system of support is multifaceted and flexible and should be able to support all four approaches to turning around these schools.

Total	50	47	47
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8	8	
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5	5	
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	3	3	
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
The state has increased revenue for elementary, secondary and higher education from 43.6% of total revenues in 2008 to 46.5% in 2009.				
Kentucky's funding formula has upward adjustments for at-risk pupils, exceptional children, home-schooled or hospitalized pupils and limited English proficient students. These adjustments provide additional revenue to high-need LEAs. The distribution of funding within LEAs is done on a per-pupil basis, so there is no special funding consideration taken for students who may be in a higher need school within a district. Without this consideration for individual schools within a large district, the chance for inequitable funding increases.				
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	8	8	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	0	0	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	0	0	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	0	0	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	0	0	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	

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

Kentucky does not have a charter school law. The state does encourage and enables LEAs to operate innovative autonomous public schools other than charter schools. It has a site-based-decision-making model that provides significant autonomy for School Councils. Most LEAs in Kentucky are small with one school per grade span (e.g., high school), but the largest LEA does have a number of options for students. The flexibility for the School Councils could provide opportunity for innovation in LEAs.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4	4	
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
Kentucky has created a myriad of conditions favorable to school reform. Most notable is an early commitment to state provision of preschool and looking after the needs of the whole child by creating family and youth resource centers. The Center for School Safety has had an impact throughout the state by decreasing disciplinary actions resulting in a safer and better school climate. Most recently they have become a partner state in The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. There have been a number of efforts to look at closing the achievement gap, but as noted in earlier sections, they have not met with a great deal of success. These and other efforts have helped to create conditions favorable to school reform.				
Total	55	20	20	

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)				
Kentucky has a STEM Task Force comprised of leaders within the government, business and education sectors. A number of admirable activities are mentioned in the application including encouraging more access to Advanced Placement programming, expansion of the Project Lead the Way program, science centers and various efforts to improve the content knowledge and teaching skills of teachers in the STEM areas. The STEM section does not specifically address underrepresented groups and women and girls, but different portions of the application do clarify that these groups are represented in STEM efforts. Similarly, activities or programs for elementary students are not addressed in the STEM section. Project Lead the Way is described as a K-12 STEM curriculum, but the application says the expansion of the Project will result "in a strengthened STEM education of all middle and high school students..." Other portions of the application allude to strengthening the elementary curriculum in STEM areas, but there are few significant efforts. The STEM Task Force report has a strong call to action, excellent definitions of problems, strong recommendations and possible strategies. The application says that the state "has established the partnerships and initiatives described in that plan." The connections between the activities described in this section and the report are weak but evident. While not an overwhelmingly comprehensive plan, Kentucky has adequately addressed the criteria for this section.				
Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The Kentucky application meets this priority. While Kentucky does not have laws enabling charter schools, it does provide flexibility in governance for the LEAs in Kentucky. Other areas of the application are particularly strong. There is total commitment to the reform effort with all school districts signing on to a strong MOU. The commitment to high quality standards and assessments demonstrated through history as well as leading the current nationwide effort is commendable. The statewide longitudinal data system is in place and plan for its expansion and enhancement is very solid. The CIITS is an excellent use of technology and should help level the playing field for the many rural LEAs in the state. The overall plan to build great teachers and leaders is strong, although there is some concern about the equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and that impact on the gap between low-income and non low-income students. Finally, the state has a very robust and integrated approach to turning around low performing schools. Full implementation of the plan should increase student achievement across the state, increase graduation rates and result in an improved professional corps of educators.

Total			0	0
Grand Total	500	402	411	



Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2

Kentucky Application #2850KY-6



A. State Success Factors

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEA's participation in it	65	62	62	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	45	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

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

(i) Kentucky has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform strategy. Since the passage of KERA - Kentucky Education Reform Act (1990) - the state has led the way on standards based reform, increased accountability, and equalized funding. The next wave of Kentucky's reform will expand and improve standards, assessments, teacher and principal quality, data systems, and turning around low-performing schools. KY's RTT plan states that it will now focus more deeply on improving teacher quality and innovations in rural schools where 80% of their students reside.

(ii) All 174 of KY's LEAs have signed the MOU committing their districts to implement all aspects of the RTT application. The state secured signatures from all of the superintendents, local board chairs, and union representatives where applicable, 153 out of 174. All 174 LEAs have agreed to participate in every aspect of the RTT plan. The MOU and scope of work are adequate.

This 100% participation represents a strong commitment at the state and local level.

(iii) KY has set interim targets for 2014 with final goals in 2020. Given the current changes in its assessment system, the state is using ACT and NAEP to set the targets. The state has set an overall ACT goal of 50% in English, reading and mathematics which is ambitious for reading and math, not so much for English. For fourth and eighth graders at or above proficiency on NAEP reading, the expectation is to increase by 10% and 9% respectively by 2014. For fourth and eighth graders at or above proficiency in NAEP math, the goal by 2014 is an 11% increase in both. These goals leave the state's at or above proficiency rate below 50% on all 4 NAEP assessments in 2014. In 2020, the percentages will rise to 55-60% at or above proficient.

At a very general level, the percent of Kentucky students scoring at or above proficient has risen 10 - 16% over the last 10 years. Therefore, a 10% rise in 4 to 5 years is ambitious even though it leaves more than half the students below proficient in 2014.

Achievement gap reductions are for a 15-20% reduction by 2020. Again, this is ambitious but the gap will remain large. For example, the Black/white achievement gap in NAEP 4th grade reading will be at 17% in 2014.

High school graduation will rise by 10% by 2020 with an intermediate target of an 80% graduation rate in 2014.

College enrollment will rise from 55% to 70% in 2014, the persistence rate will rise 4% to 75% in 2014.

The achievement goals for reading and math may need to be "ratcheted-up" to be considered truly ambitious.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	25	25
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	15	15
(ii) Using broad stakeholder support	10	10	10

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

(i) KY is re-organizing the SEA to be of more assistance to districts, to work collaboratively, as well as better integrate activities across the SEA. The RTT work will be managed by a to-be-hired director who will manage RTT, the supplemental innovative funds to the districts, and the technology contracts including the school improvement software. It is unclear who the RTT manager will report to and how much authority he/she will have over the myriad contracts and regional personnel who will be paid from this grant.

The RTT grant will also support approximately 3 additional staff at each of the nine regional centers who appear to be the main contact and support for the LEAs. There are many regional centers proposed in the RTT application without clear lines of authority or descriptions of how the Centers will interact and coordinate services and not duplicate services.

Kentucky intends to do much of the work of RTT through contracts to hire both staff and expertise. It should be noted that approximately 25% of the total budget (approximately 70% of the SEA share) will be disbursed using contracts. It is unclear who will manage this effort to ensure the level of coordination across RTT. If these contracts build the capacity of the SEA and LEA to take over the on-going operations, the chances to sustain the efforts are increased. On the other hand, if the knowledge and expertise are not grown across the state, RTT will not have a lasting benefit.

The District Innovation fund will support some of the participating LEAs through a competitive grant process to advance the LEA program. This is a compelling idea that could add much to the program and the lessons learned in Kentucky and other states.

KY acknowledges that RTT is short-term funding and claims it has designed the program for sustainability over the long-term.

(ii) Kentucky has a long history of state level collaboration on education reform. The state established an advisory committee to prepare and comment on the RTT application and intends to continue its work within separate activities over the course of the grant. The committee met to assist in the development of the phase 2 application as well.

The support letters represent the key actors at the state level. While most of them are dated January, it is important to note that the letter from the Kentucky Education Association has a May date.

The state also intends to fund a public engagement program (\$1+M) to help with public understanding of the RTT reform plans.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	20	23
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	15	18

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

(i) Kentucky has made progress in the four education reform areas through mandating the revision of its standards in 2009, helping teachers understand assessment practices, redesigning preparation programs,

and improving its work with low-performing schools. KY's application states that it has targeted its ARRA funds as well as Title 1 school improvement funds to support education reform activities.

(ii) Given the distance Kentucky students needed to travel to perform at acceptable levels, the progress has been mixed since 2003 - positive in some areas, slow and steady in others, and declines in a few areas. The reforms KY has enacted over the last twenty years have all contributed to the increases in achievement, high school graduation, and college entry. While the state has not identified any one strategy, it does assert that the cohesion and comprehensiveness of its reforms as well as the improvement in teacher and principal quality account for the increases. KY, however, does not attempt to account for the declines in achievement.

The assessment system has changed enough so that comparisons are difficult to judge. The NAEP data present a fairly consistent rise across most grades and subjects with some achievement gaps closing to a degree while others open. For example, from 2003 - 2007 NAEP fourth grade reading increased by 3% while eighth grade reading declined by 6 percentage points.

The high school graduation rate is presented in the application varies from a low of 72% to a high of 80% based on the calculation methodology.

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

The state provided additional information on how the use of coaches in reading and mathematics as well as Rtl strategies accounts for achievement improvements.

Total	125	107	110	
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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) Kentucky participated in the Common Core of Standards project with 51 states and territories.
- (ii) Because KY was mandated by state legislation to develop new standards with passage of their Senate Bill #1, they adopted the Common Core document in February 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)

(i) and (ii) KY is participating in three consortium efforts:

SMARTER: Summative Multi-state Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers with 33 members to focus on formative, interim, and summative assessments of the Common Core of Standards.

PARCC: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career with 26 states for end of high school assessments.

Board Exam for High Schools with eight states and the National Center for Education and the Economy to pilot high school instructional systems including coursework and exams.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	17	17
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Kentucky's plan focuses on the implementation of standards and assessments that cover pre-school through college (P-20). Because of that span, the SEA shares responsibility with the Council on Postsecondary Education. Key implementation partners include stakeholder groups, e.g. the school board association, the state teacher association, and the state student council groups. The plan included in the RTT application has a logical flow from awareness to understanding to implementation with much of the activity at the regional network level.

For example, KY is spending the early months of the plan building awareness and support among policymakers, educators, and the public. KY is supporting citizen's groups, i.e. the Pritchard Committee, to prepare cadres of teachers and parents to assist in communicating and engaging the public on the effort. This is an important first step. Moving the standards and assessments into the classroom has a number of steps including deconstructing the standards which will have SEA and content experts preparing regional cadres of teacher leaders to undertake this work and making information and resources available in many formats which is necessary given the geographic spread of the state.

The key area, of course, is building the instructional resources necessary to use the standards to improve teaching and learning. The state intends to use its technology system as the key implementation tool. While this may be the most cost-effective method, it might not provide the kind of intense conversations the state facilitated early in the process to build awareness. The roll-out is to be completed by August 2010 which seems to be a short timeline. In addition, given the nature of the revised standards - fewer and higher - the state does not discuss any potential problems it might have at the local level convincing parents and teachers to embrace the new standards.

KY has established a professional learning team structure which is already functioning, albeit not as well as the SEA believes it should, which appears to be taking the lead for this work. Given the statement on the need to make this approach fully operational across the state, KY did not provide specific strategies on how to make these teams more effective.

Given the state's plan to create an integrated system of classroom assessments, interim benchmark assessments, and annual assessment, it may require more effort in building assessment literacy than the state has planned.

Total	70	67	67
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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)

KY states that is has completed all 12 of the America Competes elements.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	4	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Utilizing funding from other sources in the Department of Education, the state has completed the infrastructure for the statewide data system. KY has a high quality plan, now partially implemented, to ensure that data are not only accessible but also used to inform key decisions. Of particular interest is the data currently available to middle and high school students to track their progress toward career and college.

The data system supports KY educators and stakeholders to improve all aspects of the system. The state has also made the data available to the State Legislature and trained legislative staff on how to use the system.

KY has set usage performance measures that vary across sub-groups and indicates that the expectations for district administrators are lower than for other groups, i.e. only 40% of district administrators will use the system based on audits and reports compared to 60% of state legislators and 95% of parents. It is unclear why the expectations for district administrators is so low.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	15	15
(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	5	5

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

(i) KY intends to build an integrated Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) to link instructional resources, longitudinal data, curriculum resources, assessment resources, professional development resources, as well as school and district improvement resources. The process of building the system has begun. KY intends to use it as part of the Common Core of Standards roll-out with full implementation by 2012. While the content is being developed by the content leadership teams, the integration into CIITS may require additional steps before users trust the content and find it applicable to their situations. It is unclear if this system will be able to meet all the information resource goals the state has set.

(ii) KY is tasking their system of regional centers with developing a cadre of 400 master trainers to provide the necessary professional development to schools, school councils, and districts. The state provides a roll out plan through the regional centers to train principals and master teachers who are the trainers of the 400 master trainers. Given that CIITS will be the center of KY's reform strategy, the training will need to have a strong on-going support model with both technical help and explanations of the content. This is not a one time training cycle but an on-going system that may need to have a 24/7 support system. It was not clear in the application if KY has prepared for the depth of need that might exist at the local level for in depth training on CIITS as well as the hardware and software support across the state.

(iii) The data will be made available to researchers. The state will also add a component to support researchers to conduct studies to help the state improve teaching and learning. FERPA protections were not addressed.

Total	47	43	43
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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	7	7
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	4	4

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

(i) State law allows for alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals (administrators) and has just added Teach for America to the seven alternative routes. The statute included in the application indicates that the Education Professional Standards Board sets the administrative regulations for the alternative programs and assists local boards in implementing these options. The alternative certification options include at least 4 of the 5 elements in the RTT definition. It was not clear if the state has a formal approval process for each alternative certification program.

(ii) Given the data presented in the application, it appears as if the most widely used alternative route for teachers is a University based program that provides post graduate work while the teacher is employed in a school, the second most used program is a District training program. Principals seem to use the University based program exclusively.

(iii) KY has a formula and process for local districts to report teacher and principal shortages to the state. The formula described in the application only mentions teachers. There is no discussion on how the report is compiled, disseminated, or used.

The state does articulate a plan to expand opportunities for alternative certification through publicizing the different routes, developing partnerships with Teach for America, developing a cadre of turn-around specialists through alternative routes, and increasing the visibility of alternative routes.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	40	40
(i) Measuring student growth	5	3	3
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	9	9
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21	21

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

(i) By 2013-2014, KY will measure student growth using three measures: a value added analysis of student growth on the state accountability system; beginning and end of course assessments for areas not covered by the accountability system; and presentation of evidence of student growth by teachers using pre-post tests, portfolios, and aligned local and state assessments. The application did not include a breakdown of how these three measures might be weighted in the final student growth calibration. The emphasis placed on each element will determine the rigor of the measure. The value added analysis of student growth on the accountability assessment could be the only comparable measure across schools and districts.

(ii) KY has articulated a plan to complete the design, field testing, and implementation of the evaluation system by 2014-2015. The system for teachers and principals will include student growth as a significant factor, evidence that teachers and principals have used information about student growth for instructional purposes, multiple observations of practice for teachers, 360 feedback for principals, and progress toward professional development goals. Annual student growth will be a significant factor in educator's ratings. The state intends to contract out this work to ensure its reliability. It is difficult to determine the extent of teachers and principals actual involvement in this process.

Additionally, the inclusion of the other elements may make the system fairer but also impact the rigor. It is important to know the relative weight of each element or, at the very least, the process the state will engage in to set those weights.

(iii) KY has set an annual evaluation system with student growth factored in every year for teachers and principals. They have, however, mandated annual observations for non-tenured teachers and observations every three years for tenured teachers. KY does not articulate when an annual observation of tenured teachers might be triggered if there are issues or questions with the other aspects of the evaluation. Principals have a full rating annually - there is no tenure for principals.

(iv) KY intends to use these evaluations to inform key decisions about teachers and principals. The state has articulated a full range of professional development opportunities and processes and a plan to field test compensation reform in a small number of districts using RTT funds and/or a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. Of particular interest is KY's requirement on districts to grant tenure using the evaluation findings. This will be monitored by the State which has included in their application language indicating the districts could lose their funding if the evaluation system is not used. In the area of removing ineffective teachers, KY's application uses positive language regarding retaining only those teachers that meet the evaluation standards but does not offer any plans for removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	14	14
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	8	8
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	6	6

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

(i) and (ii) KY will begin the process of ensuring the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals by requiring LEAs to annually report aggregate data on the effectiveness of educators serving the highest need students. The report will include the aggregate effectiveness data broken out by the four levels of effectiveness for both teachers and principals. Hard to staff subjects will also be included. These reports will be available as part of the roll out of the evaluation system in 2014. In addition to annually collecting data, the state will undertake a number of projects, such as:

Fund LEAs to test innovative recruiting and retention strategies that are research based and locally developed in areas such as improving working conditions; couple incentives with strategies such as instructional tools, curricula, and staff development; as well as meaningful incentives. The state will also fund LEAs to develop innovative approaches in hard to staff subjects.

Expand traditional and alternative pathways, e.g. Teach for America.

Build capacity at local level by training LEA staff in better hiring practices.

Surveying working conditions.

Supporting data driven decision making.

While it is important to involve the districts and schools where the shortages exist and hiring decisions are made, the state also has a role in ensuring equitable distribution through aggressive state policies and state wide recruitment activities that seem limited in the application. Given the data point in the performance measures of 5% effective teachers in high poverty high minority schools, the state will need to be more proactive.

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

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

(i) KY intends to use student achievement and student growth data from the teacher and principal evaluation system to develop effectiveness indices for the 30 teacher and 10 principal preparation programs in the state by 2013. These data will be publicly reported in an annual report card. This is an effective approach and will lead to improvements in the credentialing programs.

(ii) KY has a market approach plan to support program improvement. It will also strengthen state accreditation regulations to revoke programs with continued deficiencies. The state has articulated an aggressive approach to expand effective programs by establishing partnerships with the effective programs. The combination of sanctions and incentives is an effective approach to produce effective teachers and principals.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	14	14
(i) Providing effective support	10	7	7
(ii) Continuously improving the effectiveness of the support	10	7	7

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

(i) KY intends to implement a more systematized, cohesive approach to professional development as opposed to the current LEA and school driven model. Using the CIITS and the implementation of the Common Core Standards and Assessments, KY will create Seven Content Area Networks and an Administrator Leadership Network in each of the nine regions. In addition, each LEA will create a district leadership team and school-based professional development teams to form the core for professional development and coaching.

In order to provide common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals, KY will need to revise its statute governing professional development. KY will work with its legislature in 2011 to modify the law to require that professional development be embedded within a teacher's workday rather than tied to the number of hours. The application does not speak to principals' professional development.

This move to a web based professional development system supported by a regional center and specific content centers appears to be a sea change for KY. It is unclear if the state has laid the groundwork for this change with districts and schools. Nor is there any indication that the yet to be developed CIITS will be able to handle the weight of the effort.

For the critical data training, KY will use 400 Master trainers to support districts and schools. (Note: this was commented on in previous section)

Other initiatives include teacher residency for new teachers.

(ii) KY intends to contract with a third party evaluator to formally evaluate the professional development system. The state did not provide any indication of the timeline for this evaluation and whether or not there would be any mid-term reports or formal opportunities to assess its effectiveness prior to the end of the study. A few mid-course corrections could be necessary given the scope of the change and the importance of on-going support to teachers and principals.

Total	138	99	99
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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)

KY has the legal authority to intervene in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools. As for districts, the state has the authority but must first conduct an administrative hearing.

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

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

(i) KY has an approved definition that will be used from 2010-12 at which time the definition will be expanded to include all schools that fail to meet the state's accountability measures. The state has proposed an aggressive identification process.

(ii) Kentucky articulates an aggressive plan for turning around its lowest performing schools using the four school intervention models with extensive supports. Prior to intervening, KY conducts a leadership audit to determine the capacity at the school and district level to assess who is best to lead the intervention and which of the four turnaround options would be most effective. If the district is unable to intervene, the state takes over the school. The state also has the authority to take over an LEA.

Based on its experience with a variety of turnaround strategies, Kentucky is implementing a new turnaround support - Educational Recovery Schools - that will be supported by a team for educational recovery services. To oversee this effort and maximize resources, 3 SEA units have been combined to better focus Federal programs (Title 1), Leadership and School Improvement, and the Office of Teaching and Learning (content specialists). The state team will be led by an Educational Recovery Project manager (new position).

Direct services will be provided by the yet to be created and funded nine Centers of Learning Excellence. Three will be established in Year 1 of RTT, with six more added in year 3 at a cost of \$500,000 per year per Center. These centers will be selected on a competitive basis, eligible organizations include regional service agencies, school support organizations, or an educational management organization.

These Centers will provide extensive consulting services to these failing schools. The one concern with this new structure is how it will coordinate and collaborate with the other Centers and support activities proposed in the application. In addition, the list of potential services have probably been provided to these consistently failing schools on numerous occasions by many providers. Given the needs of these failing schools and the ambitious goals set out in the application, a more focused plan was expected.

Total	50	45	45
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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	4	4
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	3	3

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

- (i) Education funding in the state increased by \$15M or 3% from 2008 to 2009.
- (ii) State policies for equitable funding are set at the district level. The formula sets a basic per pupil amount which is then adjusted based on at-risk population, exceptional students, home-schooled or hospitalized students, and limited English proficient students. At the school level, funds are distributed on a per-pupil basis. The state provides three examples as evidence of the higher per pupil expenditures based on at-risk status but it does not address the issue at the school level.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	8	8
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	0	0
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	0	0
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	0	0
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	0	0
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8

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

- (i) State law focuses on providing independence and autonomy to all schools through school based decision making . Therefore, according to KY, state law allows all charters and that there are no prohibitions such as caps . It should be noted that the law is silent on charters per se because no distinction is made between charter schools and regular schools . While KY has no prohibitions on charters in statute, the fact that there are none is evidence of some form of unspoken prohibition. The state argues that given their rural nature the interest in charters is low, it does not address the possible interest in its urban areas, such as Louisville.
- (ii) The school based decision making allows schools to be closed when academic or managerial deficiencies are present. The state statute included in the appendix is not as definitive as the text might imply. There do not appear to be specific processes and procedures to be followed. No evidence is provided on the number of charters that exist in KY and if their funding status has ever changed.
- (iii) KY states that their funding allocation process is equitable. However, with no charter schools operating in the state (as well as no specific charter school statute) there is no evidence to support that claim.
- (iv) KY states that charters have equal access to funding for facilities. As previously stated, there is no charter school statute, no evidence of any existing charter schools, there is no evidence of facilities funding or access to facilities for charter schools.
- iv) KY clearly allows LEAs to operate autonomous schools. There are school choice programs, primarily in Louisville, with magnet schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

KY has a number of other significant reform conditions that have contributed to increased achievement from pre-school programs to extended day programs to partnerships with foundations and other reform

organizations. The state does not provide specific examples linking these strategies to achievement. As noted in previous sections of the application, KY believes it is not a single reform strategy that has improved achievement but the cumulative effect of all its past efforts.

Total	55	20	20
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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)

KY has included STEM activities in all the relevant sections of the application with an emphasis on recruiting and rewarding STEM content teachers. The state plan to focus on STEM areas in the alternative teacher certification programs should increase the quantity and quality at the local level. Given the geography of KY and some of its isolated areas, the state will also use distance learning to increase STEM content for students. The plan addresses the need for all students to be more involved in STEM activities as well as a Partnership in high need school districts. The plan provides specifically for underrepresented groups, including women and girls.

This is an impressive plan as well as supported by extensive resources.

Total	15	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

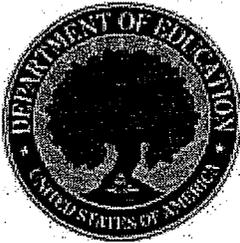
Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

KY's application meets this priority. It has provided a comprehensive approach to improving achievement in the state through the full participation of its LEAs.

KY's plan builds on its long history of reform and uses the lessons it has learned to propose new strategies and activities to meet the increased challenges of RTT.

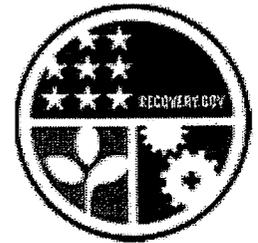
Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	396	399
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Kentucky Application #2850KY-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	59	59	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	42	42	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

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

(A)(1)(i) Kentucky earned the maximum five points for articulating a reform agenda. Reasons for that high score are:

- The agenda, text and charts defined comprehensive and coherent reform elements in all four educational areas described in the ARRA and timelines for accomplishing them
- Kentucky laid out a plan for improving student outcomes statewide with a clearly defined timeline. The plan establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application. The plan connected past improvement efforts and successes to future efforts.
- The plan made important connections to the fact that 70% of its student live in rural settings.

(A)(1)(ii) Kentucky earned high points for commitment to the State's plan. Reasons for that high score are:

- All 174 LEAs in Kentucky have signed binding agreements with the state to implement the Race to the Top plans.
- The LEAs signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) suggested in the guidance.
- While the Kentucky scope of work does not define all the details in Section D Great Teachers and Leaders found in the model scope of work, the charts for (A)(1)(ii) indicated 100 percent participation for the requirements of "improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. Full points were not given because the performance-based language was not present in the scope of work and thus it is not part of the official understanding between the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE) and the LEAs.
- All LEAs had the maximum number of signatures including teacher organizations where they existed. The state teacher's organizations and other education organizations had letters of support.

(A)(1)(iii) Kentucky earned high possible points for a high quality plan that will result in broad state-wide impact through fulfillment of ambitious yet achievable goals overall and by student subgroups. Reasons for the high score are:

- All LEAs are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans and therefore incorporate all public school students in Kentucky.
- Kentucky expects to increase the percent of students reaching proficiency by nine to ten percent in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required

under the ESEA. Kentucky is starting from a low base and by the end of the grant in 2014 fewer than half of the students will be at the proficient level if the goals are reached. Full points were not earned because of low targets.

- Kentucky would decrease achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics approximately two percent per year, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA. Kentucky has serious achievement gaps and full points were not earned because of low targets.
- More positive, Kentucky would increase high school graduation rates to 70% by 2014, increasing from today's rate of 55 percent.
- Also positive, seventy five percent of college-goers will successfully complete one year of postsecondary education, increasing from today's rate of 71 Percent. College remediation rates in the first year of college will fall by 75% from today's rate.

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

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

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

(A)(2)(i) Kentucky earned high points for ensuring that it has the capacity to implement the proposed plan. Reasons for that high score are:

- Kentucky has taken positive steps to ensure that it has the capacity required to implement its proposed plans through reorganizing the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and reorienting the philosophy and functions of what KDE should do. Using the expectations emerging from RTTT and Kentucky Senate Bill I is implementing six steps to build strong state wide capacity.
- Some of those positive steps include reorienting the interactions between the state and LEAs; building on a regional system; redesigning the SDE, benchmarking SEA processes and best practices; establishing a new program management office and more effectively encouraging, fostering and sharing successful innovations. Some specifics aligned with the RTTT proposal are:

(a) The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has already established five cross-functional process teams that correspond to Race To The Top (RTTT) expectations. They are Standards, Assessments, Information and Knowledge, Educator Effectiveness, and Effectives Schools and Districts. KDE expects that these teams will work across traditional silos "to form complete solutions to critical topics and are heavily engaging organizations and experts outside of the Department, including key state partners such as postsecondary institutions."

(b) Kentucky will support participating LEAs in successfully implementing the education reform plans through its own leadership and working with many regional partners, Jefferson School district and higher education partners. This collaborative whole will work on activities such as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary.

(c) Kentucky will provide effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement. It has and will use laws and procedures already in place to ensure LEA progress and performance. It is prepared to temporarily assume control of low-performing districts and increasing levels of monitoring of districts with performance challenges through the agency's Partnership Assistance Team program.

(d) Kentucky intends to use other funds to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top Program. Kentucky gives as examples using existing federal and state funding for testing to develop new assessments: "the longitudinal data system will use federal grants already secured, changes in the evaluation system for teachers will build on work already underway that has been funded by the Wallace Foundation; and the teacher preparation reports will implement designs already developed."

With the exception of the RTTT project director, most of the additional KDE staff focused on RTTT will be regionally based. The budgets for the RTTT director (Project 7) and the regional people (Project 1) appeared appropriate both in implementation design and cost allocations.

(e) Kentucky intends to use RTTT funds to pursue initial work over the next four years on critical parts that are designed for longer-term sustainability of those components that prove successful. This component was not as detailed as were other elements and full points were not awarded here.

(A)(2)(ii) Kentucky earned maximum points. The reasons for the high score were numerous support statements from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the statements of support.

- Organizations representing Kentucky's teachers and principals indicated universal and complete support for the RTTT proposal.
- Other critical stakeholders were universally and totally supportive of the proposal. The many letters from higher education entities were especially notable for the number received and for the degree of their commitment.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	19	19	
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5	
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	14	14	

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

(A)(3)(i) Kentucky earned maximum points for making progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms. Reasons for the high score are the examples of progress in each of the four areas:

Standards and Assessments

Kentucky was one of the first states in the country to adopt standards and assessments for accountability. It created assessments that were focused on understanding and mastery and used constructed response items and writing portfolios to measure learning at levels that multiple choice tests could not. Kentucky claimed that it would be the first state to adopt the new Common Core standards. During 2009, a total of 852 Kentucky educators participated in seminars focused on classroom assessment.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Kentucky has made significant progress in expanding its data systems. It has worked on the creation of a comprehensive Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) since 2006. This work has been in large part supported by two federal grants.

Great Teachers and Leaders

In recent years, Kentucky has "sun-setted the accreditation of all programs and required them to adopt model practices shown to lead to increased student achievement." The Department of Education and several districts have partnered with the Wallace Foundation on several initiatives focused on improving teaching effectiveness and school leadership. Other important efforts have been the Kentucky Leadership

Academy, School Administration Manager program, Kentucky Instructional Leadership Team Network, Coaching Initiative and Instructional Practices Assessment.

Turnaround of Lowest-Achieving Schools

As a result of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, Kentucky launched the Distinguished Educator program, preparing the most effective educators statewide to serve as supports to schools in need of improvement. More recently, the Commonwealth has instituted Assist and Support School Improvement Success Teams (ASSIST) program, the Highly Skilled Educator program.

(A)(3)(ii) Kentucky earned points in the middle range on issues associated with improving student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explaining the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to those results. Reasons for middle points include:

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

Kentucky started at very low levels of proficient or above on NAEP but it has had significant growth in the percentage of students scoring at Proficient or above. On NAEP, percent proficient went from 13% in 1992 to 37% in 2009 for fourth graders and from 10% in 1990 to 27% in 2009 for eighth graders. Kentucky indicated that similar progress was evident on state tests.

Kentucky has similarly demonstrated progress on Reading and English / Language Arts. On NAEP, percent proficient increased from 23% in 1992 to 33% in 2007 for fourth graders but showed a slightly decreased from 29% in 1990 to 28% in 2009 for eighth graders. Two points were not added to the score because eighth grade scores did not show an improvement.

(b) Kentucky showed major increases in achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA. Achievement gaps increased by 12 to 14 percent for black subgroups and low socio-economic as compared to majority populations on NAPE tests between 1992,1996 and 2009. Some gender gaps were decreased. Significant points were not added to the score because of the increase in achievement gaps.

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

Kentucky received a waiver because it does not have data with the required quality standards now expected of states. "Leaver" data indicates that high school graduation rates are improving but those numbers do not have the quality necessary for making clear judgments. Points were not added to the score because of the data quality.

Total	125	106	106	
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B. Standards and Assessments

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

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

(B)(1) (i) Kentucky earned maximum points. The reason for the high score is because it has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards by being an active member of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS) jointly led by the Council of Chief State School Officers

(CCSSO) and the National Governors Association in partnership with Achieve, Inc., ACT, and the College Board. Forty-eight states are participants in this effort.

(B)(1)(ii) Kentucky earned maximum points. The reason for the high score is because on February 1st, 2010 the Kentucky Board of Education adopted the Common Core standards for Math and English/Language Arts and in May 2010, the Department established the Core Oversight team. Beginning in July 2010, Kentucky will create, identify, and disseminate appropriate professional learning resources to support adopted standards

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

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

(B)(2)(i) Kentucky earned maximum points for demonstrating its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments. The reason for this high score is it joined three consortia that are developing high-quality assessments and two include a significant number of state.. By Fall 2010, Kentucky will begin roll-out of benchmark assessment systems in Math and English/Language Arts (developed as part of the State Consortium.) By January 2012, the state will roll out a complete Common Core assessment system, including end of course assessments, for Math and English/Language Arts.

Those three consortia Kentucky has joined are:

Consortium 1: Summative Multi-state Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER BALANCE) As of May 12, 2010, thirty-three states have joined together in the Smarter Balance Consortium to apply for the Race to the Top Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

Consortium 2: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC)

The number of participating states in PARCC is up to twenty-six states.

Consortium 3: Board Exam for High Schools

Eight states have joined the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) to pilot instructional systems at the high school level. The Kentucky RTTT application had MOUs, descriptions of the proposed work and list of member states in the appendices of its application.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	20	20	
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

KDE will work in collaboration with its participating LEAs to implement internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments tied to those standards. Kentucky earned maximum points for the quality of its assessment plan. The reasons for that high score are the comprehensiveness, quality and detail of the plan. The budget for this activity is both appropriate fiscally and linked to the activities.

The plan has six activities. In the proposal, each of the activities had detailed sub-activities, general timelines and the major players in each sub-activity that are detailed either in the text descriptions or in appendices.

Activity 1: Adopting and disseminating the Math and English/Language Arts standards

Activity 2: Aligning PreK-12 and post-secondary education around the new standards

Activity 3: Building networks to deconstruct the standards and create high-quality aligned instructional supports				
Activity 4: Ongoing professional learning around the new standards and assessments				
Activity 5: Implementing a balanced assessment system				
Activity 6: Increasing access to challenging courses				
Total	70	70	70	

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	24	24	
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1) (C)(1) Kentucky earned maximum points. The reason for the high score is that Kentucky has all twelve America Competes elements completed in its statewide longitudinal data system.				
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	5	5	
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1) (C)(2) Kentucky earned maximum points for accessing and using student data. This high score was given because a considerable portion of the necessary infrastructure and professional development is already underway. Attention is given to use by superintendents, curriculum specialists, principals, teachers and parents. The charts related to (C)(2) indicated extremely high expected use by the end of 2012. Researcher access will be available through the P-20 collaborative and other formal partnerships.				
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	18	18	
(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	
(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	6	6	
(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	6	6	
(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1) (C)(3)(i) Kentucky earned maximum points for its plan for increasing the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness. This high score was given because Kentucky has a high quality plan to provide all teachers, principals and district administrators an access system appropriate to their roles by Spring 2013. Kentucky intends to build a one-stop shop that has easy to use functions necessary for each role called the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS). CIITS would be piloted with mathematics and science materials in late 2011, refined in 2012 and largely completed by Spring 2013. CIITS would have tools and resources in Standards, Assessment, Instructional Resources, Professional Development Resources, School & District Improvement, and Educator Effectiveness & Evaluation. Budget was appropriate both fiscally and for its connection to the activities. (C)(3)(ii) Kentucky earned maximum points for the quality of its plan for supporting participating LEAs and schools that are using instructional improvement system in providing effective professional development to				

teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement. This high score was given because Kentucky has designed a regional support system that appears to have great potential. The budget was appropriate both fiscally and for its connection to the activities.

- It would “with the leadership of a Department CIITS Implementation Coordinator in each of Kentucky’s nine regional networks, develop an in-state cadre of 400+ statewide master trainers to provide professional development to schools, school councils, and districts.”
- To prepare new teachers and principals to use CIITS, CIITS training would be incorporated into Kentucky’s Teacher and Principal Internship Programs so that all new educators would be able to use the many resources in that system.

(C)(3)(iii) Kentucky earned maximum points for making the data from instructional improvement systems, together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers. They will have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students. This high score was given because Kentucky will allow researchers access to appropriate data through:

- Researcher access through the P-20 collaborative as regular partners and participants in CIITS. They would be both contributors and users for their daily work.
- Creation of special partnerships with researchers, such as the Partnership for Next Generation Learning, to evaluate identified programs, instructional materials and strategies that were of special need or appeared to be especially promising

Total	47	47	47	
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

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

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

(D)(1)(i) Kentucky earned high points because it has legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification for teachers particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education. Kentucky appears to have one option for alternative principal certification. It received high points because it has eight routes to teacher certification and all eight options are selective in certifying teacher candidates. It was not awarded one point because there appears to be only one alternative principal certification option. The eight alternative route options established by KRS 161.048 are:

- Option 1: Exceptional Work Experience Certification,
- Option 2: Local District Training Program,
- Option 3: College Faculty for people with extensive content knowledge
- Option 4: Adjunct Instructor working without full credentials
- Option 5: Veterans of the Armed Forces

Option 6: University-Based Alternative Route to Certification

Option 7: Institute Alternative Route to Certification

Option 8: Teach for America. Senate Bill 180 has recently been signed into law by Governor Steve Beshear as another option to allow teachers in content fields trained outside the colleges of education to teach in Kentucky schools.

Three options specifically allow for alternative route providers other than universities. All are selective in accepting candidates. All provide supervised, school based experiences and ongoing support through mentoring or coaching. Routes significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses. All routes upon completing a teacher internship award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

(D)(1)(ii) Kentucky earned high points because alternative routes to certification are heavily used. Kentucky reported that:

“During the 2009-2010 school year, 10% of Kentucky’s current teachers and 6% of Kentucky’s current principals had been certified through alternative routes. More than 90% of the current Kentucky teachers certified through alternative routes came through Option 6, 3% came through Option 2, and the remaining teachers were spread in small numbers across the other options. All of the current Kentucky principals certified through alternative routes came through Option 6. Option 6: University-Based Alternative Route to Certification provide certification through alternative university programs that enroll students in a post-baccalaureate teacher preparation program concurrently with employment as a teacher in a local school district.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 17% of Kentucky’s new teachers (with no previous experience) and less than 1% of new principals came through alternative routes. Of the 450 new teachers certified through alternative routes, 93% came through Option 6 programs, 4% came through Option 2 programs, and the others were spread across the other options. One new principal was certified through an alternative route and came through Option 6.”

(D)(1)(iii) Kentucky earned points in the high range because it has a process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and especially because it has several strong programs for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage. The high score was given because as required by 16 KAR 1:050, Kentucky’s current process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage is conducted through the Local Educator Assignment Data (LEAD) report. LEAD identifies (a) teaching positions that are unfilled; (b) teaching positions that are filled by teachers who are certified by irregular, provisional, temporary, or emergency certification; and (c) teaching positions that are filled by teachers who are certified but who are teaching in academic subject areas other than their area of preparation.

The Kentucky RTTT proposal indicated that there are four programs that prepare teachers and principals to fill “shortage” positions. They are:

- UTeach – a program that encourages math and science majors to enter the teaching profession by offering an integrated degree plan, financial assistance, and early teaching experiences for undergraduates, sponsored by the National Math and Science Initiative.
- Teach Kentucky – a program that recruits new teachers to Kentucky schools to primarily teach in critical shortage areas and requires a high score on the Praxis exams to be accepted.
- ACES program in Jefferson County – an 18-month district-based certification program in Jefferson County that requires teaching candidates to also commit to teach in Jefferson County Public Schools for three years.

- Teach For America – Teach For America is launching its program in the Commonwealth, working with districts to place teachers in critical shortage areas. By 2012, there will be 120 TFA teachers teaching in the Commonwealth each year.

Full points were not given because of insufficient discussion about the evaluations of the programs and sharing of best practices.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	51	49	
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5	
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	12	10	
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10	
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	24	24	

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

(D)(2)(i) Kentucky earned the maximum points for its plan to establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student. The budget was appropriate both fiscally and to its connection with the activities. It received a high score because it will use at least three student growth measures that include:

- “Valued-added analysis of student growth on statewide accountability assessments in reading and math, aligned with statewide standards.
- Growth as measured by beginning- and end-of-course assessments in subjects and grades not covered by the statewide accountability assessment.
- Presentation of evidence of student growth with respect to standards by every teacher, using instruments such as pre-post tests, portfolios and local and state-level assessments that have been aligned with standards.”

An additional reason for a high score was that Kentucky would ensure the accuracy of these assessments through additional statewide assessments and regular state reviews of program and assessment quality. Because it intends to use as many of the assessment materials developed nationally for RTTT, Kentucky expects that most of the assessments materials will have initial high quality.

Another positive reason for a high score was that Kentucky's plan has a fast timeline. Key milestones in Kentucky's timeline for measuring student growth include: In 2011-12, identify all students' starting level of performance, in 2012-13, begin to generate value-added analyses of student growth since the previous year based on our new assessment system; by 2013-2014, measure growth in achievement for each individual student.

(D)(2)(ii) Kentucky earned high points for designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals.

(a) Kentucky will implement and differentiate effectiveness using four multiple rating categories. One of the four rating categories would use data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as the evaluation criteria. Maximum points were not given because Kentucky does not indicate whether student data will be 25% of the evaluation, more than 25% or less than 25 percent. The proposal does not indicate whether the other three evaluation factors (teacher's use of data, principal and other expert observations and progress on professional growth plans) are more important. It is not clear whether those determinations will be made locally or statewide. For this reason three points were not added. The same concern is noted for principals where student growth is one of five evaluation factors. It is important to note that 360 degree feed back on instructional leadership is one of the factors in principal evaluation and Kentucky is to be commended for that inclusion. One possible explanation for this response maybe because Kentucky schools have unique powers to make their own decisions.

(b) Kentucky's system recognizes the importance of having teachers and principals as key participants in the design and implementation of evaluations. Effective Teachers Steering Committee and the Effective Principals Steering Committee will guide Kentucky's efforts in the use of student growth and value-added assessment data to drive improvements in educator effectiveness and to design and implement the teacher and principal evaluation system.

(D)(2)(iii) Kentucky earned maximum points because there will be annual evaluations of all teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback. Part of each evaluation for teachers and principals will be concerned with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools.

(D)(2)(iv) Kentucky earned points in the high range because it will use evaluations that consider student growth and data use, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding the following factors. Full points were not awarded because Kentucky did not indicate the percentage student growth would play in teacher and principal evaluations on the four factors noted below.

(a) Kentucky will use the new evaluation to developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development for both new teachers and experienced teachers. Analysis of evaluation results will be an important factor in determining professional development plans for all teacher and principals regardless of their experience.

(b) Kentucky will use the new evaluations, that include student growth and use of data, in compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals. It will use the evaluations to provide opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities. This effort will begin with pilot programs for additional compensation. Only teachers and principals considered highly effective will be eligible for additional responsibilities and promotions.

(c) Kentucky will use the new evaluation system that includes student growth and use of data in determining whether new teachers will be retained. Evaluations will be used to grant tenure after four years of highly effective evaluations to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

(d) Kentucky will use the new evaluation system to remove ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve. It will ensure that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures. Kentucky intends to "retain only those teachers who meet clearly defined standards of effectiveness (including evidence of student growth and the use of student growth data to improve practice)."

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

(D)(2)(ii) Points were reduced because the panel's responses implied less agreement on what percentage student growth will count in teacher and principal evaluations. The panel's responses also suggested that the decision may be more difficult and take longer to reach agreement than implied in the proposal.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	25	23	23	
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	13	13	
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	10	10	

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

(D)(3)(i) Kentucky earned points in the high range for its plan to ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in the notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals. Kentucky will ensure that high-poverty and high-minority schools

are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students. This high score also was given because Kentucky has a high-quality, four activities plan noted below.

Activity 1: Requiring and supporting equity-focused data reports from LEAs that include data on the effectiveness of all teachers and principals as determined by the new evaluation, achievement, high-minority and poverty levels of students.

Activity 2: Recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals in the classrooms and schools where they are needed most through use of financial and other incentives, instructional tools and changes in working conditions.

Activity 3: Increasing the supply of teachers and leaders for high-need classrooms and schools through use of special programs such as Teach For America.

Activity 4: Building capacity at the district and school level to ensure equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and principals through things such as strategic hiring practices and increased emphasis on reports that will require remediation of inequalities.

Kentucky's plan had a lot of positives because it clearly laid out expectations and provided programs and resources to help correct the problems. The reason it did not earn full points was because while its plan had expectations, the plan did not have KDE procedures and sanctions for districts that did not meet equitable distribution requirements.

(D)(3)(ii) Kentucky earned maximum points for its plan to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers (as defined in this notice) teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA); and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA. Kentucky received these high points because Kentucky intends to field test recruitment and retention strategies for those hard-to-staff subject areas through a variety of approaches that go beyond relying on new teachers from higher education. Three approaches seemed especially promising. They were:

- Innovative means of addressing the challenges of rural districts, such as the development of mobile expertise or use of technology.
- Incentives that could include: reimbursement for the cost of coursework or other training needed to achieve certification in a shortage area and a salary supplement for teachers who are fully state-certified.
- Teach For America (TFA): TFA will recruit, train, coach, and mentor new teachers to teach critical shortage subjects in schools in Eastern Kentucky, with 120 teachers serving per year by 2012.

In 2013, the Kentucky Department of Education will begin identifying and supporting the expansion of the more successful approaches statewide.

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

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

(D)(4)(i) Kentucky received the maximum 7 points for its plan to link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State. This high score was given because Kentucky Standards Board stands ready to redesign the Effective Educator Preparation Index (EEPI) as well as the Effective Principal Preparation Index (EPPi), "to create a single numerical indicator of program

quality and enable a publicly-released ranking of teacher and principal preparation programs according to the effectiveness of their graduates.”

One of the most significant considerations for the indices will be student achievement and student growth data from the new Kentucky Teacher and Principal Professional Growth and Evaluation System. The final result will be that the indices will provide a way to rank teacher preparation quality and to study factors that were contributors to success and failure of teacher preparation programs. Kentucky will also make available other factors than the EEPI and the EPPI to help determine teacher preparation programs quality. Examples are student’s scores on Praxis tests, retention rates of educators who complete the program, and the results of the New Teacher Survey to help determine program quality.

(D)(4)(ii) Kentucky earned the maximum points for its plan to expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals and terminating those that are unsuccessful. The budget was appropriate both fiscally and it ties to the activities. Kentucky received high points because it will use at least four strategies to make teacher preparation programs successful.

The four strategies are: (1) “Marketing” the successes and failures of the various programs, (2) Supporting financially and with publicity successful programs, (4) Sharing best practices and improvement strategies, and (4) Using regulatory procedures to terminate those that prove unsuccessful. The termination procedure is more than an empty threat as Kentucky has already terminated two teacher preparation programs.

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

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

(D)(5)(i) Kentucky earned maximum points for its plan for providing effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Kentucky received that high score because its plan was comprehensive and of high quality. It had defined milestones and timelines. The components were realistic and based on best practice. The budget for this activity was appropriate both fiscally and its connection to support activities. The Kentucky plan, for providing effective support to teachers and principals, has three major components. They are:

Activity 1: Revising the State’s approach to professional learning from each district doing its own disparate professional learning activities to state programs, delivered through regional to district to school networks. Professional learning would consist of those topics that have evidence of high impact on student learning. The heart of the Kentucky is focused on the state developing regional expertise, with the regional experts developing district expertise and the district developing school expertise. Special emphasis would be given to addressing the professional development considerations of the RTTT proposal including curriculum, instruction, assessment and addressing special populations needs.

Activity 2: Providing professional learning experiences for successful implementation of all new initiatives such as data-driven instruction, use of the Kentucky Statewide Longitudinal Data System (KSLDS), CIITS, the Kentucky Teacher and Principal Professional Growth and Evaluation System.

Activity 3: Creating a residency model that will explore the benefits of a two-year clinical residency/induction model for preparing new teachers for effective practice in the hard-to-staff subject and specialty areas and high-poverty / high-minority schools, by significantly increasing the amount of time the teacher candidate has in a real classroom under the supervision of a highly-effective teacher and professional learning schools that are partnerships of districts and higher education organizations.

(D)(5) (ii) Kentucky earned 10 maximum points for its plan to measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of the professional learning supports in order to improve student achievement (as defined

in this notice). Kentucky earned high points because it is using three strategies to evaluate the appropriateness and quality of the professional development. The plan is strong because the use of the three strategies allow for formative and summative evaluation, an independent point of view and the survey allows every participant to have a say. The strategies are:

- The CIITS provides a platform for constant and extensive reporting on the effectiveness of teaching, resources, assessments, professional learning, and technology for continuous improvement.
- The state will contract with a third-party evaluators to conduct ongoing formal evaluations that are more rigorous and structured.
- A bi-annual survey will provide an opportunity for individuals to indicate their impressions of how things are progressing, what concerns need to be addressed and what are factors that are so successful that wider use should be considered.

Total	138	126	124	
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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) Kentucky earned the maximum ten points because the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly BOTH in the state's persistently lowest achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status. Evidence for the high score may be found in the following citations.

The Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 160.346 enables the Kentucky Department of Education to intervene in persistently low-achieving schools. KRS 160.346 defines a persistently low-achieving school and enables the State to intervene and expeditiously implement one of four intervention options. It is accompanied by the Kentucky Administrative Regulation 703 KAR 5:180. In addition, KRS 158.780 and KRS 158.785 enable the Department to intervene in LEAs. Copies of the laws and regulations were attached to the RTTT proposal.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	32	30	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	27	25	

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

(E)(2)(i) Kentucky earned points in the high range because it has a clear procedure for identify persistently -low achieving schools. The budget appeared to be appropriate both fiscally and in its connection to activities. From 2010 through 2012, Kentucky will use the federal definition of persistently lowest-achieving to identify turn-around schools. The federal definition is schools whose student scores have ranked in the bottom 5% in proficiency in Math and Reading/Language Arts combined for three consecutive years and any high schools that do not meet the above definition but have a graduation rate of less than 60 percent. After 2012, Kentucky will add all schools in the bottom 5% proficiency whether they are Title I or not.

In January, 2010, Kentucky identified the first ten schools that they have labeled "recovery" schools. The list included eight high schools and two middle schools. For unexplained reasons the list does not have any elementary schools.

(E)(2)(ii) Kentucky earned points in the high range for this section. The Kentucky RTTT proposal in all other sections has provided clear and well organized information. This is not the case for this section. Kentucky has mixed numerous programs and strategies for addressing concerns about schools at various levels of need. Kentucky has an elaborate procedure for school and district responses. It has a flow chart on who in the district or the school should determine the turnaround strategy depending on how well the school and district leadership function. (See CD PDF 9, Page 292) In doing so, Kentucky has not answered very well how the KDE will support its LEAs in turning around those schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model required in RTTT. KDE leadership actually seems to be focused on other recovery approaches that use three strategies noted in the proposal under the headings of District 180, Centers for Learning Excellence, and Educational Recovery Leaders and Specialists. Those programs would help low-achieving schools but the design seemed to address general concerns and were not specific to the four models. Kentucky earned points for strategies that districts and schools could use to make model selection decisions and for providing school improvement support. It did not earn points associated with state leadership in implementing the four models required in the RTTT program. The response may be because Kentucky schools have unique powers to make their own decisions.

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

Points were reduced because the panel's response did not clarify sufficiently the concerns about the State's role in turn-around schools that were not responding positively to intervention efforts by partners. The answer did not provide answers about when and what would be done about partnerships that were not working out.

Total	50	42	40	
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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)				
<p>(F)(1)(i) Kentucky earned maximum points because Kentucky increased the percentage (43.6% to 46.5%.) of the total revenues available to the State and the total amount (an increase of 15 million dollars) that were used to support elementary and secondary education, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008.</p> <p>(F)(1)(ii) Kentucky earned maximum points because the state's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools. In fact, Kentucky provides an additional 15% to LEAs with high percentage of poverty students with no differences in schools within LEAs.</p>				
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	8	8	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	0	0	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	0	0	

(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	0	0	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	0	0	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
<p>The State does not have a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in the notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;</p> <p>Kentucky proved difficult to score in regards to charter schools. If one uses the function definition of a charter school then Kentucky should earned maximum eight points because all schools in Kentucky have such great amounts of autonomy. If one uses a legal definition of charter school that requires a state to have a charter school law then Kentucky should not receive points. Though very different from charter school laws in other states, the autonomy given schools in Kentucky is very similar to the autonomy given charter school in other states. However guidance given to reviewers required that a state have a charter law before it can be given points. Kentucky does not have a charter school law and therefore gets 0 points.</p> <p>(F)(2) (ii) Kentucky does not have a charter school law and therefore gets 0 points.</p> <p>(F)(2) (iii) Kentucky does not have a charter school law and therefore gets 0 points.</p> <p>(F)(2)(iv) Kentucky does not have a charter school law and therefore gets 0 points.</p> <p>(F)(2)(v) Kentucky earned the maximum eight points because it enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools. In many ways every school in Kentucky meets the requirements of the subsection. This option is especially important for large districts where specialty schools and open enrollment options are possible.</p>				
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5	
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
<p>(F)(3) Kentucky earned maximum points because it has a long history and numerous examples of having created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.</p> <p>The Kentucky RTTT proposal provided the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 that included: new standards, across seven subject areas, and new assessments, School intervention authority, School-level control and innovation, School Based Decision Making, Transition to equitable Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK), • Partnership with Wallace Foundation to pilot key elements of reforms to increase teacher and principal effectiveness • Universal administration of the ACT. <p>All three examples have created conditions favorable to education reform and the 1990 legislation was exemplary and a national model. Many of the components were precursors for similar concerns in RTTT. The Wallace Foundation work addressed the importance of having great teachers and leaders even before RTTT. The universal administration of ACT was important because some students, who would not have taken the test otherwise, found that they were capable of higher education pursuits.</p>				
Total	55	23	23	

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)				
<p>Kentucky met the conditions required to earn the 15 points associated with emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Throughout the proposal, in several STEM related appendices and in the special section devoted to the STEM priorities, Kentucky gave extensive documentation of what it is doing in this area. STEM-related programs of special note were AdvanceKentucky, Project Lead the Way, UTech, Mathematics and Science Partnership, Partnership Institute for Mathematics and Science Reform. Also significant were the numerous opportunities that will be made at the various science centers. This reviewer would have liked more attention given to women and minority populations. References to girls were found only in AdvanceKentucky and the Girl's STEM collaborative. However, Kentucky's frequent use of "all students" to included women and minority populations is accepted with some concern.</p>				
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)				
<p>The Kentucky Proposal meets all the conditions of the "Absolute Priority." The application comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. Kentucky had 100% LEA participation and therefore demonstrated in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans. It described how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The proposal was clearly written and had all the required and optional charts completed. The budgets were very well done, realistic and connected directly to RTTT efforts. The most serious concern was that the appendices were not marked with identifiers or page numbers and thus were very difficult to find and use.</p>				
Total		0	0	

Grand Total	500	429	425	
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Kentucky Application #2850KY-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	64	65	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	4	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	45	45	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	15	15	

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

(A)(1)(i) Kentucky has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in all of the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide. This commitment is made evident in the fact that it has a 20 year educational reform history which started with the state's Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA) legislation. The RTTT plan specifically addresses the adoption of new standards and balanced assessment; the development of a data collection system; professional development for teachers and principals, and turning around failing schools. A timeline is provided in the narrative showing the action steps that need to be implemented. One weakness that was noted was the lack of detail supplied relating to "fair distribution" of effective teachers and principals. Except for this one item the state establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the Commonwealth has proposed throughout its application. The plan is awarded high points for this section.

(A)(1)(ii) Kentucky was highly successful in securing LEA commitment. Kentucky has secured all 174 LEA's signatures. The participating LEAs are strongly committed to the Commonwealth's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). The terms and conditions of the MOU reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs. The MOU clearly defines the Scope-of-work that is required of participating LEAs. All 174 LEA superintendents, presidents of the local school board, and local union representatives, where appropriate, signed the MOUs. The Commonwealth earned high points.

(A)(1)(iii) Kentucky has secured the 100% cooperation from all of the commonwealth's LEAs for all parts of the plan. This means that 100% of Kentucky's students will be impacted by RTTT; this translates into broad statewide impact. Kentucky has set ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup. The commonwealth proposes to increase the number of students who meet ACT benchmarks in English, reading, and mathematics from current rates of 46%, 33% and 20% to 50% for all three by 2014 and 70% by 2020. Similarly, ambitious achievable goals are set for the use of NAEP data. Kentucky's plan for decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP data, ACT and ESEA assessments, is also ambitious and achievable. The commonwealth proposes to decrease current gaps for economically disadvantaged groups from 20-30% to 20 %; 15%-20% by 2014 and 10% by 2020. The achievement gap between African Americans and white peers are to be reduced from rates of 18-25% to 12-17% by 2014 and 8% by 2020. Kentucky plans to increase the high school graduation rate across the state to 85 % by 2020 with an interim rate of 80% by 2014. Kentucky's goals for successful transition to post secondary environment is equally ambitious and achievable including that 80% of high school graduates enrolling in college, and that 85% of them will successfully complete the first year. There is also a plan to reduce the remediation rate at colleges. Detailed summary data is provided in appendix F. Kentucky earned high points on this section.

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

Kentucky clarified their process, in particular giving more detail about the "fair distribution" of teachers through the use of cohorts and marketing strategies.

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

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

(A)(2)(i) Kentucky has the capacity to implement their ambitious RTTT plan. Kentucky's department of education is the primary provider of leadership teams dedicated to implementing the program statewide. As a part of this process, the state has redesigned the state department into five cross functional teams that are designed to provide two-way communication with LEAs to solve problems of practice and policy. This design is supplemented through the inclusion of multiple stakeholders and advisory councils. Kentucky plans to rely on regional networks, already in place, to serve as an active network of practitioners. These networks are to be used to share promising practices and coordinate evaluations of practices and supporting participating LEAs. The MOU holds LEAs accountable for progress and performance with intervention applied when necessary. The State has a team in place and processes aligned to administer RTTT. Kentucky indicates that it has a well established system in place for allocating and overseeing grants to LEAs. This should ensure effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement. Kentucky indicates that due to the rural nature of Kentucky that the DOE is taking on a significant portion of the work to design and develop tools to facilitate LEAs implementation of RTTT. The budget narrative indicates that Kentucky is coordinating education funds from other sources including Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals. The Commonwealth notes that they have had educational reform as a driving goal for 20 years. Kentucky notes that while RTTT funding will enhance their efforts, the Commonwealth has the capacity to implement these reforms without the grant (though progress will be slowed) and to continue the priorities after the grant funds have ended. Kentucky was awarded high points for this section.

(a)(2)(ii)

The state has support from a broad group of stakeholders. Every LEA signed the MOU. This included all teachers' union representatives. Additionally, the commonwealth reached out to all stakeholders in designing the RTTT plan by seeking input from the Superintendents Advisory Council, Teacher Advisory Council and Parent Advisory Council and through a statewide survey of stakeholders. Kentucky has received letters of support from other stakeholders such as: local businesses, The United Way, universities and colleges, The Kentucky PTA, and the Kentucky Education Association. The Kentucky Department of Education collaborated with Kentucky legislatures to pass house Bill 176 to improve student learning across the Commonwealth. Kentucky also solicited support from stakeholders throughout the state where 15 out of 22 strategies received strong support from respondents. These data were combined with comments from teacher and parent advisory groups to foster "buy-in" for RTTT. All points were awarded for this segment.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	24	30
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	5	5
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	19	25

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

(A)(3)(i)

Kentucky has made commendable progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas. Kentucky has used ARRA, Title II, Institute Of Educational Sciences, Title I School Improvement funds, and other state funds to fund their reform initiatives. Kentucky has continued to improve their standards and assessments over the past several years. Of particular note is Senate Bill 1 that mandates criteria for education standards that mirror federal criteria. The Commonwealth is also in the process of adopting the Common Core standards. The Commonwealth has pursued the creation of a Statewide Longitudinal Data System in which three state agencies are able to share data. Kentucky's Standards Board has redesigned all principal and teacher Master's programs. Additionally the DOE has partnered with the Wallace Foundation to improve teaching and leadership effectiveness. Kentucky has been intervening in low-performing schools since KERA (1990). The Commonwealth has implemented an aggressive intervention model (ASSIST) which provides additional staff to provide leadership to these low-performing schools. The Commonwealth earned high points for this section.

(A)(3)(ii)

Kentucky has been successful in increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA. Specifically, in mathematics NAEP data show an increase from 1992 to 2009 of 24% for fourth graders and 17% for eighth graders. This is a significant increase. ESEA data is a little less straightforward, as the assessment was changed in 2007. However, across all grades there was a 28% increase from 2003 to 2009. There was an 8% increase on the same testing regime between 2007 and 2009. NAEP reading data were less impressive. Between 1992 and 2009, there was only a 10% increase for fourth graders and a decrease of 1% for eighth graders. From 2003-2007, data showed an increase of 3% for fourth graders, but a 6% decrease for eighth graders. ESEA data showed only a 1% increase from 2007-2009. Kentucky suggests that it is not possible to attribute successes to any one change, but rather success that has been achieved is due to the comprehensive plan.

While Kentucky has had success in increasing the achievement rate across general populations, the data suggest that there has been less success in closing the gaps among sub-groups. While all groups, especially in mathematics, achieved at higher rates, there were mixed results in closing achievement gaps. On ESEA mathematics assessments, the gap between low income and non low-income students narrowed by 4% from 2003-2009. All other groups' data indicated a closing of the gap by 1% or less. NAEP data were mixed. In Mathematics, the black-white achievement gap increased by 15% for fourth graders and by 12% for eighth graders in the 1992-2009 time period. Similar data were reported for socioeconomic status, gender and disabled groups. In reading, NAEP data indicate that the Black-White gap increased by 6 % for fourth graders but decreased by 6% for eighth graders. The gender gap increased for fourth graders by 3% and eighth graders by 5%. Similar results were reported for ESEA reading data. Kentucky reports that it is focused on closing the achievement gap, and that it has formed partnerships to do so. Currently there is a closing the Achievement Gap Council. However the data seem to indicate that more needs to be accomplished, but no specific plan was mentioned.

Kentucky uses an estimate (The Leaver Rate Method) to analyze their graduation rate. They estimate that there has been an increase of 55% from 2001 to 2008. Kentucky attributes this increase to their comprehensive plan, and their focus on low performing schools. Concomitantly, Kentucky notes that the college enrollment rate from 1992 to 2006 has increased from 49% to 61 %. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

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

Kentucky clarified that they would be using micro strategies to decrease the gap among different student populations. They went on to say that they were using mathematics and reading coaches to low performing schools to facilitate the closing of these gaps.

Total	125	118	125
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B. Standards and Assessments

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards	40	40	40	

(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards	20	20	20
(ii) Adopting standards	20	20	20

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

(B)(1) (i) Kentucky is one of the first states to join the Common Core Standards Coalition (CSSC) which consists of 51 states and territories. This coalition was formed to develop and adopt a common core of standards for mathematics and English Language Arts. These standards are aligned with college and work expectations, are rigorous, and are internationally benchmarked. An MOU with CSSC is attached. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

(B)(1)(ii) Kentucky's Senate bill 1 mandated the adoption of new standards. Kentucky adopted the Common Core Standards (CCS) on February 10, 2010. The CCS initiative was supported in a broad bipartisan way in the House, Senate and Governor's office. There is coordination among the Education Professional Standards Board, Council on Post Secondary Education, and Kentucky DOE in coordinating information and professional learning among undergraduate, graduate teacher and principal preparation programs and for existing teachers and principals. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

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

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

B)(2)(i) and (B) (2) (ii) Kentucky is committed to working with three consortia of states to develop assessment tools to evaluate the CCSs. MOUS and a list of states were provided. The Summative Multi-state Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER BALANCED) has 33 states as members. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has 27 participating states. The Board Exam for High Schools consists of eight states. Kentucky is to be commended for the broad array of sates that it is working with to develop high quality standards. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

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

(B)(3)

Kentucky has a well thought out plan for transitioning to and implementing RTTT through their CCSs. This plan revolves around six activities: adopting and disseminating math and English/Language Arts standards; aligning PreK-12 and post secondary around the CCSs; building networks to deconstruct the standards and creating high-quality, aligned instructional supports; ongoing professional learning around new standards and assessments; implementing a balanced assessment system, and increasing access to challenging courses. This plan involves the active involvement of key stakeholders across the education community. Each activity has steps and key partners highlighted to implement the action plan. This is a detailed comprehensive effort that clearly outlines how it is to be accomplished. Kentucky is depending on outside partners and less on LEAS to implement. This might be due to the rural nature of the state and the capacity of individual LEAs to efficiently attack all areas of the plan. Kentucky earned high points for this segment of the grant.

Total	70	68	68
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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) Kentucky has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements. Each element was addressed in the narrative. Kentucky earned all points for this section.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data

5 5 5

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

Kentucky has a well thought out plan for transitioning to and implementing RTTT through their CCSs. This plan revolves around six activities: adopting and disseminating math and English/Language Arts standards; aligning PK-12 and post secondary around the CCSs; building networks to deconstruct the standards and creating high-quality, aligned instructional supports; ongoing professional learning around new standards and assessments; implementing a balanced assessment system, and increasing access to challenging courses. This plan involves the active involvement of key stakeholders across the education community. Each activity has steps and key partners highlighted to implement the action plan. This is a detailed comprehensive effort that clearly outlines how it is to be accomplished. Kentucky is depending on outside partners and less on LEAs to implement. This might be due to the rural nature of the state and the capacity of individual LEAs to efficiently attack all areas of the plan. Kentucky earned high points for this segment of the grant.

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

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

(C)(3)(i) Kentucky has created an ambitious and achievable plan for increasing the use of instructional improvement systems. Kentucky has developed three key activities tied to using data to improve instruction. The first is the development and roll out of CIITS. This system will contain standards and aligned instructional supports. The system eventually will focus on instructional tools, data access and analysis, and professional development. Kentucky has a previous history of successfully rolling out similar systems which adds to the evidence that this plan is "doable". High points were awarded for this section.

(C)(3)(ii) The second activity of Kentucky's plan revolves around supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems. This plan revolves around providing professional learning on accessing and using CIITS. In this effort, the Commonwealth will utilize nine regional networks across the state. This is impressive as they are using an "in state" model, where 400 master trainers will deliver PD to local schools, councils, and LEAs. The use of "local" talent makes it more likely that the reform efforts will continue after RTTT funding has ended. Commonwealth wide capacity is built by having a coordinator of CIITS for each region as the program is implemented. The learning opportunities center on: how to use the platform; how to use data to understand student needs and to inform instruction, and how to use data in professional learning teams to support continuous improvement. Kentucky included a table of performance measures that seem to be ambitious yet achievable. High points were awarded.

(C)(3)(iii) The Commonwealth has designed an innovative plan for making data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers. The Commonwealth will provide non-confidential data to all stakeholders including researchers. Additionally, Kentucky appears to be committed to working with researchers and/or evaluators to analyze

the impact of impact of instructional strategies and learning activities. This allows for a rating system that will enable teachers to choose the most effective strategies for different groups of students in different situations. This is a well thought out approach to using research to help inform stakeholders of best practices. High points were awarded.

Total	47	47	47
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

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

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

(D)(1) (i)

(D) (1) (i) Kentucky has legislation that permits alternative routes to certification for both principals and teachers. There are eight alternative routes to certification, the most recent being a Teach for America Option. The combination of alternative certification programs meets five of the five parts of the definition of high quality pathways. Three of the routes allow for providers other than IHEs. All of the programs are selective in accepting candidates. These alternative certification programs have strong school based experiences. Another strength is that alternative routes are not completed until a year of internship is completed. All alternative programs award the same level of certification once the internship is completed. Full points are awarded.

(D)(1)(ii)

Kentucky has a significant number of teachers using the alternative certification routes. There are a modest number of principals using alternative routes. Approximately 10% of current teachers and 6% of current principals were certified through alternative routes. During the 2009-2010 school years, 17% (450) of Kentucky's new teachers and 1% of new principals came through the alternative routes. All of the principals came through a university based program (appendix AAA). A majority of teachers came through a university program also. All points were awarded.

(D)(1)(iii) Kentucky has an effective plan for identifying and preparing teachers and principals for shortage areas. Kentucky uses a Local Educator Assignment Data report to monitor and identify areas of teacher/principal shortage. Many of the alternative route teachers and principals fill these positions. Kentucky has ambitious and achievable plans for the future to expand high quality alternative routes through several activities: better publicity of two of the options; partnerships with Teach for America; increased visibility of effective programs, and a new turn-around specialist certification program. Full points were awarded.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	56	56
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5

(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	13	13
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	10	10
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	28	28

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

(D)(2)(i)

Kentucky has an achievable and ambitious plan for measuring student growth. Kentucky plan and timeline indicate that the Commonwealth will generate Student Growth Measures (SGM) that are tied to the CCS. These SGMs will include: value added analysis of assessments in reading and math; pre and post course assessments; portfolios etc. The value added analysis of the data will allow principals and teachers a more convenient method of using data to improve instruction, which should also facilitate more efficient and appropriate use of the system. These student growth profiles will be tied to individual teachers and principals. Kentucky is to be commended for a well thought out approach. High points are awarded.

(D)(2)(ii)

Kentucky's plan to develop evaluation systems is ambitious (a 2013 target implementation date) and seems to be achievable. Kentucky is to be commended for using both principals and teachers to develop the system, thus fostering stakeholder buy-in. Kentucky is using its Effective Teachers Steering Committee and Effective Principals Steering Committee to lead the development of the new Kentucky Teacher and Principal Professional Growth and Evaluation System. This is a multiple-measures evaluation system that will be operating statewide by 2013-14. Developed by educators for educators, this system will be rigorous, transparent, fair, and aligned to the Commonwealth's overall approach to continuous improvement in professional practice and student learning. The system is designed to evaluate teachers and principals based on: evidence of student growth; evidence that teachers/principals have systematically used information about student growth (across at least three points in time) to inform, improve and differentiate instruction and that teachers/principals make progress towards goals in professional growth plans. Teachers' evaluations will be based also on multiple observations of instructional practice by principals, peer reviewers, and other trained evaluators with respect to research-based criteria of effective practices. Principals' evaluations will include 360° feedback and use of data from the New Teacher Center Teacher Working Condition Survey. Kentucky indicates that the system will be able to differentiate teachers and principals into at least four levels of effectiveness. While Kentucky indicates that student growth will be a "significant" factor, they do not indicate "how much" is significant. It would be helpful if the qualitative "significant" were quantified as a percentage. Formal training for the evaluators is another sign of the quality of this plan. High points were awarded.

(D)(2)(iii)

Kentucky describes a comprehensive and achievable plan to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals. The plan looks at educators' growth through multiple lenses, thus ensuring fairness and formative use of the evaluation. For non-tenured teachers, annual evaluations will consist of objective evidence of student growth; evidence of use of student growth data in instructional practice, multiple observations of instructional practice, and progress against professional growth plans and student learning targets. The plan states that for tenured teachers, annual evaluations will consist of objective evidence of student growth, use of student growth data in instructional practice, and progress against professional growth plans and student learning targets. Multiple observations of instructional practice will occur every third year. For principals, these annual evaluations will incorporate evidence of student growth, use of student growth data in instructional practice, assessments of progress against professional and performance targets, 360° feedback, and use of data from the New Teacher Center's Teacher Working Conditions Survey for school improvement. The evaluations will provide teachers and principals with information about their performance including the growth of their students. By 2011-12, CIITS will provide access to pertinent information to inform instruction and improve their practice at all times through user friendly tools; this is an ambitious benchmark. High points were awarded.

(D)(2)(iv)

Kentucky has a cohesive and comprehensive plan to use evaluations to inform all personnel decision-making by schools, districts and the state, from support for professional learning to additional compensation and career

opportunities, to tenure, certification, and release decisions. The new evaluation system described by Kentucky has the capacity to provide teachers, principals, school councils and LEAs with actionable information about the growth needs of all the Commonwealth's educators. This should ensure that induction, training, and mentoring, can address the unique strengths and needs of each educator. The Commonwealth has an induction program planned for both teachers and principals grounded in the new evaluation system. CIITs is in the process of developing a professional development database that will allow educator evaluation data to be matched with PD programs to track the impact of the programs. this provides data both on educator needs but also on the efficacy of different PD Opportunities. Kentucky describes a comprehensive process for using the evaluation system for compensating, promoting and retaining teachers who are rated highly effective. Tenure, certification, and dismissal are tied to the evaluation system. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

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

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

(D)(3)(i)-(ii) Kentucky presents a comprehensive plan to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals to high minority/poverty schools and in hard to staff subjects and specialty areas. Kentucky notes that they have already made strides in these areas by consistently having met goals for the equitable distribution of "Highly Qualified" educators under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The latest Highly Qualified Summary Report shows that at Kentucky's high-poverty and high minority schools over 98% of classes are taught by highly-qualified teachers. Kentucky uses these data to inform its plan for further progress. Kentucky outlines four activities that are the focus of its plan to ensure equity. These activities include: requiring and supporting improving working conditions and supporting data driven decision making. Kentucky's plan includes an ambitious effort to recruit and retain teachers. The plan is an innovative system of incentives, retraining, and the provision of extra resources to fit the needs of these high need subject areas and LEAs schools. the plan while innovative and ambitious appeared to have achievable performance measures. Kentucky earned high points respectively for (D) (3) (i) and (D) (3) (ii).

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

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

D) (4) (i) Kentucky articulates a clearly defined innovative plan for improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs. Kentucky already has a teacher preparation report card and is in the process of redesigning it to include multiple indices. The redesigned indices will merge multiple inputs into an algorithm that results in a single score for each program within a broader institution (i.e., a special education teacher program), as well as an aggregate score for the institution (i.e., a college of education). Among the most significant inputs to the Indices will be student achievement and student growth data from the new Kentucky Teacher and Principal Professional Growth and Evaluation System. Because the data from the teacher and principal evaluation system will be an input into the EEPI, the Report Card will also include which preparation programs produce the highest percentages of effective and highly effective teachers and principals. A synthesis of multiple indices should allow concerned stakeholders a simple method for making comparisons. Data will be published and will help LEAs to more effectively use their recruiting resources. Kentucky earned high points for this section.

(D)(4)(ii) The Commonwealth's plan clearly and comprehensively explains how the Commonwealth plans to expand its most successful teacher and principal preparation programs. The plan involves: providing better information to the

teacher and principal "market"; supporting program improvement; strengthening their regulatory approach, and using public resources to expand the most successful programs. Legislation has been passed that gives Kentucky the right to monitor programs' effectiveness. The Standards Board has a collaborative partnership with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), using its standards as a basis for the evaluation of educator preparation programs. Following on-site monitoring visits and data analysis, a committee may make recommendations to the Standards Board, with one of four recommendations: accreditation; provisional accreditation; denial of accreditation, or revocation of accreditation. Additionally, Kentucky is sun setting all teacher and principal preparation programs' accreditations, and is requiring all programs to reapply. The Standards Board is also in the process of identifying best practices in admissions and clinical experiences to be incorporated into all teacher preparation programs. These and other activities present a multi-pronged aggressive approach to improving teacher and principal preparation programs. Kentucky earned high points.

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

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

(D)(5)(i) Kentucky has an ambitious and achievable plan to provide support to teachers and principals. Kentucky's plan involves changing from an LEA controlled Professional Learning (PL) that led to disparate measures and results with an approach that is dependent on: strengthening the existing system of networks at the state, district, and school level; providing data and resources through the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS), and prioritizing job-embedded professional learning, enabled through legislative changes. Job-embedded professional learning is mentioned in the narrative, however Kentucky does not explicitly say if this PD will involve "common planning and collaboration time". Clarification would have strengthened the narrative. The Department, by strengthening the professional learning infrastructure as part of the Common Core standards and assessments implementation, will provide districts with innovative hybrid model for professional learning that combines technology-based and in-person professional learning experiences and supports to meet the needs of all teachers across geographies and assignments. This is an important innovation in a rural state as it allows the Commonwealth to provide high quality support to schools that are not easily accessible geographically. In addition to this statewide regional network approach, individual district level leadership teams and school-based professional learning teams are critical for collective problem-solving, best-practice sharing, and collaboration within district CIITs. The CIITs is an innovation that will provide data and resources which will connect teachers and principals to the best curriculum, assessment, instruction, PL and assessment resources. CIITS will provide continuous access to proven strategies and resources; support collaboration through online communities; share knowledge of experts in content areas such as Math, Science and English/Language Arts within teachers' own classrooms; provide examples from action research from classrooms and schools similar to their own, and provide online access to post secondary courses. For individual teachers, the CIITS will provide the tools, resources, and data (e.g., formative assessment and other student learning results) needed to inform their professional growth plans. Kentucky also is implementing PL schools. Kentucky is exploring the possibility of a two year residency and induction model for undergraduate education, but has not explicitly made it a part of the plan. Again, clarification would be helpful. The combination of strong regional networks, technology, PL schools seem to be an ideal way to provide support to LEAs in such a rural state. However the lack of clarity on the induction plan and on common planning time weakened the narrative. Kentucky earned high points.

D)(5)(ii) Continuous improvement of the effectiveness support is planned for by Kentucky assessing the impact of professional learning models on teacher and principal effectiveness. A major part of this assessment is measuring growth in student learning. The Commonwealth is committed to identifying which professional learning opportunities most effectively increase student learning. Three mechanisms will enable the continuous evaluation and improvement of the new professional learning system and approach. CIITS will provide: extensive reporting mechanisms that enable district and state leaders to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of teaching, resources, assessments, professional learning, and technology for continuous improvement, and a professional learning database in which the providers and methods identified as most effective by LEAs (through third-party

evaluations and the new teacher and principal evaluation system) can then be highlighted. This will be a continuously evolving and expanding database of professional learning approaches, models, and examples that have been tried, tested, and evaluated by LEAs across the state. For rural LEAs with fewer resources to try new approaches, this database will provide critical information to ensure that professional learning funding and time are spent in the ways, and on the programs that most effectively increase student learning. There are also tools for classroom walkthroughs and student formative and summative assessment, enabling the state, district, and principals to assess the impact of professional learning, coaching, and pre-service interventions in terms of teacher and principal practices as well as student learning. Tools supporting Kirkpatrick's four levels of professional development evaluation(teacher satisfaction, application of learning, impact on student scores, and Return on Investment) will facilitate evaluation of Professional Learning activities. Finally the state will use third-party evaluators to provide ongoing formal evaluations of the PL system. The combination of practices should a lead to a dynamic continuously improving support system. Kentucky earned high pts.

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

Kentucky in their presentation indicated that school teams meet on a monthly basis. This gives teachers the opportunity for common planning times. The score was raised to account for this additional information.

Total 138 134 136

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)

Kentucky is committed to the strategies and actions required to turn around the State's lowest-achieving schools. The Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 160.346 enables the Kentucky Department of Education to intervene in the Commonwealth's persistently low-achieving schools. KRS 160.346 defines persistently low-achieving schools (federal definition) and enables the State to intervene and expeditiously implement one of four intervention options. It is accompanied by the Kentucky Administrative Regulation 703 KAR 5:180. In addition, KRS 158.780 and KRS 158.785 enable the Department to intervene in LEAs. The combination of laws allows KY DOE to intervene in both low-achieving schools and LEAS. All points are earned by Kentucky.

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

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

(E)(2)(i) Kentucky has a cogent plan to identify persistently low-achieving schools and determine the capacity of the schools/LEAs leadership to effect change. Kentucky will use the federal definition of persistently lowest-achieving to identify the schools for turnaround. These schools will be called Educational Recovery Schools. In Fall 2012, the Department will expand the definition to include all schools that fail to meet the state's new accountability measures. From this group, the Department will identify those schools whose student scores have ranked in the bottom 5% in proficiency in Math and Reading/Language Arts combined, for the ALL students category for three consecutive years. In addition, per the guidelines in the School Improvement Grant program and the Race to the Top notice, the State will identify any high schools that do not meet the above definition but have a graduation rate of less than 60%. As part of the identification process, Kentucky also proposes to determine the capacity of the current school and LEA leadership

to manage and lead the educational recovery. Since 2000, school and district scholastic audits have been an integral part of Kentucky's efforts in school improvement, and provide a powerful tool to launch the State's future work in Educational Recovery Services. The Commonwealth will use a new type of scholastic audit called a Leadership Assessment. This would appear to be an innovative piece that is crucial to determining capacity prior to making staffing changes required under the turnaround options. Kentucky has identified ten (10) persistently low achieving schools and analyzed their leadership capacity. The combination of strategies including the leadership assessment presents a picture of a comprehensive plan. Kentucky earned full points.

(E)(2)(ii) Kentucky has put together an ambitious but doable plan for supporting LEAs in turning around low achieving schools. Relying on previous data and experience the Commonwealth has formulated a plan that proposes closing the gap in three years with a longer timeframe for continued improvement. Kentucky notes that educational recovery will require action on a number of fronts: require many of these schools to relinquish much of the control over the school to the local district, the State, or an Educational Management Organization (EMO) that has a proven track record with students similar to those in the affected school(s); make fundamental changes in the conditions under which these schools operate; develop a marketplace of partners and support providers skilled in educational recovery, and appropriate the funding necessary to create successful educational recovery. Three key elements will be the focus of developing and sustaining this specific level of support known as Educational Recovery Services: District 180, Centers for Learning Excellence, and Educational Recovery Leaders and Specialists. *District 180* combines staff and resources from three existing units, the Office of Leadership and School Improvement (where the Highly Skilled Educator, ASSIST and scholastic audit work is housed), the Office of Special Instructional Services (the home of the Federal Programs work where Title I and the Federal School Improvement Grant are managed) and the Office of Teaching and Learning who will be providing Literacy and Mathematics content specialists to provide further support to the identified schools. In addition to providing the leadership for all Department efforts around educational recovery, this unit will provide support and assistance to the Centers for Learning Excellence as well as to those identified educational management organizations contracted to manage recovery schools. *Centers of Learning Excellence* will serve as intermediaries between the Department's District 180 team and the Educational Recovery Schools. Centers will be collaborative hubs, representing multiple support partners and providers. Schools and districts in need of educational recovery will be clustered and assigned to these Centers. Each Center will serve to provide support to identified Educational Recovery Schools as well as other schools identified for school improvement. *Educational Recovery Leaders* will be the lead administrator in each recovery school, and will go through extensive and on-going training in educational recovery strategies. *Educational Recovery Leaders* will focus on assessing what barriers exist to whole school turnaround with more emphasis on culture, family and community engagement, teacher effectiveness and professional growth, leadership, and resource allocation. As part of their work in each recovery school, the Education Recovery Leader will develop a transition plan designed to ensure that the school is prepared to re-enter the regular school improvement process once the recovery period is completed. A central piece of the transition plan will be working with school and district leadership to identify a Principal in Waiting. Once identified, this individual will become a member of the staff of the recovery school. The Principal in Waiting will assist the Education Recovery Leader in implementing turnaround strategies and will receive coaching and mentoring from the Education Recovery Leader. At the end of the recovery period, this individual will assume the role of Principal in the recovery school. Finally, *Educational Recover Specialists & Intervention Specialists* have specific experiences and training in working with teachers to make dramatic improvements in instructional practice. Their role is to focus on mentoring, coaching, and modeling effective instructional practices to build capacity with the teaching staff. Kentucky plans to use the *four* federally mandated models and provides an explanation of this in the narrative. Kentucky has developed an integrated, innovative, and ambitious plan. Of particular note is the clear plan to develop leadership for the future by having a designated "principal in waiting". This should help to insure sustainable educational leadership. Kentucky earned high points.

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

Kentucky gave additional information in the questioning period that clarified the structure and role of the various stakeholders in low performing schools. The role of the Educational Recovery Specialist was further

clarified as being the common point person for the process. This strengthened the process so full points were awarded.

Total	50	45	50
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F. General

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

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

(F)(1)(i) Kentucky's commitment to allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education is evidenced by the fact that the Commonwealth has increased spending to education by 15 million dollars despite an overall budget decline of \$500 M. This was a proportional increase in educational spending of 3% from 43.6% to 46.5%. Kentucky earned full points.

(F)(1)(ii) Kentucky has a formula that leads to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools within LEAs. Under the Support Education Excellence In Kentucky (SEEK) funding formula, the state fixes a base rate for each student. The amount of revenue is then adjusted upward for each LEA to reflect a set of factors that affect the cost of providing services to students. These factors include: at-risk pupils; exceptional children; home-schooled or hospitalized students, and Limited English Proficiency. Kentucky's funding system devotes more resources to low income and minority children. Kentucky's distribution of funding within LEAs is done on strict per-pupil basis. This would mean that within a district there is no way to allocate extra funds to a school with larger percentage of high needs students. This is a weakness in the funding plan. Kentucky earned moderate points in this area.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	8	8	
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	0	0	
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	0	0	
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	0	0	
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	0	0	
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8	

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

(F)(2)(i-iv) There is no charter school law; therefore no points were awarded for these elements (i-iv).

(F)(2)(v)

In 1990, Kentucky passed the first legislation in the country to address the need for innovative, autonomous schools; Kentucky enacted KRS 160.345 as part of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. It remains, to the date of this application, the only state legislation that has created an environment that makes ALL public schools innovative and autonomous through the establishment of a school-based decision making (SBDM) form of school governance. Full points were awarded for this element.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)			
<p>(F)(3) Kentucky has favorable conditions for school reform. Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA) legislation resulted in: new standards, assessments, school intervention authority for the state to intervene in low-achieving schools; School Based Decision Making, and Support Education Excellence In Kentucky (SEEK) funding. Beyond KERA, Kentucky has implemented several other actions that also enhance the reform environment such as: partnership with the Wallace Foundation; universal administration of the ACT; Senate Bill 1. These reforms have led to dramatic progress. Over the last decade NAEP 4th grade mathematics scores rose 24 %, and reading scores rose 10% ;graduation rates climbed 9%,from 1996-2006, and post secondary enrollment has risen 12% since 1992. These data and activities make Kentucky a fertile environment for continued reform. Kentucky earned high points.</p>			
Total	55	21	21

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)

Kentucky addresses STEM throughout their plan for RTTT. As a part of their emphasis on STEM, Kentucky formed a task force comprised of key stakeholders to investigate the STEM initiative. As a result of these partnerships, Kentucky has developed a comprehensive plan to further their students' progress in the STEM fields. Examples of Kentucky's STEM initiatives include: Advance Kentucky (an initiative to encourage more participation in AP (math & science) courses); Project Lead the Way, and a PK-8 parent initiative. Innovations such as partnerships with TFA; UTeach; The Mathematics and Science Partnership, and Partnership Institute for Mathematics and Science Education Reform are also examples of systemic and creative ways to address STEM initiative. Centers for Learning Excellence will manage the implementation of programs in turn around schools to ensure that teachers are trained in and students participate in rigorous STEM courses. Gender and minority issues are addressed in appendix FFF and LLL though not directly in the narrative. More direct information about this area would have been helpful. Kentucky is awarded STEM points for this initiative.

Total	15	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

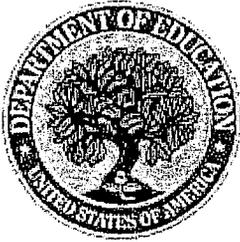
	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Kentucky has presented a cogent and cohesive plan that addresses all four education reform areas specified in the ARRA and in the State Success factors. The attached MOUs clearly describe how the Commonwealth in collaboration with LEAs and other key partners such as: universities, Kentucky Parent Teacher Association, Kentucky Education Association will creatively use the RTTT funds to decrease achievement gaps, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and career. Kentucky appears to already have taken preliminary steps to insure the success of the reform effort. The structure of the Commonwealth support as presented is cohesive and innovative.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	448	462
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Race to the Top

Technical Review Form - Tier 2



Kentucky Application #2850KY-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	42	42	
(i) Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda	5	5	5	
(ii) Securing LEA commitment	45	25	25	
(iii) Translating LEA participation into statewide impact	15	12	12	

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

(A)(1)(i)

Kentucky's application details a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that reflects the core elements of RTTT, including, for example: (1) internationally benchmarked standards and assessments, (2) developing and supporting great teachers and principals, using longitudinal student-level data (including growth models) to inform instructional practice (including the effectiveness of teachers and principals), and amplifying support (and/or intervention) for persistently low-performing schools and districts. The viability of the plan is backed by the state's extensive and successful experiences with educational improvement through educational policy, equity in finance, and effective implementation.

(A)(1)(ii)

Kentucky's application enjoys unanimous LEA support as reflected by signatures from all key parties (as applicable) on the model MOU. By signing the MOUs, all LEAs have agreed to implement the plan as identified in the preliminary scope of work. However, the scope of work is unclear on particulars, particularly as it relates to the evaluation of teachers and school leaders. The SOW states that participating districts will "Implement teacher and principal growth models for all schools in the districts," but the SOW does not state how these growth models will be used by districts. The SOW states that participating districts will "Implement state's teacher and principal evaluation systems to increase effectiveness of teaching"; however, the SOW does not state that said evaluations will be based partly on student achievement as measured by growth models. The SOW states that participating districts will "Act on information to increase equity of access to effective teachers," but it's not clear what information districts will act on or how they will act on it. The SOW states that participating districts will "Commit to participate in successful strategies for equitable distribution," but it does not state what participation means or what is to be equitably distributed.

(A)(1)(iii)

The state's goals for increased student achievement, lowered achievement gaps, increased graduation rates, and increased college-going and college-completion rates seem sufficiently ambitious and practical.

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans	30	30	30	
(i) Ensuring the capacity to implement	20	20	20	

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

(A)(2)(i)

The State has articulated a clear, viable strategy for implementing and scaling up its plan. This assessment is supported partly by the State's history in implementing reforms that are aligned with the elements of RTTT. The State's education management philosophy embraces collaboration, decentralization, innovation, and accountability. To facilitate collaboration, numerous advisory groups and regional networks are being (have been) formed. Moreover, an RTTT office will be established at the state level to coordinate effective implementation of the RTTT grant (if funded); the work of the small RTTT office would be facilitated through the use of state-of-the-art technology-based monitoring and communications tools. The proposed budget is aligned with core RTTT elements.

(A)(2)(ii)

Kentucky's plan culminated from the collaboration of key stakeholders, including KDE, other state agencies, the state's major teacher union (KEA) and other K-12 groups (administrators, superintendents, school boards). Letters of recommendation from many colleges/universities indicate strong support from this sector.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps	30	21	21
(i) Making progress in each reform area	5	3	3
(ii) Improving student outcomes	25	18	18

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

(A)(3)(i)

Using both state and federal funds (e.g., funding from the U. S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences for a Statewide Longitudinal Data System, federal Title II Teacher Quality funds, and Title I School Improvement funds), the State has implemented important initiatives in each of the RTTT's four education reform areas. However, it's not always clear from the narrative how extensively and intensively these programs were implemented. Second, the causal connection between these initiatives and state educational progress is vague.

(A)(3)(ii)

In recent years, Kentucky has experienced notable growth in student achievement in both reading and math, as well as graduation rates (as measured by leavers). However, the achievement gap has generally risen during this period. Kentucky currently endeavors to improve the quality of assessment and measurement systems. Temporal shifts in the percentage of Exceptional children and/or ELL students excluded from testing suggests possible instabilities in the assessment system.

Total	125	93	93
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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
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(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(1)(i)

Kentucky is a member of the 51-state Common Core State Standards Initiative, which aims to develop a common core of reading (English language arts) and math standards for grades K-12.

(B)(1)(ii)

The narrative states that Kentucky adopted the Common Core standards on February 10, 2010.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	10	9	9
(i) Participating in consortium developing high-quality assessments	5	4	4
(ii) Including a significant number of States	5	5	5

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

(B)(2)(i)

Kentucky has joined with three distinct consortia to develop and implement high-quality assessments of the Common Core standards. It would be useful to describe the relationships among the work of the consortia and especially to discount the possible perception that the consortia are duplicative and/or contradictory.

(B)(2)(ii)

Two of the assessment consortia that Kentucky has joined include over half the states in the U. S.:

- Summative Multi-state Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER BALANCE) – 33 states;
- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) – 26 states

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	20	13	13
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(B)(3)

The application lays out a clear, comprehensive plan (goals, activities, time tables, responsible parties, budget) for supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. The state will: (1) build on its historical networking infrastructure to disseminate standards, (2) use effective internal and external agents to support the development and use of standards-aligned assessments (formative and summative) and related tools, and (3) provide ongoing state-aligned support to LEAs, schools, and teachers. Mindful of the state's rurality, the application calls for the extensive use of computer systems to facilitate information transfer and professional development, and the development of students' Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). The proposed work is aligned with the budget presented for Project 1: Professional Learning for Teachers and Principals. It is notable, however, that the application limits (B)(3)'s performance measures to teacher perceptions regarding their understanding of the standards and the instructional tools. These performance measures inadequately capture the richness of the discussion in the narrative. For example, what % of students (will) have ILPs? What % of teachers are actively engaged with learning teams? What % of LEAs and schools employ standards-aligned interim assessments? What % of teachers and principals receive formative/diagnostic data on how well their students/schools are performing? What is the level of consistency in the content and quality of the LEA/school activities among regional networks? What % of teachers and principals are "assessment literate"? How do principals feel about their

ability/capacity to integrate the standards and assessments into their schools' educational programs? In short, the absence of greater detail in the offered list of performance measures raises questions regarding the long-term viability and efficacy of the state's (B)(3) plan.

Total	70	62	62
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C. Data Systems to Support Instruction

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	24	14	16	

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

(C)(1)

The state is making good progress toward the implementation of a statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with the 12 elements in the America COMPETES Act (ACA 1 through ACA 12). A few areas seem to pose potential challenges, e.g., routinely linking P-12 data and post-secondary data and including teacher identifiers in the database.

ACA 1: 2

ACA 2: 2

ACA 3: 0

Data available for P-12, but work not completed on 13-16 component. Appendix NN notes only the P-12 component.

ACA 4: 0

A work in progress. Agencies currently link their student-data records "as needed."

ACA 5: 2

ACA 6: 2

ACA 7: 2

ACA 8: 0

Not clear from this description that the system links unique teacher ID codes to student data.

ACA 9: 2

ACA 10: 2

ACA 11: 0

Response fuzzy on question of whether transition data are part of student-level data base. For example, the High School Feedback Report is a school-level report (see Appendix UU).

ACA 12: 0

Response focuses largely on programs designed to facilitate improved college access for Kentucky's students, rather than information included in the longitudinal data system that facilitates alignment and adequate preparation for success in college.

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

Commissioner clarified that system links unique teacher ID codes to student data.

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data	5	4	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(2)

Kentucky has a coherent plan for ensuring that its Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) is widely and optimally used to support improved outcomes. All teachers, principals, and superintendents will have access to each of their students' longitudinal data. The plan entails expanding access to other key stakeholders (e.g., post-secondary institutions). The plan also calls for improved access and use through the use of state-of-the-art computer-based systems and professional development and support through the nine regional centers. Moreover, increased use will be promoted through increasing the quantity and utility of data available in the system. Kentucky has an excellent plan for providing parents with online access to data in their children Individual Learning Plans (ILPs); by the end of the grant period, the goal is for 95% of parents to have access to SLDS data. However, it is notable that only a maximum of 40% of district administrators will be expected to use SLDS.

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction	18	15	15
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(i) Increasing the use of instructional improvement systems	6	5	5
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(ii) Supporting LEAs, schools, and teachers in using instructional improvement systems	6	4	4
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(iii) Making the data from instructional improvement systems available to researchers	6	6	6
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(C)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(C)(3)(i)

The State plans to roll out its Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS), which intends to provide rapid time data for decision-making and improvement to teachers, principals, and administrators.

(C)(3)(ii)

Training would be provided mainly through full-time coordinators at each of the State's nine regional centers. Coordinators will facilitate training of lead principals and teachers, who will in turn facilitate training of their peers. It is not clear what level of success the State has attained in using trainer-of-trainer models for providing professional development.

(C)(3)(iii)

Kentucky has developed a good strategy for making longitudinal data available to researchers. Specifically, through competitive grant making, Kentucky plans to partner with selected researchers to analyze the full-range of CIITS (including SLDS) data to improve educational policy and practice.

Total	47	33	35
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D. Great Teachers and Leaders

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	21	18	18	

(i) Allowing alternative routes to certification	7	7	7
(ii) Using alternative routes to certification	7	5	5
(iii) Preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage	7	6	6

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

(D)(1)(i)

Kentucky law and policy permit eight alternative routes to certification of teachers that include the five RTTT elements. Kentucky law permits the Standards Board to "promote the development of one or more innovative, nontraditional or alternative administrator or teacher preparation programs through public or private colleges or universities, private contractors, the Department of Education, or the Kentucky Commonwealth Virtual University and waive administrative regulations if needed in order to implement the program."

(D)(1)(ii)

Kentucky currently employs eight alternative routes to certification of teachers that include the five RTTT elements. In addition to the traditional IHE route to teacher certification, Kentucky uses, for example, Teach for America (TFA), an independent organization that provides alternative certification for teachers, with a focus on low-performing schools. However, only one alternative certification route is currently used for principals (university-based) (Appendix AAA).

(D)(1)(iii)

The narrative describes a thoughtful process for monitoring, evaluating, identifying, and resolving areas of teacher and principal shortages. Kentucky's LEAs are required to submit Local Educator Assignment Data (LEAD) to the state; these data are used to monitor, evaluate, and identify teacher and principal shortages. Multiple means are employed to address shortages, including alternative certification.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	58	40	40
(i) Measuring student growth	5	5	5
(ii) Developing evaluation systems	15	7	7
(iii) Conducting annual evaluations	10	7	7
(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions	28	21	21

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

(D)(2)(i)

Using multiple standards-based assessments, Kentucky's approach will develop growth measures for all students in all grade levels.

(D)(2)(ii)

Kentucky's plan for developing and implementing new evaluation systems for teachers and principals lists all the elements required by RTTT. The Effective Teachers Steering Committee will develop the evaluation system for teachers. The Effective Principals Steering Committee will develop the evaluation system for principals. Input from all teachers will be solicited through a statewide survey. However, while the plan indicates that teachers and principals would eventually be evaluated partly on the basis of growth in student achievement, the plan remains vague regarding the extent to which growth would factor into the evaluation.

The plan states that "Annual student growth will be a significant factor in educators' ratings in the new system." However, the term "significant" is not defined operationally (e. g., 10% or 50%). This lack of specificity is consistent with the language in the SOW attached to the LEA MOU.

(D)(2)(iii)

Teachers and principals will be evaluated annually. These evaluations will include, among other elements, "evidence of student growth" and "evidence of use of student growth data in instructional practice." Notably, however, performance measures are not listed for this selection criterion.

(D)(2)(iv)

Once the evaluation system is developed and put in place, the State has developed a good plan for using the data to inform critical decisions. In developing teachers and principals, the State would eventually align its prevailing induction programs (i.e., the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program and the Kentucky Principal Internship Program) with the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. Funding would be provided for only a small number of districts to implement compensation reforms that shift from current step-and-ladder compensation to systems based on teacher and principal performance based partly on relative growth in student achievement; thus it's unclear, overall, how student growth-based evaluations will factor into compensation decisions throughout the State. Existing systems for deciding on tenure or certification would be updated to include student performance data as a significant criterion. Finally, by rendering teacher and principal evaluations transparent, the State hopes to ensure that students are not being taught by ineffective teachers or led by ineffective principals. However, it is not clear from the narrative that consistently ineffective teachers would be removed.

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

	25	6	6
(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools	15	4	4
(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	10	2	2

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

(D)(3)(i)

To address this RTTT element, Kentucky's proposal relies on the volition of LEAs to resolve intra-LEA inequities in the distribution of staff (budget covers four LEAs for an average of \$300K per year per LEA in Years 2, 3, and 4 of RTTT). However, it is not clear that the State would seek to assess inter-LEA inequities or help to resolve such inequities.

(D)(3)(ii)

Here, too, responsibility for addressing distributional staffing inequities devolves to LEAs, notwithstanding the possibility that the issue may pose both intra- and inter-LEA challenges. Moreover, there seems to be no RTTT funding allocated for this item.

(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	4	4
(ii) Expanding effective programs	7	6	6

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

(D)(4)(i)

Kentucky has developed a reasonable plan for this RTTT element, but given that the State doesn't plan to finalize and roll out the new teacher and principal evaluation systems until the last year of RTTT funding, it's not clear that the State will have sufficient time to link evaluation data to in-State teacher and principal development programs -- unless this element will be implemented independent of the development of the new teacher and principal evaluation models.

(D)(4)(ii)

The plan would take practical actions to encourage expansion of the most effective preparation programs. It's not clear, however, that the plan would consider the cost-effectiveness of preparation programs.

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

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

(D)(5)(i)

The State has a clear and cogent plan for providing effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals. Key elements of the plan include strengthening existing regional networks and improving the level, relevance, and quality of data provided to educators through the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS). To shift the focus to school-embedded professional development, the plan would pursue modifications in the State's education code regarding time requirements for professional development. Moreover, the application includes a plan for field-testing a residency program to intensify the preparation of new teachers for assignment in hard-to-staff contexts (subjects and/or schools).

(D)(5)(ii)

The State's plan for measuring, evaluating, and continuously improving the effectiveness of its support system is clear and cogent. The plan stipulates that the State's professional development program would be evaluated by an external evaluator. The evaluation would also benefit from the administration of a teacher survey. Moreover, CIITS would serve as a clearinghouse for information on the effectiveness of various professional development programs tried by LEAs. Information from these sources would be used to facilitate improvement.

Total	138	94	94
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

(E)(1)

The state can intervene directly in both schools and LEAs.

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

(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	30	30
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(E)(2)(i)

State has identified persistently lowest-achieving schools using the federal definition, supplemented with other state considerations.

(E)(5)(ii)

State has undertaken a needs assessment (for the initial list of intervention schools) that makes informed judgments about the capacities of school councils, school principals, and LEAs to guide and/or implement school turnaround. Language for employing the four options denoted in RTTT has been legislated, inclusive of guidance for determining which option to select for a given context, and how to effect the option. State will also provide support to LEAs and/or schools through regional centers and training of school intervention leadership. The phase-in plan is reasonable (start with 10 schools and eventually expand intervention to 30) and performance targets are satisfactory.

Total	50	45	45
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F. General

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

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

(F)(1)(i)

According to the narrative, from 2008 to 2009 State funding for elementary, secondary, and higher education rose from 43.65% to 46.5% of the State total budget.

(F)(1)(ii)

In 1990, the State implemented a plan (SEEK) to ensure equitable funding for LEAs. SEEK, in effect, equalizes funding per pupil with upward adjustments for students in certain categories (e.g., at-risk, Exceptional children, English Language learners). Thereby, SEEK promotes horizontal and vertical equity. However, districts are permitted to use property taxes to increase their education revenues up to 15% above the SEEK base. The narrative for subsection (b) suggests that funding within school districts is distributed equally to all students, but this subsection is unclear (e. g., Under School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) are budgets completely decentralized at the school level? Are there differences in average teacher pay at schools based on teacher experience and education levels? If Yes, how is this difference accommodated in the budget process?).

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	8	8
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	0	0
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	0	0

(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	0	0
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	0	0
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	8	8

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

(F)(2)(i)

The State does not have a charter school law. However, Kentucky's RTTT application argues that the State's mandated School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) law represents "the most comprehensive system of 'public charter' schools in the nation." Kentucky's SBDM model does provide school councils with enormous budget and decision-making authority. However, my reading of Appendix FFFF suggests that this model does not provide as much autonomy as the typical U.S. charter school. There is a critical difference in how personnel decisions are made. For example, under SBDM, school councils must fill teacher and principal vacancies from lists of candidates provided by the local superintendent. Moreover, under SBDM, school councils cannot dismiss or transfer staff. The typical U.S. charter school is not bound by these critical restrictions.

(F)(2)(ii)

Kentucky does not have a charter school law.

(F)(2)(iii)

Kentucky does not have a charter school law.

(F)(2)(iv)

Kentucky does not have a charter school law.

(F)(2)(v)

Kentucky's statewide SBDM model gives schools, through school councils, exceptional authority over resource allocation and program decision-making.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5	5
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

(F)(3)

Beginning with the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA) the State has progressively effected practices (e.g., School-Based Decision Making) designed to propel improvements in student achievement, close achievement gaps, and improve graduation rates.

Total	55	21	21
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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)

Priority 2: STEM

In 2007 the State engaged a broad range of key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive, coherent STEM plan for Kentucky. Elements of STEM initiatives are clearly reflected throughout the State's RTTT application. Through projects such as AdvanceKentucky and Project Lead the Way, the State plans to improve the rigor of, and access to, STEM courses by all students, including "underrepresented groups, including girls." (Appendix KK) Through projects such as UTeach and the Mathematics and Science Partnership, Kentucky plans to improve the capacity of current teachers to teach STEM and to attract more math and science majors to teaching. Centers for Learning Excellence would help to ensure that the lowest-performing schools possess an equal opportunity to benefit from the State's STEM initiatives.

Total	15	15	15
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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)

In the main, Kentucky's RTTT application comprehensively and coherently addresses the education reform areas specified in ARRA as well as the State Success Factor Criteria. With respect to the plan's strengths, notable growth in aggregate student performance in recent years is correlated with a solid history of, and financial and programmatic commitment to, educational reform (e.g., KERA). The State is engaged in concerted efforts to develop, adopt, and implement high-level standards and assessments. The State has a plan for making effective use of longitudinal student-level data to improve instruction. The State would employ both traditional and alternative routes for developing and certifying teachers and principals. The state has a solid plan for providing effective support to teachers and principals. The State has a solid plan for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools. All LEAs indicated they are committed to participate in the RTTT initiative. The State has a history of implementing coherent STEM initiatives, and would continue and/or expand these efforts under RTTT.

Total		0	0
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Grand Total	500	363	365
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